



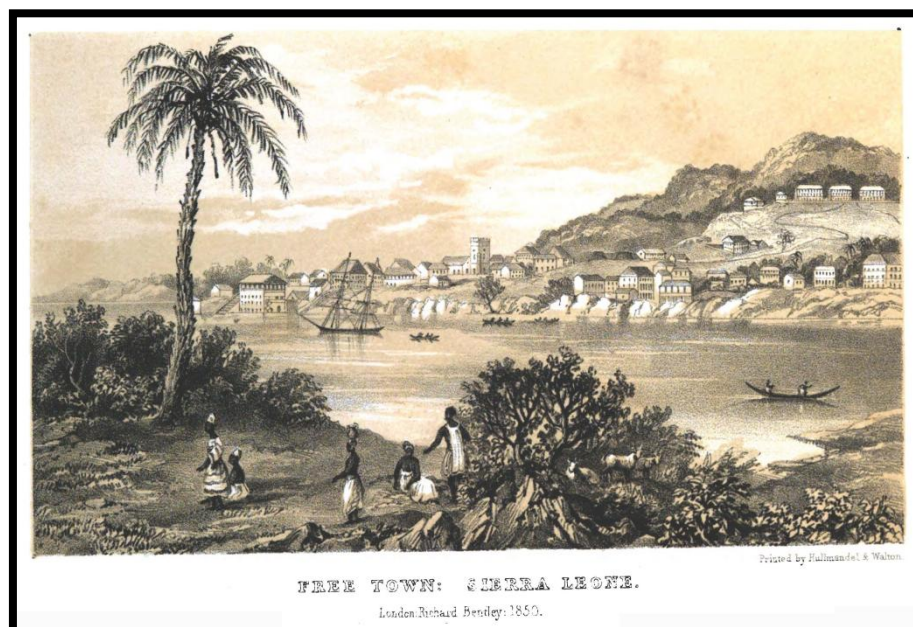
UNIVERSIDAD DE LAS PALMAS
DE GRAN CANARIA

Departamento de Filología Moderna

TESIS DOCTORAL

**A Roadmap to Sierra Leone English:
A Sociohistorical and Ecological Perspective**

Saidu Bangura



Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

2015



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Traducción, comunicación y cultura

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TESIS DOCTORAL

Dirigida por la Doctora:

El Doctorando:

Alicia Rodríguez Álvarez

Saidu Bangura

Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, 2015

Dedication

To my teachers, friends, students and family –
For they have kept me in the walls of schools
And in the pursuance of knowledge;
For they have taught me to believe in myself,
To make the impossible dream possible,
The seemingly unreachable height reachable,
To do those things I like my own way,
And to be strong in the face of challenges;
For they have given me the lenses and shoulders
Through which and upon which I see the world;
For without these four, my world
Would have been monotonous and unchallenging;
For with these four, we can be the stars
That will change the lives of others;
Through these four, we can do 'n' good things
That will make the world a better place
And life can be much more worth living –
For whosoever has a teacher, a friend, a student, a family
Has a guide, a hand, a follower and a life-partner.

“You raise me up so I can stand on mountains.
You raise me up to walk on stormy seas.
And I am strong when I am on your shoulders.
You raise me up to more than I can be”
(Brendan Graham – song writer).

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Abbreviations

AAE	African American English
BE	Black English
BrE	British English
cf	Compare
CMS	Church Missionary Society
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EIL	English as an International Language
EL	English Language
ELF	English as a Lingua Franca
ENL	English as a Native Language
ESD	English as a Second Dialect
ESL	English as a Second Language
FBC	Fourah Bay College
GA	Georgia
GB	Great Britain
IL	Interlanguage
IPAM	Institute of Public Administration and Management
IVE	Indigenised Varieties of English
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
L3	Third/Additional Language
LE	Liberian English
MTE	Mother Tongue Education
NL	Native Language
NPE	Nigerian Pidgin English
NS	Nova Scotia(n)
PCE	Postcolonial English(es)
RL	Recipient Language
RP	Received Pronunciation
RSE	Regional Standard English
SC	South Carolina
SL	Source Language
SLA	Second Language Acquisition

SLE	Sierra Leone English
SLLL	Sierra Leone Linguistic Landscape
TESL	Teaching English as a Second Language
TL	Target Language
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USA	United States of America
VA	Virginia
WE	World English(es)
WWI	First World War

Britain was more successful than any other nation in implanting its language around the globe, both in terms of sheer numbers of speakers and in the proliferation of overseas varieties (Holm 1989: 405).

All new Englishes are natural developments and legitimate offspring, although some look more like their ancestors than others do (Mufwene 2001: 197).

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.0. Background Information

The Republic of Sierra Leone, as the country is officially known, is a small country in West Africa with a population of approximately six million and two hundred thousand inhabitants. It shares borders with the Republic of Guinea in the north-west, north and north-east, the Republic of Liberia in the east and south-east and the Atlantic Ocean in the west and south-west. It is almost round in shape. There are twelve districts and four regions with their regional headquarters: the Northern (Makeni), Eastern (Kenema), Southern (Bo) and Western Area (Freetown), Freetown, besides is also the country's capital city. Sierra Leone became independent from Great Britain on 27th April 1961.



Map 1. Map of Sierra Leone

(<http://www.ezilon.com/maps/africa/sierra-leone-road-maps.html>, retrieved 24/10/2015)

1.1. The history of Freetown

The history of Freetown may have begun long before the country was baptized by Pedro da Cintra as '*Serra da Leoa*' in 1462 and even before the resettlement of liberated slaves from the American and Caribbean plantations, which started in 1787. However both events gathered more people around the Freetown peninsula as ever before. Indeed, the importance of Freetown became well-established in 1787 when the Sierra Leone Company decided to buy land to resettle emancipated slaves. The land was bought from Temne people who were the original owners and settlers of what is today the capital city of Sierra Leone, Freetown. Its original Temne name was "*Romarong*"¹:

In 1787 freed African slaves came from England to begin the colony that was to become Sierra Leone; they were later joined by other Creole speakers from North America and Jamaica (Holm 1989: 411).

The 'Black Poor' were the first group to be resettled in 1787 but suffered from disease and conflict with the local Temne people. In 1792, the 'Nova Scotians', the second group came followed by the 'Maroons' in 1800 from Jamaica with a restructured variety of English. Because of the British Abolition Act which banned British citizens from participating in any act of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, up to 50,000 slaves from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds were settled in Freetown between 1808 and 1864 (Wyse 1989: 1-2; Huber 1999; Sengova 2006: 179 cited in Oyètádé and Luke 2007: 123;). With this diverse linguistic and cultural background of the settlers and the original inhabitants of Freetown, a new cultural and linguistic community was established, and Freetown became the first West African region to witness the birth of western education and civilization through Fourah Bay College and other Church Missionary Society's educational institutions (Mazrui 1975). Thus, the formation of the Sierra Leone Krio can be seen as the outcome of the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of the

¹"*Romarong*" in Temne means 'a place where people cry', "the place of the wailers" (*Guardian Weekly*, September 16-22, 2005: 15). We hypothesize that the name was given to the place due to the fact that there were constant fighting in the area or due to mysterious wailings or mishaps at sea. The author of this study has a poem entitled "Here in Romarong" published by *The Patriotic Vanguard*. The editor of the journal explains the meaning of the name as well: <http://www.thepatrioticvanguard.com/poetry-here-in-romarong>

different people that met in Freetown. With this new setting and its resultant identity, Freetown became the first British Crown Colony in West Africa in 1808 while the rest of the country was made into a British Protectorate in 1896 (Oyètádé and Luke 2007: 123), eighty-eight years after Freetown was declared a British Colony.

While the estimated current population of the country is about six million two hundred thousand people (6,200,000)², Freetown holds about a quarter or more of this population. Freetown population swelled and diversified during the 1991-2002 civil war, and more especially from 1996 to 2000, because the capital became a centre of refuge for the internally displaced population from the war-torn regions. Even after the end of the war in 2002 most people who came from other regions of the country either found it very difficult to return to their original places of residence or were reluctant to do so.

As a city, Freetown has always been a diversified cultural and linguistic place. It was this multi-cultural and multi-linguistic characteristic nature of Freetown that gave rise to the present Creole language, Krio, spoken in Sierra Leone but with sister-creole languages elsewhere in the sub-region (The Gambia) and beyond (Guinea Equatorial, see Yakpo 2009, for the similarities between Krio and Pichi). It is through this diversified nature of Freetown, culturally and linguistically, that we are studying the English language.



Map 2. Map of Freetown (www.google.es, retrieved 24/10/2015)

² Data taken from <http://worldpopulationreview.com> (consulted 24/10/15).

1.2. An overview of the sociolinguistic situation of Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone, like many other (West) African countries (with the exception of Cape Verde), is multilingual with 18 indigenous languages existing side by side. As in many other African countries, each ethnic group has its own peculiar cultural and linguistic manifestation. However, four of the Sierra Leonean languages (Limba, Krio, Mende and Temne) are currently used in the educational system as languages of instruction in primary education and as subject of study in secondary and tertiary institutions due to and based on their regional use and dominance. Limba and Temne are widely spoken in the Northern Province, Mende in the eastern and southern provinces and Krio in the Western Area (Freetown); Krio is also the language of intra- and interethnic communication. What remains to be seen is the introduction of other languages, the said “minor” languages as languages of instruction and subject of study into the educational system.

Even though some scholars like Bokamba (1992: 125) have maintained that the typical African country lacks a common indigenous language for nationwide communication, the Sierra Leonean linguistic situation presents a different picture with Krio, which is, to a large extent, the linguistic melting pot of the different indigenous and ethnic languages (see Oyètádé and Luke 2003, 2007) and thus refutes, in part, the above assertion. Krio is thus an indigenous nationwide language of communication although it has not been declared as the *de jure* or national co-official language (though it is currently co-existing with English in many domains) but it is the common *de facto* language of wider communication among Sierra Leoneans of the same or different linguistic backgrounds in and/or out of the country. At the moment, its use in education and its influence on other Sierra Leonean languages and the English language is immense.

1.3. Scope and purpose of the research

Given the scarcity of current scholarly works around the variety of English spoken in the country, (except for Pemagbi 1989 and Conteh-Morgan 1997, and, more recently Turay 2010), Sierra Leone is a blank spot on the map of modern English

(socio)linguistic studies, the global spread of the language and the linguistic effects of this process compared to other West African countries like Ghana and Nigeria. The difficulty of encountering academic works in international academic centres, and even within the country, on this subject-matter seems to be due to (a) educated speakers of English in Sierra Leone seem to pride themselves of speaking British English (see Conteh-Morgan 1997), (b) some even go as far as describing the Sierra Leone English variety as “deficient” (Pemagbi 1989), and (c) most academic works today seem to concentrate more on “errors” than in describing the features that are peculiar to the variety (see Turay 2010).

The present global spread of the English language and the linguistic place it occupies and enjoys is far above the objective of this study and far beyond not only one’s imagination but also outside one’s possibility to address. Even within Sierra Leone, it is impossible to handle a study of the English language from a global national perspective, but rather one directed at a particular region within the country. As such, this study is restricted to a particular area of interest, in this case, Freetown. Why Freetown?

This study seeks to provide sociohistorical facts about the English language in Sierra Leone within its West African context and beyond, facts which culminate not only with the history of Freetown with the evolution and development of Krio and West African English within the city’s ecology, but with English education in the country as a whole with a view on its current features, hence the roadmap metaphor of the title of the thesis.

Freetown was the first English using/speaking West African city to witness the introduction of western education and civilization (note the Church Missionary Society’s introduction of education and Christianity through Fourah Bay College in 1827, the Church Missionary Society Grammar School for Boys in 1845, the Annie Walsh Memorial Secondary School in 1849, among others), and is the economic, political, social, academic and cultural centre of Sierra Leone. Freetown also witnessed the exportation and diaspora of restructured varieties of the English language through Granville Sharp’s philanthropist move to (re)settle the Black Poor in London and consequently other people like them in the Americas to Freetown two hundred and twenty-eight years ago. This was not only

a salvation and civilising mission but was also meant “as a potential utopian frontier of the mind and soul: a new beginning, in which humanity could rectify its past sins” (Bledsoe 1992: 186). This new beginning, therefore, has direct links to the existence of the English language with its divergent dialects in its new ecology in Freetown, the ‘Province of Freedom’. This historical society and its linguistic property, English, has attracted some language enthusiasts (Spencer ed. 1971; Jones 1971; Holm 1988/89; Fyfe ed. 1991; Montgomery 1999; Huber 1999, 2004). The linguistic diversity of the settlers’ Englishes and their co-existence with speakers of other (African) languages should be of interest to the (socio)linguist interested in the current state of the language since we can only fully understand the present if we look into the past using magnifying lenses. A survey of the English language in pre-colonial and colonial Freetown will thus serve as a representation of the linguistic history of Sierra Leone and what has happened linguistically not only to English and Krio, but to all the other languages spoken in Sierra Leone.

Regarding the object of the study, Sierra Leone English, we observe that the linguistic community under examination, Freetown, presents a perfect example of the spread of European languages in the world and the ensuing indigenisation that they have been made to undergo. This is due mainly to the fact that European languages came into contact with indigenous languages in these countries and their cities, and, were subsequently (re)shaped according to the linguistic experience of the people that use them as second and official languages and based on the linguistic ecology in which they are spoken. Therefore, apart from the history of Sierra Leone English, which began in eighteenth-century Freetown, or even before that, and even at present, Freetown, as a city, should be of interest to the linguist since

cities have usually been contact settings, where individuals of different ethnolinguistic backgrounds have migrated either from rural areas or from other cities, typically in search of better economic opportunities. It is probably around them that one can most easily defend the hypothesis that, due to complex webs of interconnectedness and interdependence among residents and among the industries in which they (hope to) function, globalization *cum* glocalization is homogenizing places culturally, hence linguistically (Mufwene 2010:34).

In recognition of the above and of the importance of Freetown from both a sociohistorical and ecological perspective, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

- 1) What types of English did the Settlers bring to Freetown?
- 2) What role did Freetown play to the birth of West African English and the English lexified Pidgin and Creole languages in West Africa and beyond?
- 3) What language policies have been implemented so far with regards language and education?
- 4) What peculiar features does Sierra Leone English have which makes it either similar or different from other World or Postcolonial Englishes?

To answer these questions, this study has five interrelated objectives:

- a) a critical look at the people who were settled in Freetown as they co-existed with one another and with the indigenes of the Settlement;
- b) the structure of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Freetown society in relation to the people and their use of language;
- c) an analysis of the varieties of the English language brought and used by the Freetown Settlers taking the other languages spoken in Freetown into account;
- d) the role of the Freetown settlement and Sierra Leoneans to the birth, development and spread of not only West African English but also English lexified Pidgin and Creole languages in West Africa and beyond; and,
- e) a cursory look at some of the phonological and structural features of present-day Sierra Leone English (SLE henceforth) as we juxtapose these features to the Nova Scotian Variety and other Englishes today in (West) Africa and beyond.

Whereas objectives a) – d) above seek to elucidate on the sociohistorical aspect of the English language in Freetown, e) looks for answers with regard to the linguistic features that are peculiar to Sierra Leone English. This is further juxtaposed with the status that English enjoys as the language of education in the country. In order to obtain the desired results in, especially 4) and e), we collected data through audio recorded interviews in Freetown, the capital city of Sierra Leone. This study is, therefore, a sociohistorical and (socio-)linguistic appraisal of

eighteenth and nineteenth-century Freetown English looking at the history of the settlement vis-à-vis the people and the society with the aim of determining whether features of present-day Sierra Leone English in Freetown can be (a) traced to the Nova Scotian variety, and (b) compared with other (West) African varieties.

1.4. The structure of the thesis

Considering the scope and objectives of the study, there are seven chapters, including this introduction and the conclusions.

Chapter two examines the English language from a global perspective and considers the different nomenclatures as responding to the varied ecological nature of the countries where English is used. Then there is a revision of the characteristics of English as a Native Language (ENL) as compared to English as a Second Language (ESL). As its title implies, “On English in West Africa: state of the art”, the chapter takes the reader through a journey of the different studies on the English language in the five English speaking West African countries and Cameroon. The latter was included because Krio was exported from Freetown to many countries, including Cameroon. Our findings suggest that more needs to be done with regard to studies on SLE. A detailed description of the language is yet to be undertaken both in and out of Sierra Leone.

In chapter three, “Framework for describing Sierra Leone English”, state-of-the-art concepts and theories related to the study are discussed and put into perspective. These include: sociolinguistics, contact linguistics, language contact, interference and interlanguage phenomena; issues about World Englishes and Postcolonial Englishes are equally discussed in detail. Mufwene’s (2001, 2013, 2014, 2015) concept of “ecology of languages”, introduced in chapter two, is expanded and Schneider’s (2007) “Dynamic Model” concludes the chapter as we put into perspective the historical development of SLE.

In chapter four, “A sociolinguistic history of Freetown”, the metaphorical roadmap of the study begins. A description of the linguistic history of SLE starts by looking at the general Sierra Leonean Linguistic Landscape; then the history of the English language in Freetown is discussed looking at the different processes and events that brought English to Sierra Leone; the Freetown

Settlement is then studied with a focus on the (socio)linguistic situation that obtained in the settlement and this is followed by an overview of colonisation and the diffusion of evangelism which saw the establishment of Fourah Bay College as a theological institution. Section 4.4 discusses eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Freetown English as we look at the demographic and sociolinguistic situation of the settlement with a focus on the Nova Scotian Settlers. Their restructured variety of English found in letters compiled by Fyfe (ed.1991) has been variously studied and analysed (Montgomery 1999; Huber 2004, among others). The features of this variety is discussed in subsection 4.4.2.

Chapter five discusses the issue of language and education in Sierra Leone. A historical overview of the introduction of Western education introduces the chapter and continues with English as a minority language in the colonial period. A historical appraisal of the languages of education follows with the conclusion on the current languages-in-education in Sierra Leone.

In chapter six, we discuss a selection of current phonological and structural features of SLE. The chapter opens with a discussion on the causes and processes of language indeginisation as discussed in Mufwene (2001, 2015) and Schneider (2007). We also discuss the methodology of data collection and rationale for our methodology. For the description of the features, we follow Wells (1982) and Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008). Our findings are juxtaposed with studies of other (West) African varieties of English (for example, Ebot 1999; Huber and Dako 2004; Huber 2008)

The final chapter discusses our findings and prospects for the future.

1.5. Data sources and data collection methodology

Considering the nature of the study, providing sociohistorical facts regarding the evolution and development of Sierra Leone English, the author initially has revised literature about the object of the study before embarking on the linguistic fieldwork. Given the fact that a major part of the thesis deals with bibliography, the author decided to embark on spoken data, for both the phonological and structural features, from educated speakers of English in Sierra Leone, especially public and political stakeholders – Ministers, Members of Parliament, Ministers of

Religion, among others. Considering distance and other constraints, the author watched and listened to speeches in English by Sierra Leoneans posted on YouTube as a way to interpret and analyse phonological tendencies and structural features. Being a native of Sierra Leone, the author had no problem in identifying the features. The YouTube Videos constitute the secondary corpus.

For the main corpus, a two weeks fieldwork was done in Freetown in December 2011. Informants were randomly selected after explaining to them the object of the study. A total of twenty-five informants were interviewed using a digital audio recorder, but due to background noise and poor quality of the recordings, we analyse only a group of nine men and eight women, seventeen in total. Each interview lasted for about fifteen to twenty minutes. The informants come from different ethnolinguistic backgrounds and live in different areas of Freetown although the interviews were recorded on Fourah Bay College Campus and at the Hotel where the author resided during the fieldwork. Their ages range from seventeen to around sixty and are postsecondary graduates – first year to final year students at the University of Sierra Leone, Fourah Bay College and Institute of Public Administration and Management (IPAM), graduates and staff of the university.

Two tables are provided in chapter six showing sociolinguistic information about our informants including those that form the secondary corpus. Although we do not correlate all the linguistic features with the social variables of the informants, they have provided valuable information for certain features and the sociolinguistic variables may constitute the aim of another study on SLE. The identities of our informants are coded. We classify our informants as basilect, lower mesolect, upper mesolect, lower acrolect and upper acrolect users of SLE due to the fact we are dealing with L2 users of English and not native speakers where classifications such as basilect, mesolect and acrolect might make more sense.

Chapter 2

On English in West Africa: state of the art

If West Africa is a significant growing point of the English language today, the factors which cause and direct this growth must be made clear. It is therefore as important to understand the functions of English in West Africa, the roles it plays, and the contacts it has with other languages in the lives of those who use it, as it is to enumerate and classify the particular lexical or syntactical or phonetic characteristics which it displays in the various speech communities of the area (Spencer 1971: viii).

2.0. Introduction

As the above quote states, the ‘growth’ of the English language in the English-using West African countries should be seen primarily as a product of the social and linguistic complexity that the area displays. These factors, both social and linguistic, ‘must be made clear’, first and foremost, from a sociohistorical and ecological perspective (see Jones 1971; Holm 1988/89; Huber 1999; Mufwene 2001; Schneider 2007). Then a survey and a classification of the linguistic peculiarities of the English language in each speech community as explained in the above excerpt should follow. This will show the “use of English for educational, administrative and many other official and unofficial purposes, against a background of extreme multilingualism” in indigenous languages, therefore making the English language “relatively at home” in West Africa (Spencer 1971: 1-2).

While a large proportion of the inhabitants in Anglophone West Africa cannot be said to be adequately fluent in English, some can be said to be reasonably at ease with the spoken language, and some others are indeed very comfortable with the language as their use of English in different scientific and literary fields has caught the admiration of the wider English-reading world (Spencer 1971: 2). As a matter of fact, therefore,

English in West Africa cannot thus be seen as a temporarily borrowed language. On the contrary, it is by now part of the linguistic property of those who use it, and if it is not a mother tongue it is not thereby a foreign

language. For in as much as it is widely used, it is often used with a creativity and ebullience which must spring from a confident sense of ownership (Spencer 1971: 2).

However, one must also consider this fact vis-à-vis the multilingualism that the area is well known for (Lüpke 2010: 2) taking into account the speaker and the number of languages s/he uses ('mother tongue', 'first' and 'second language'). West Africans' confident ownership of the English language as their linguistic property (Spencer 1971: 2 cited above), together with Achebe's proposal of an ecologically altered English carrying the burden of the African experience but still comprehensible to its original owners (Achebe [1965] 1997: 349), forms part of the central argument in defence of the thesis that the English spoken and used in West Africa is not only a reflection of the new surroundings to which the language was exported but it is also the linguistic manifestation of the creativity of its new owners. Hence, the English of West Africans explains how the West African ecology is able to shape a new language variety.

Mufwene (2013: 302) observes that the concept of ecology was "originally developed by biologists to account for the vitality of organisms and species in their natural habitat" and this concept has now been extended by linguists "to explain the fates of languages in their social environment". Hence, the ecology of language is a concept which sees languages as species which have lives since

we can account for the birth, vitality, and death of languages adequately only if we also conceive of them as species, albeit of the viral kind, whose existence depends on the interactional practices of their speakers, who are both their creators and their hosts (Mufwene 2013: 303).

Essentially, just as ecology is seen to be the driving force behind biological evolution, "languages also evolve at the mercy of the socio-economic ecologies in which they are embedded" and the geographical ecologies which facilitate them (Mufwene 2013: 310) with the individual speaker at the centre of the whole process within his/her socio-cultural and linguistic milieu.

The significance of the languages as species metaphor should be seen from the point of view of "variation within a language as an extrapolation from what is otherwise a population of idiolects spoken by individuals communicating with

each other” (Mufwene 2013: 303). Since languages have no agency, speakers become the most important external ecological factor as they act upon languages through their communicative activities within the settings in which these languages exist. In multilingual contexts, speakers decide the advantage of using one language as against (an)other(s) in their communicative activities and hence ensure language vitality (Mufwene 2013: 304). Vitality, in this context, is facilitated “by population contact, the traditional prerequisite for language co-existence, thus a situation of language contact, and often of language competition” (Mufwene 2013: 304). Language competition is prompted by the choices that speakers make in situations where there are competing languages, especially in Africa where European languages are used as *lingua francas* among the elites and are seen to be more effective instruments in the restricted domains established by the erstwhile colonial system (in education, the judiciary system, public administration, to name a few), and seldom in the traditional part of their societies (Mufwene 2013: 306). Language selection then becomes the way through which language competition is resolved (Mufwene 2013: 306). For Mufwene, “the selection process need not be conscious, as speakers typically focus on communicating in ways that are beneficial to them” even if their selection mean only to be understood or even if this may affect the future of their language (Mufwene 2013: 306-7). Competition and selection, therefore, becomes the procedure through which variants compete and become selected “under particular ecological conditions” as the whole process “involves competition between alternatives A and B, with A or B prevailing because it was favored by particular ecological factors” (Mufwene 2014: 14).

This whole issue of the ecology of language places an important premium on the individual speaker and the population of speakers as important ecological factors. Mufwene (2013), in considering the speaker’s role in the ecology of language, maintains that

one cannot claim to approach language dynamics and evolution ecologically without factoring the SPEAKER as the most direct external ecological factor to language, as he/she contributes variation to the emergent, ever-evolving language and participates in: 1) the spread or elimination of variants through the selections he/she make (*sic*) from among the competing variants (be they

languages or linguistic features), 2) the emergence of new norms, and 3) sometimes the emergence of new varieties. Speakers operate within specific population structures, which constrain who they can(not) interact regularly with, and when they can(not) accommodate the practices of other speakers and thereby converge with or diverge from them (Mufwene 2013: 311).

From the above perspective, we can say that the speaker, given his/her role within the linguistic community, is responsible for the dissemination or eradication of variants, the creation of novel linguistic norms and/or new language varieties. Therefore, we can only approach the structure of the community of speakers, the linguistic community, through the individual speaker. Without the individual speaker, it will be impossible to understand “the complex dynamics of inter-individual and inter-group interactions” (Mufwene 2013: 312). It is through speakers that we come to terms with networks and communities of practice (Mufwene 2013: 312). Individual speakers, thus, become the agents of change as “they roll the dice of language evolution through their interactional and communicative practice” (Mufwene 2013: 315; see also Mufwene 2001). Essentially, therefore,

within the limits of his/her competence, a speaker is a dynamic agent that adapts his/her linguistic behavior to varying communicative interactions, always adjusting to current ecological pressures as lived in the present. In the final analysis, one must realize that although speakers reflect the history of their language(s) and their own personal interactional histories, they shape the ongoing history of their language(s) through how they use it on different occasions to meet their respective communicative needs (Mufwene 2013: 324).

As such, the role of the individual speaker should not be downplayed within the context of the ecology of language. On this note, the individual speaker/user of SLE, should be seen as a reflection of the history of the English language in Sierra Leone and of his/her personal linguistic history of the variety as he/she presently contributes to shaping the variety within the Sierra Leonean ecology.

Another important aspect with regards the concept of the ecology of language has to do with the fact that ecological conditions are determiners to language varieties. Mufwene (2014: 21) frames it this way: “every language variety has emerged locally in response to local ecological conditions”. Hence, we

can say that language varieties owe their existence to the societies where they are used. They are shaped and developed as a result of the exigencies of the environment in which they are used. This does not imply that we cannot trace an ancestor to that particular variety out of the community in which they are used (see Mufwene 2014: 21). Taking this into account, it becomes relevant for us to submit that, even though we can trace SLE to the parent English language, the English of Sierra Leoneans born and raised in Sierra Leone should be seen as a local variety which is a product of the country's ecological conditions namely, the climate, soil, its fauna and flora, their linguistic habits coupled with the socio-economic, -cultural, -political realities of its speakers given its specific and peculiar population structure. SLE should not be seen from a different light; it falls within the context of indigenised Englishes (see Mufwene 2015).

In order to understand why English has become part of the linguistic repertoire of the Sierra Leoneans who use it and has thus become one of the indigenous languages of the country, this study departs from Mufwene's conception of "colonization", "indigenization" and "differential evolution", on the one hand, and, on the other hand, from the particular reality of Sierra Leone, that is, the (re)settlement of freed slaves with their restructured Englishes in Freetown and the consequent relocation of a few English men to Sierra Leone and the subsequent colonisation of Sierra Leone.

Considering the fact that it is acquired differently from places where it is acquired as a native language, the indigenisation process thus explains that it is being appropriated to express realities different from where it is spoken as a native language. SLE is, therefore, manifesting exigencies of its new ecology and can be explained ecologically just as other English varieties (see Mufwene 2015: 17; see also Mufwene 2001, 2009). We will take up this issue again in chapters three and four.

Before presenting a thorough review of studies about the English language in West Africa, it seems necessary to reconsider the status of the language in a wider context: the global spread of the English language.

2.1. The English language in its global perspective

The English language is the most widely used and the most important means of communication of our times. According to Morrison (2002 cited in David Doms 2003: 2) “just as Latin steamrollered its way across Europe 2,000 years ago, crushing dozens of other languages, English has become the lingua franca of our times”. While Latin forced its way across Europe and replaced other languages (and, equally so, gave rise to the birth of the Romance languages and had a major influence on others), the impact of the English language has similarly been felt worldwide from London and Sydney to the remotest villages in Asia, Europe, Africa and Latin America, with its diverse varieties and the numerous Atlantic and Pacific English-based pidgin and creole languages, as well as its current influence on other languages. English is used in almost every undertaking of the international community and is very influential in politics, sports, trade and business, the media, air and sea travel networks. It is the language of major academic centres and the books and conferences they produce, the most widely used language in computers and the internet, to name only a few areas of the global use of English. This linguistic and cultural influence of the English language has been viewed from different perspectives.

Some scholars are particularly wary of the widespread use of English and consider the language to be a tool of imperialism. For Phillipson, “what is at stake when English spreads is not merely the substitution or displacement of one language by another ... [it is] English linguistic imperialism (Phillipson 1992 cited in Doms 2003: 1). Many other researchers like Crystal (1997) and Wardhaugh (1998) (also cited in Doms 2003) consider English democratic and neutral. Wardhaugh notes that “since no cultural requirements are tied to the learning of English, [...] English belongs to everyone or to no one, or at least is quite often regarded as having this property” (Doms 2003: 1).

Schneider (2003; 2007) refers to both the indispensability of English and the role it is playing in displacing many of the world’s languages with regard to the current global spread of the language and its “transnational functions” and

“extralinguistic roles”:

On the one hand, English is the world’s leading language, the main vehicle of international communication, and in that role it is an essential, indeed an indispensable tool for international economy, diplomacy, sciences, the media, and also individual interactions across language boundaries. On the other hand it has been damned as a ‘killer language’, responsible for the extinction of innumerable indigenous languages, dialects, and cultures around the globe (Schneider 2003: 233).

Within its present role as both a vital international means of communication on the one hand and a ‘killer language’ on the other, we should also take into consideration the roots English is growing and developing

in a great many countries and communities around the world, being appropriated by local speakers, and in that process it is diversifying and developing new dialects – a process which ... is determined by general sociolinguistic principles and characterized by a significant set of common traits across its input contact languages and cultures (Schneider 2003: 233-234).

It is this dynamic nature of the English language: “the sea which receives tributaries from every region under heaven” (Emerson cited in Delisle and Wordsworth (eds.) 1995: 26), its appropriation by other speakers and the new dialects it is developing from the input of other languages and cultures that is the principal focus of this study: how much influence the languages and culture of Sierra Leone have exerted on the English used by Sierra Leoneans. Equally worth mentioning regarding the diversification and birth of new dialects are the varying differences between the parent “British English” and the settler Englishes in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and a few other varieties. Still, it is due to its varying nature as an international language that Kachru (1996) developed the model of three concentric circles of English: the Inner-Circle (*norm-providing*) comprising the UK/GB, USA, Australia, Canada, to name only a few (countries where English is acquired and spoken as a first/native language); the Outer-Circle (*norm-developing*), comprising former British colonies in Asia, Africa and the Caribbean area where English is acquired/learned and used/spoken as a second/additional language or as a second dialect and is the official language of administration and education, and, the

Expanding-Circle (*norm-dependent*) comprising European and Latin American as well as African Countries (where Arabic, French, German, Dutch, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, etc., are used as mother-tongues or as official languages: countries where English is learned and used/spoken and studied as a second or foreign language). Kachru's three circles essentially demonstrate how English spreads to each circle, how it is acquired and what role(s) it play(s) in the lives of those who use it within their cultural settings (Lim 2009: 180). The Inner Circle English simply means it is not only the dominant language in these territories, but also the heritage language of the majority of the population in those territories (Mufwene 2015: 9). In the Outer Circle, irrespective of the fact that English does not seem to have a foreign language identity as it is part of the linguistic landscape in these territories and also given importance as the official language of state, of education, and the legal system, it is not "a heritage language for the indigenous population" (Mufwene 2015: 10). In the Expanding Circle, English functions as a foreign language and is less used internally except for professional, scientific, diplomatic and business purposes. Sierra Leone like other ex-colonies of Great Britain in (West) Africa, according to Kachru's circles of English, belongs to the Outer Circle and hence English adds up to the linguistic diversity of the country

Despite the cultural and linguistic diversity of the continent, "the typical African country lacks both an indigenous nationwide language of communication and a language policy that proposes the development and implementation of such a language" (Bokamba 1992: 125). Most African countries still maintain the languages of their former European colonisers (English, French, Spanish and Portuguese) as their sole official administrative, educational, legal, business and diplomatic languages long after independence (with the exception of South Africa). Due to this seeming lack of a real common language in many sub-Saharan African countries (with the exception of Cape Verde and São Tome e Principe and their unique linguistic situation of colonisation), most African nations are still clinging to the European languages as languages that ensure national unity and cohesion, and as such deny any of the indigenous languages the role of official or co-official state language. This political and cultural decision

has brought “very interesting sociolinguistic phenomena, e.g., structural changes in the European and African languages involved and continued debates on the Africanization of education and the language of instruction” (Bokamba 1992: 125) owing to the linguistic diversity of the typical African country. These changes that are taking place on both sides (the mutual influence taking place between the European languages on the one hand and the African languages on the other) in the former European colonies in Africa has led to the branding of the English used by Africans as African English. While there is no such variety known as African English (East, West or Southern African English) yet, when people (no matter the level of education) from the regions mentioned speak English, “native speakers have no difficulty identifying the accent as African” (Bokamba 1992: 126; see also Schneider 2007: 72). And still, considering the fact that such speakers come from varying cultural and linguistic backgrounds, one would be tempted, after careful research, to say there is every possibility that the non-native varieties of English used in the different West African countries have crystallised into Cameroon English, Nigeria English, Gambia English, Ghanaian English and most recently Sierra Leone English. On the same note, since these Englishes reflect linguistic features typical of the African country in question, we might also be tempted to say there is a variety of English known as African English if one pays careful attention to, and compares, the phonological, morphological, semantic and syntactic levels of the English language spoken or used on the continent, especially so when we consider the conditions under which the language is acquired in Africa “which is not a unique phenomenon but a common development to be expected, given the milieu in which English is taught and spoken as a foreign language in Africa” (Bokamba 1992: 140).

What seems to be of relevance here is not only the acquisition of English as a foreign or second language, official or additional language, but the fact that, with the exportation of English to other regions of the world and more especially to Africa, the language had to go through indigenisation, contextualisation and nativisation processes. This simply means that “English is adapted to local or regional linguistic conditions, and thereby deviates systematically from the standard dialect” (Bokamba 1992: 140). What’s more, when we examine the

users (particularly writers) or speakers of English in Africa, we observe that the language is used to transmit African culture(s) or to talk about African social, political, economic and other related realities. These lay the foundation for the Africanisation of not only English, but other European languages as well. The use of these languages to transmit African thoughts can be seen as having made the English language, in particular, and its different varieties to undergo “L1, or mother tongue interference, and analogical derivation based on English” (Bokamba 1992: 139).

We have to observe what happens when people from different linguistic backgrounds live together within a particular society and the resulting consequences on their languages. English was exported to Africa and thus came in contact with the indigenous languages of Africa and thereby ensuring that none of the linguistic exclusiveness of the speakers of the languages that came in contact holds as it were. Whenever languages are in contact, the speakers of the various languages that are said to be in contact with each other in a particular linguistic community can influence one another linguistically (Weinreich 1968; Thomason and Kaufman 1988; Milroy 1992; Romaine 1994; González Cruz 1995; Holm 2004). Naturally, languages do not, of their own volition, come together; it is the speakers of the different languages within a given geographical location through their extra linguistic activities and their attitudes towards the language(s) of the other members of the society that are in a situation of contact and the effect these contacts have on the different languages within that society or community is what has been labelled contact linguistics or languages in contact.

Apart from the mother tongue influence and the analogical derivations, imperfect acquisition of English has been considered as an equally important phenomenon with regard to the non-native varieties of the English language, particularly in Third World countries. However, Kachru's (1976) response to Prator's "The British heresy in TESL" in Fishman *et al* (1968: 459-76) is a reaction to Prator being linguistically intolerant to the non-native varieties of English which he describes as "a tongue caught up in a process that tends to transform it swiftly and quite predictably into an utterly dissimilar tongue" (Prator 1968: 464, cited in Bamgbose 1992: 158). Kachru observes that Prator committed

“seven attitudinal sins”, which include:

- (1) the sin of ethnocentrism;
- (2) the sin of wrong perception about language attitudes on the two sides of the Atlantic;
- (3) the sin of not recognising the non-native varieties of English as culture-bound codes of communication;
- (4) the sin of ignoring the systematicity of the non-native varieties of English;
- (5) the sin of ignoring linguistic interference and language dynamics;
- (6) the sin of overlooking the “cline of Englishness” in language intelligibility and
- (7) the sin of exhibiting language colonialism.

For Kachru these non-native varieties or these “imperfect Englishes” should be of “linguistic, cultural, pedagogical and sociolinguistic interest” (1976: 221). Kachru further states that in Third World countries

the English language is not taught as a vehicle to introduce British or American culture. In these countries, English is used to teach and maintain the indigenous patterns of life and culture, to provide a link in culturally and linguistically pluralistic societies, and to maintain a continuity and uniformity in educational, administrative and legal systems (Kachru 1976: 225).

Kachru characterizes four reasons “why the non-native varieties of English deviate at the phonological, grammatical and lexical levels” (1976: 226): (1) substratum influence; (2) cultural influence; (3) the resistance of the speaker to the impact of the linguistic change in the new language, and (4) attaching more importance to the written form of the language than to the oral form in the colonial educational system.

However, some non-native speakers of English have still not come to terms with the issues around second language acquisition and therefore advocate aiming at only the best native-speaker, performance level in the teaching and learning of English as opposed to these ‘deviant’ or non-standard forms of Englishes in Third World countries. They seem to turn a blind eye to or are characteristically not *au fait* with the linguistic and cultural realities that are caused by the indigenisation (or the linguistic deviations) of English and other

European languages, especially in Africa.

Therefore, the development of English both as a national language for England (see Delisle and Wordsworth (eds.) 1995) and as an international language today can be attributed to its accepting other languages and cultures for its linguistic and cultural enrichment.

2.2. English as a Second Language (ESL) as opposed to English as a Native Language (ENL)

The global spread of the English language has given rise to different nomenclatures in terms of its uses and functions in different societies: English as a Native Language (ENL), English as a Second Language (ESL), English as a Second Dialect (ESD), English as a Foreign Language (EFL), English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), English as an International Language (EIL) and even intra-Regional Standard English (RSE) (see Görlach 1998; Jenkins 2003; Berns *et al* 2009). In essence, the different classifications coincide with the variations and changes the language has been made to undergo from the parent British English in its different ecologies, especially in the ENL and ESL settings. These divergences are both social and linguistic. Both factors ensure notions of adaptability and functional use and hence

The functional range and the norms of correctness are the essential criteria for a classification of societies as employing English as a native language (ENL), as a second language (ESL), as a second dialect (ESD) and as a foreign language (EFL), so named according to the use they make of the English language (Görlach 1998: 19).

Each of these societal cum linguistic distinctions, including English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), as an International Language (EIL) and as intra-Regional Standard English (RSE) has typical linguistic features. Looking at all the individual varieties of the English language would be a demanding task. We, therefore, consider only the ENL and ESL varieties.

A clear understanding of the peculiar characteristics of the settler varieties (American, Australian, New Zealand: countries where English is spoken as a native language) and second-language varieties of English in Asia and Africa (ex-

British colonies where English is the official state language and/or one of the (regional) languages of instruction) is very necessary. From a sociohistorical perspective, the ENL varieties came into existence from the ‘settler communities’ implanted in the United States of America, Australia and New Zealand; hence the upsurge and development of “phonological change”, lexical and other types of linguistic embellishments from “interdialectal contact” with other native speakers in the new settlements (Spencer 1971: 3; Görlach 1998: 21, 23). Their types of English are characterised by ‘innovation’ and inherited at home from older family members.

On the contrary, the Second Language varieties of English (in West Africa, for example) came into existence through cultural and linguistic accommodation and as an auxiliary to the many indigenous mother tongues (Spencer 1971: 3). As such, the ESL varieties

are likely to be characterized by interference phenomena and overgeneralization and therefore exhibit innovation (of different types), unless these local features are criticized as deviations when compared with an external standard, say the educated speech of the South of England (Görlach 1998: 21).

These interferences can be seen from the fact that “social mixing between Englishmen and Africans was not very widespread during the colonial period” (Spencer 1971: 5-6) and English could not take the place of the home and community languages as the language was and still is “only part of the total linguistic activity of a typical educated urban West African” (Spencer 1971: 6). Görlach (1998) buttresses this different kind of innovation in the ESL communities by stating that it

largely depends on the new social set-ups and communication needs the English language has to serve, and given the extralinguistic determinants of the new situation, the types of innovation in a particular New English are, to a limited extent, predictable (Görlach 1998: 21-22).

While linguistic changes, particularly the phonological ones, in the ENL societies are due to interdialectal contact, and hence are caused by external factors, phonological changes in the ESL countries can be considered internal:

The pronunciation of ESL or pidgin/creole speakers was often affected by the phonological system of their native languages, most notably where these had only a very limited set of vowel contrasts, say five or six (normally not including vowel length as a distinctive factor). Often the major problems are in intonation, with syllable-timing rather than stress-timing (Görlach 1998: 24).

Characteristically, speakers of ESL consist mostly of people from ex-British colonies in Africa and Asia (Sierra Leone, Nigeria, India, Singapore, Ghana, Kenya, Botswana, etc.). The following are some of the most prominent characteristics of English in ESL contexts (see Spencer 1971, Görlach 1998):

1. The ESL varieties of English came into existence through cultural and linguistic ‘assimilation’ then, as an auxiliary to the many indigenous mother tongues and later as a ‘separate development’.
2. Those who use/speak ESL constitute a minority (especially in Africa), most of them are educated, with varying individual phonological divergences and competences.
3. English is restricted to the law, media, administration, education (sometimes excluding the first stage of primary school), religion, among other official uses: hence it is an institutional rather than a domestic language.
4. It is acquired through training (in school) mostly influenced and dominated by literary (from Shakespeare to Dickens) and religious nuances/register (the Bible).
5. Its use outside the mode and the environment of acquisition causes “register misuse” and other types of “unusual mixes”.
6. It is characterized by the lack of native speakers. The language is acquired through non-native teachers in a school setting (instrumental as against the integrative mode of acquisition) and hence deviates from standard pronunciation.

Considering the above characteristics which set the ESL varieties as distinct from the parent British English and those of the ENL varieties (due to the peculiar nature of their societies from a sociolinguistic perspective, the new needs for the use of the English language and the previous linguistic experience of the

speakers), an analysis of the status of the English language in West Africa follows.

2.3. The Status of English as a Second Language (ESL) in West Africa

While English is the most important language for most regions of the world in the current era of globalisation and information technology, English played three important roles in West Africa even before, during and after colonialism. It was and continues to be the language of “salvation, civilization and worldly success” (Spencer 1971: 13). As reported by a Church Missionary Society missionary in London, English was referred to as a “language which seems of itself to raise the person who is acquainted with it in the scale of civilization” (Ajayi cited in Spencer 1971: 13-14). Spencer also notes:

It is normally through English that an individual breaks the bonds of West African traditional life and enters into some kind of relationship with the westernized sectors of society. Through English he obtains the education which is the road to the kind of success which awaits him beyond the village or the tribe. Through English of one kind or another he communicates with fellow citizens from language groups other than his own, or with foreigners. English is the language of institutions implanted by colonialism ... for the majority of adult English-using West Africans today, English is primarily the language of the westernized areas of their lives, an institutional rather than a domestic tongue (Spencer 1971: 4).

While the above is still considered valid, we must also note issues of language contact, language change and individual multilingual tendencies that the region presents:

Contemporary West Africa is characterized by extensive societal multilingualism going hand in hand with cultural hybridity. This situation type is characterized by a complex interaction between two or more languages in an individual's brain as well as in an entire society (Lüpke 2010: 1).

With reference to the region as a whole, the linguistic success of Britain as an empire led to the birth of a good number of pidgin and creole languages, namely

West African Pidgin English(es)³ and creole languages (Aku⁴, and, Krio) in the sub-region (Holm 1989). Present-day West African Pidgin English(es) in general and Nigerian Pidgin English in particular started in Sierra Leone and spread to other countries in West Africa “from the Gambia in the northwest to Cameroon in the southeast” with Sierra Leoneans shaping the development of West African English (Holm 1989: 406ff; see also Görlach 1996: 7). The spread of West African Pidgin Englishes and English-based creole languages and West African English in the region has been noted by various researchers. For Holm

Sierra Leoneans were particularly influential in shaping West African English as it developed in the nineteenth century. Their Krio spread as a second language not only to the nearby indigenous groups in Sierra Leone, but also throughout much of the rest of West Africa (Holm 1989: 411–412).

But for Mazrui, the influence of Sierra Leone and of Sierra Leoneans is more in the spread of the English language than of Krio, as their impact

came to be centred on Fourah Bay College, established in 1827 as virtually the first modern institution of higher learning in sub-Saharan Africa. Year after year the College sent out Africans to propagate the Gospel and to spread liberal education in the English language in different parts of Western Africa (Mazrui 1975: 41-42 cited in Wolf 2001).

We can, therefore, note the existence of pidgin and creole languages in West Africa exported from Sierra Leone:

1. Aku in The Gambia, an offspring of Krio (with native speakers as well); exported to The Gambia by Sierra Leoneans).
2. Nigerian Pidgin English (different from Nigerian Standard English with a growing number of native users) believed to have been taken to Nigeria by Sierra Leonean missionaries among other non-native speakers of English.
3. Cameroon (Central Africa) Pidgin English (equally different from

³ West African Pidgin English refers to the English-based pidgins spoken in Cameroon (*Kamtok*, Cameroon Pidgin English), Ghanaian Pidgin English and Nigerian Pidgin English. Although these languages share many features, the use of the plural *Englishes* here points to the fact that to a great extent these languages are independent of each other.

⁴ Aku is an English-based creole spoken in the Gambia which is an off-spring of the Sierra Leonean Krio just as Pichi in Equatorial Guinea is a daughter language of Krio. Aku and Krio are said to differ only in lexical items, products of their different ecologies.

Cameroon English) imported from Sierra Leone by missionaries.

4. Pichi (an offspring creole language of Krio) in Equatorial Guinea (Central Africa) imported from Sierra Leone (see Yakpo 2009).

The transplantation of the English language and restructured Englishes (pidgin and creole languages) whether by Sierra Leoneans and other second language speakers of English or by the British themselves to other West African countries can be viewed from two interrelated perspectives associated to the acquisition of English:

1. the influence the indigenous languages and cultures of West Africa have exerted and are still exerting on the English language, that is, the nativisation or indigenisation of English ;
2. the influence the English language has exerted and is currently exerting on indigenous languages and culture(s) in West Africa, that is, the Anglicisation of (West) African languages.

Implicitly, there is reciprocal influence between English and the indigenous languages of West Africa (see Kirk-Greene 1971 and Ansre 1971 in Spencer (ed.) 1971). This is particularly evident in code-switching, loanwords, discourse strategies and phonological interferences which are easily identifiable in the teaching and learning of English in the English-using West African countries where English is not very much a foreign language as the sociolinguistic realities of these countries prove: English to many is a distant language irrespective of the fact that it is the official language and the language of instruction in the formal educational system. Equally important is the fact that in most, if not all, of these countries English co-exists with its lexified pidgin/creole language as the vehicular language (Krio in Sierra Leone; Pidgin English in Nigeria, Ghana and Cameroon⁵; Liberian⁶ Pidgin English; Aku in The Gambia is not so widely spoken as Wolof).

⁵ Cameroon English might be said to have three types of linguistic influences: the home, Pidgin and French languages (see Anchimbe 2006).

⁶ Liberian Pidgin English itself, like Sierra Leone Krio, is a variety of early AAVE that followed a parallel but distinct path of development. LPE becomes then the equivalent of Sierra Leone Krio, the linguistic outcome of the settlers brought from the US (for Liberia) and from England, the US, Nova Scotia, and the Recaptives captured on the high seas on their way to slavery (for Sierra Leone).

These non-native varieties of English, also known as “New Englishes”, therefore, fulfil the following conditions identified by Ajani (2007), citing Platt et al. (1984):

1. New Englishes must have been taught as a subject as well as used as a medium of instruction in places where languages other than English were the main languages;
2. New Englishes have developed in an area where a native variety of the EL was not the language spoken by most of the population;
3. New Englishes are used for a range of functions among those who speak or write it in the region where it is used;
4. New Englishes have become “localised” or “nativised” by adopting some language features of its own, such as sounds, intonation patterns, sentence structures, words and expressions. Usually it has also developed some different rules for using language in communication.

Apart from these conditions, Görlach (1998: 28) considers the following as characteristics of English as a Second Language:

1. its speakers develop a wide variety of individual competences due mainly to a limited number of people who speak English as a first language;
2. English is restricted to official domains (education, law, media, administration, etc.);
3. English has a limited area of input (administrative, literary, religious [biblical language]: these often lead to register misuse);
4. the main area of deviation is in pronunciation rather than in writing.

Thomason and Kaufman (1988) also consider other factors such as the time factor and “the integrative orientation” (and not “the instrumental”) in the acquisition of a new language in a situation of language contact:

If a whole population acquires a new language within possibly as little as a lifetime, therefore necessarily other than by parental or peer-group enculturation, the linguistic system which results may have massive interference from the structure(s) of the language(s) originally spoken by the group. If this population is not integrated into the group that provided it with a new language, this deviant form of speech may crystallize into a new language (Thomason and Kaufman 1988: 10).

Besides, regarding the role of the socio-cultural and cognitive aspect of a language and the people that use it, Marckwardt (1958) argues that

... [Language] is the product of the society which employs it, and as it is employed it is engaged in a continual process of re-creation. If this is the case, we may reasonably expect a language to reflect the culture, the folkways, the characteristic psychology of the people who use it (cited in Kachru 1976: 227).

Below is Bamgbose's argument (1992: 148) when commenting on Standard Nigerian English. He maintains that

it is generally known that in a language contact situation, particularly a close one where an exoglossic language becomes a second language with an official role in a country, the second language is bound to be influenced by its linguistic and cultural environment.

The integrative use of language, the socio-cultural and the psychological characteristics of language, and, the linguistic and cultural setting (the language ecology) in which a foreign language becomes a second language⁷ are closely related to the social nature of language that Holm (2004: 1) mentions: "language is a kind of social behavior, one of the many ways in which individuals interact with those around them". Therefore, the co-existence of the English language with other languages and cultures in the West African sub-region for over two centuries would have been linguistically, socio-culturally and rationally untenable if these languages and cultures had not been able to mould and to produce a new English still capable of performing its linguistic and cultural functions with the community from where it was exported and also within the new environment, and thus the (West/East/South) Africanisation of English. For this reason, Chinua Achebe observes that

the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. But it will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit its new African surroundings

⁷ Note the distinction between a foreign language and a second language by Christopherson (1960:131 cited in Bamgbose 1992:158). For Christopherson a foreign language is used for "absorbing the culture of another nation" and a second language is "an alternative way of expressing the culture of one's own".

(Achebe[1965] 1997: 349).

Bearing in mind (a) Achebe's "new English" capable to express his "African experience", (b) Holm's social interactional aspect of language, (c) Marckwardt's "language" as a product of the society that uses it, (d) Thomason's and Kaufman's time factor and the integrative orientation as against the instrumental in the acquisition of a new language in mind, and (e) the linguistic and cultural milieu that surrounds the English language in West Africa, we provide a brief overview of the five English using countries in the West African sub-region; four colonised by Britain (Nigeria, Ghana, the Gambia and Sierra Leone), and the other settled by Afro-Americans who joined forces with the indigenes to form a new nation (Liberia). Studies of the English language in Cameroon form part of this work not only because it has English as one of its official languages due to the fact that it was a joint mandate by Britain and France (after WWI), but because Sierra Leoneans contributed to the development of the Pidgin English spoken there. It is worth noting at this stage that we cannot provide a literature review of all that has been written on the English of the individual countries. We give only a cursory view in order to contextualise the position of SLE within the wide West African milieu.

2.3.1. Nigeria

Any serious study of the English language in any one of the English-using West African countries colonised by Britain can hardly ignore the ground-breaking book, *The English Language in West Africa*, edited by John Spencer (1971). Individual findings in this book are still evident in West Africa as a whole and in the respective English-speaking countries in the sub-region. Therefore, Bamgbose's seminal article "The English Language in Nigeria" in Spencer (1971: 35-48) will be the starting point in this overview of Nigerian English. This will be followed by a discussion of Kirk-Greene's "The Influence of West African Languages on English" also in Spencer (1971: 123-144).

Just as in other ex-British colonies in Asia and Africa, according to Bamgbose (1971: 35), the English language is the most significant heritage left in Nigeria by the colonial administration. Apart from all its other functions (in the

legal, educational, administrative, mass media, commerce and trade, literary and religious domains), the English language is used for both internal and external communication in Nigeria (ibid). Bearing in mind the multilingual nature of the country, coupled with the lack of an indigenous Nigerian language serving as a national vehicular language without any ethnic, social and political connotations, educated Nigerians turn to the English language as “the only effective medium of communication between Nigerians from different linguistic backgrounds” (Bamgbose 1971: 36), a function which none of the three main regional languages, Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo can perform. The EL is equally an important linguistic instrument “in the social life of educated Nigerians” (ibid). Thus, the use of English by Nigerians can be accounted for (a) the absence of a common ethnic or regional language, (b) the use of the written mode of communication, (c) the formality of the situation, and/or (d) the technicality of the topic under discussion (Bamgbose 1971: 44-45). The indigenous languages are reduced to informal types of communication. The language that comes close to the English language “as a medium of social communication” (Bamgbose 1971: 36) in terms of widespread use above the regional and ethnic languages is Nigerian Pidgin English. Note that the latter is considered not only as a ‘*patois*’ with all belittling linguistic undertones but also as a sub-standard variety of Standard English (see Grieve 1964). In view of that and considering the fact that English is the language of instruction from the third class in the primary school up to university and hence acquired mostly in school as a second or as an additional language as well as the fact that it is in contact with Nigerian languages, “it is to be expected that the kinds of English found will be different from the varieties of English spoken in countries where English is a mother tongue” (Bamgbose 1971: 39). Citing Grieve (1964) who distinguishes the different varieties of English in Nigeria “ranging from something very near standard English to the patois of the market place” (Grieve 1964 cited in Bamgbose 1971: 39), Bamgbose notes the difficulty in establishing what is to be accepted as ‘standard Nigerian English’ and what is to be rejected as ‘sub-standard’ (Bamgbose 1971: 39). For Bamgbose, while the English of some writers like Amos Tutuola and the Onitsha market fiction writers in Nigeria may be considered as not standard enough (though their fictions are

considered classics in their own right), some others like Achebe demonstrate the contrary. As such, Nigerians' use of English carries with it a mark of educational accomplishment: the more educated one is the more standard his level of English is. Hence, the standard and sub-standard dichotomy in relation to the varieties of English in Nigeria:

Between the two extremes, there are various admixtures – sometimes close to the Onitsha market fiction variety and sometimes nearer to the more standard type of English. The newspapers provide excellent samples of the various kinds (Bamgbose 1971: 41).

Regarding spoken English, Bamgbose (1971: 41) points out two basic problems: intelligibility and acceptability. Since English in Nigeria is an acquired language, learned in the classroom and used in institutional contexts, the spoken variety will thus differ from other varieties of English, such as British Received Pronunciation and American Standard English. As such,

How much local variation can be allowed without reducing the ability of the Nigerian speaker of English to communicate effectively with speakers of English from other countries? What pronunciation model should teachers aim at? It is generally agreed that the aim is not to produce speakers of British Received Pronunciation (even if this were feasible!). ... Many Nigerians will consider as affected or even snobbish any Nigerian who speaks like a native speaker of English. It is also true to say that most Nigerians prefer a British accent to an American one. These are sociological factors which cannot be ignored in English language teaching and examining in Nigeria (Bamgbose 1971: 41-42).

While Received Pronunciation is not feasible and Nigerians will frown at any Nigerian who speaks with an accent other than one that is intelligible and acceptable to other Nigerians, the fact remains that in Nigerian English is mostly spoken the Nigerian way even if people generally try to write Standard English. That is, the use of English in Nigeria is the product of both its linguistic setting and the linguistic background of the speaker from a sociological and ecological perspective.

In this article, Bamgbose (1971: 42ff), gives examples of linguistic influences from the indigenous languages on the spoken English of Nigerians. He also focuses on lexico-semantic areas where some “lexical items have developed

special meanings in Nigerian usage” while others have been influenced by the indigenous languages (Bamgbose 1971: 43-44).

Despite the inferior social importance of the indigenous languages to that of English in the country, Nigeria is among the first countries in West Africa to officially heed the UNESCO call (1953 and reinforced in 2003) for the use of the indigenous languages in education. While the L1 is the language of instruction during the first two years of schooling when English is introduced as a subject, from the third year of primary school up to university level English is the language of instruction (Bamgbose 1971: 35, 45). At secondary level, four Nigerian languages (Efik, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba) are offered as optional disciplines (Bamgbose 1971: 45). Regarding the use of these languages, Bamgbose concludes

In view of the existence of many mother tongues in Nigeria, the English spoken and written in Nigeria is bound to be influenced by these languages; new features are bound to develop, and are in fact developing. In time, many of these features are likely to become stable and ultimately standardised, and a distinct variety of English, probably associated with a certain level of education, will then emerge (Bamgbose 1971: 48).

Can this be true after almost five decades of this proclamation? How does education shape one’s level of English? Consistent with the numerous articles proving the existence of Nigerian English (some of which are analysed below), one cannot but agree with Bamgbose and many other language researchers who have written extensively on issues around the English language in Nigeria demonstrating the Nigerianness of the English language in Nigeria. Most, if not all, have proven the fact that there is a Nigerian English born out of the co-existence of the English language with indigenous Nigerian languages, a variety not marred by mistakes and errors but a language associated with one’s level of education; one whose existence and authenticity is due mainly to the continuing use of the English language alongside indigenous Nigerian languages and hence taking up features from its linguistic surroundings. Enumerating and discussing all these articles and their findings in detail would be a tedious task. A brief analysis of some of these works follows.

Kirk-Greene’s (1971) article presents a two-dimensional model studying

the influence West African languages have had on the English language in the sub-region: a minor perspective and a major perspective.

Regarding the minor perspective, Kirk-Greene mentions “the trends and shifts in the English of native English speakers resident in West Africa” as well as “the modifying forces on English in its West African context” (Kirk-Greene 1971: 123) as topics worthy of study but on a minor scale focusing on the limited nature of the influence caused by the limited number of native speakers of English resident in West Africa then and now. The case of the English language in India is a point of reference involving the incorporation of Indian expressions and vocabulary into Standard English through Indian non-native speakers of English in various domains. Kirk-Greene studies the influence of West African languages on English examining the English of native speakers still resident in West Africa and those who have already returned to England. However, the number of “West Africanisms adopted into Standard English” is not very high as compared to, for example, the English of Eastern or Southern Africa and more especially of India due to the shorter time spans of British contact with Africans in West Africa. Kirk-Greene (1971: 124-126) puts forward certain reasons for the limited (or the almost inexistent) West African vocabulary in Standard English as compared to the situation in India:

1. The British Colonial Empire lasted for a shorter period in Africa than in India;
2. Indian culture and languages were very influential in teaching both the humanities and the sciences, unlike African languages, which are yet to be recognised as languages worthy of use as cultural and intellectual media;
3. The size of India is reflected in the number of languages in the country whereas in Africa up to today it is difficult to find one language spoken by over twenty million people in a single country;
4. The inexistence of retired colonial British people in West Africa who could have been West African cultural transmitters/couriers to Britain as compared to India;
5. The work of creative writers: whereas African users of French

(irrespective of the difference in the colonial policy of administration between the French and the English – the direct as against the indirect systems of rule respectively) have been able to supply typical African and Arabic vocabulary to French just as their Indian English counterparts did to the English language; creative writers from West African English-using countries have yet to do the same, and,

6. Military personnel serving outside their countries are known for the use of slang from languages of those countries where they are serving. Thus, British Army personnel serving in India were incorporated into the Indian Army and thus felt part and parcel of it, mainly because they had been stationed there “for years at a time” since 1857. However, British Army personnel who served in the different African armies did not feel that they were serving African nations but their own, especially between 1939 and 1945 when British Army personnel were stationed in West Africa to protect their colonial interests.

Considering these facts, Kirk-Greene (1971: 124) concludes that “the English vocabulary is the poorer for the fact that West Africa never left its mark on the English language in the way that India did”.

As regards the English of these native speakers of English, the aforementioned minor perspective concludes that West African languages have had little or no influence at all on it. The major perspective, on the other hand, “is the influence of West African languages on the English of those who are native speakers not of English but of one of the West African languages, to whom English is a second or even a third language” (Kirk-Greene 1971: 126).

This model, which Kirk-Greene considers significant in the study of the English language in West Africa, is the major focus of this study, that is, a study of the English of Sierra Leoneans who are native speakers not of the English language but of one or two indigenous Sierra Leonean languages. This study further explores how far these Sierra Leonean languages, especially Krio, have influenced the English language in Sierra Leone (see Jones 1971).

Considering the emergence of new varieties of English in the ex-British colonies in Africa and elsewhere, Kirk-Greene (1971) talks about new features

coming into the English language to the point that West African English has not only been recognised but has been given a place in the educational system in some English-using countries in the region: “with educated West African varieties of English being deliberately adopted as models for particular teaching circumstances in Ghana and Nigeria” (Kirk-Greene 1971: 126). Contrarily, some scholars are promoting and defending the teaching of Received Pronunciation in Ghana, for example, in order to ensure mutual comprehension and consequently mutual intelligibility (Kirk-Greene 1971: 126). Whether this is an effective teaching method in Second Language Acquisition (SLA henceforth) settings is to be tested. Knowing that Standard English is a product of “competing dialects” and that the use of English in a West African city is not identical to that in a city in the UK or the USA, it should be expected that each of the different English-using countries has peculiar features of the English language: Sierra Leonean, Ghanaian, Nigerian, among others. Citing Spencer (1963), Kirk-Greene (1971: 127) observes that investigating these new varieties of English in West Africa should not be seen as an opportunity to condemn, control and change the natural development of the English language in the specific countries or the region as a whole but rather “in accepting its legitimacy, to examine its particularities and the causes which lie behind them”.

Even though a larger part of the examples that Kirk-Greene (1971) gives are drawn from Hausa speakers of English, that is, an analysis of the contact situation involving English and Hausa, it is clear that the author pays attention to the linguistic, social, historical and educational development of the English language in Northern Nigeria (Kirk-Greene 1971: 127-128). On this note, we can only say that “an awareness both of the formal characteristics of African languages as well as the sociolinguistic role of English is of major importance to our assessment of the relative influence of West African languages on English” (Kirk-Greene 1971: 127). On the specific subject matter of Hausa speakers of English, Kirk-Greene (1971: 128-129) considers four important points. Firstly, linguistic issues such as tone and stress are “bound to interfere with the learning of stress and intonation in English” (Kirk-Greene 1971: 128). Equally significant is the issue of “the language of wider communication” in the north of Nigeria

which relegates “English to the status of a classroom language”, a situation different from the south of the country where “English is very much the daily language of schoolchildren both outside and inside school” since there was no common language of communication (Kirk-Greene 1971: 128). There is also the fact of linguistic patriotism in the north: “two cultured Hausa men who know English are more likely to converse in Hausa than are two educated Igbos in Igbo” (Kirk-Greene 1971: 128). The colonial policy of indirect rule championed by Britain in the colonisation of West Africa, unlike the French colonial policy of assimilation and direct rule and the consequent educational policy instituted, is another case in point that Kirk-Greene mentions. In order not to cause a breakdown or loss of the inherent indigenous political and cultural institutions and values, the British colonial administration sought to preserve and develop the African institutions and values by making use of them in the different sectors of the new society in areas such as education, religion and administration. Indigenous African languages were the media that were particularly used for the preservation of the African institutions and values. Northern Nigeria was not an exception in the use of African languages in the British colonial system: “Hausa newspapers, Hausa novels, a Hausa translation bureau, official Government documents and legislative instruments in Hausa, all became features of the indirect rule scene in the emirates from the mid-1930s, in a way that Yoruba and Igbo never became” (Kirk-Greene 1971: 128). In addition to the importance given to Hausa, expatriate English teachers stayed longer in Northern Nigeria than in the south: “the position is, and was, very different in the South where, without insinuating any value judgment, much English has for a long time been taught by Nigerians who were themselves taught English by Nigerians” among other non-native English teachers in Nigeria as well as in other English-using West African countries (Kirk-Greene 1971: 129). Does the non-native teacher of English have any linguistic carry-over effects in teaching English to other non-native learners of English? How does this affect the acquisition of the English language as a second or additional language in the West African English-using countries and other regions of the English-speaking world? Whereas an answer to the former question will more likely be positive, for the latter, research into the linguistic

area of native (if there are still native English language teachers) and non-native teachers of English within West Africa should reveal very interesting results.

For Kirk-Greene (1971), a sociolinguistic study must precede a linguistic study so that a clear notion of “the direction and causes of change and development” of not only West African English in general but also of the individual English-using nations in the sub-region can be obtained: “only by understanding both the structure of the first language and the method by which English is acquired as well as the purposes for which it is used can we account for the deviant forms in bilingual usage, for these are often conditioned by non-linguistic factors” (Kirk-Greene 1971: 129). This is so because the users of English in West Africa, in general, and in Nigeria, in particular, are second or additional language users from different linguistic backgrounds with varying degrees of competence and hence Nigerians use the language in different circumstances and domains (Kirk-Greene 1971: 129-130). In this regard, therefore, Kirk-Greene (1971: 130) considers the different domains of use as “factories” that not only produce but equally “retail and distribute substantial supplies of English of a particular West African flavour”.

In order to obtain grammatical, idiomatic and lexical peculiarities of Nigerian English and with the aim of tracing the linguistic and conceptual influences of Nigerian languages on English, Kirk-Greene uses ten main sources of written and spoken English from Hausa (Northern Nigeria) users of English including first language speakers of Yoruba and Igbo (Southern Nigeria) users of English (Kirk-Greene 1971: 130-131).

Considering the issue of second language users using ‘instant-translation’ techniques from their L1 when speaking the second language, there seems to be in most cases, “an English surface structure with a vernacular deep structure” (Kirk-Greene 1971: 131) for the West African speaker of English; the reverse equally happens when Europeans try to speak African languages. Drawing examples from various sources Kirk-Greene (1971: 131-137) analyses the grammatical structure of Nigerian English and points out eighteen different deviations from Standard English. Among these are the following ones:

- inappropriate use of the definite and indefinite articles;

- the influence of certain structural particles from the L1 to English;
- the pluralisation of mass nouns or misplacing the distinction in the use of the singular marker where the plural is required and vice versa as examples of “transferred morphological constructions”;
- negative questions and the negative element in ‘hope’ sentences are other issues of interest: answers to negative questions and responses to ‘hope not’ comments deviate from Standard English norms;
- comparative sentences sometimes reflect the indigenous deep structure and hence have deviant forms;
- misuse of modal conjugation especially in languages which have aspect rather than tense in the verbal system; and,
- the use of ‘too’ for ‘very’.

If the syntactic area of the use of the English language in West Africa is full of deviances rather than embellishments, when Kirk-Greene examines the lexicon of the English language as it is used in Nigeria, he maintains that this is the area that shows not only “the pace of the growth” of the English language in West Africa but also how dynamic the language is “in its imaginative creation of new verbals” (Kirk-Greene 1971: 137). For Kirk-Greene, there are two ways of looking at lexical items in the English of West Africans: “deliberate coining” and “misascription”. The former refers to the creation, extension, reshaping of old words or modelling of the word on an indigenous or Standard English analogy. The latter involves giving new meaning or extending the semantic field of the word either through ‘mishearing’, ‘misunderstanding’ or ‘misprint’ (1971: 137). These semantic adaptations of words in West Africa may cause some confusion for newcomers to the individual countries or to West Africa as a whole. In order to demonstrate the dynamic nature of the lexicon of Nigerian or West African English, Kirk-Greene (1971: 139-141) considers three main areas: nominals, verbals and modifiers.

Kirk-Greene (1971) concludes that the use of English in West Africa is influenced on all linguistic levels by the indigenous languages: phonological, syntactical, morphological and semantic. While the L1 may play an important role in such influence, languages of wider communication, which are sometimes

not the first languages for most people, are sometimes very significant in such interference. Teachers of English and others who care about languages in West Africa should work together in documenting the postcolonial development of the English language in contact with indigenous West African languages.

While Bamgbose's (1971) work gives a picture of the status of the English language in Nigeria and the way Nigerian indigenous languages have influenced English to the point that Nigerian users of English are characterised as having a diverse range of Englishes within the country, Kirk-Greene's (1971) article not only presents two ways (the minor and major dichotomy described above) of studying the English of West Africans but notes that a sociolinguistic study must be done before a linguistic study.

Akere (1978) not only gives a historical background to the existence of the English language in West Africa as a whole and Nigeria in particular, but also discusses the peculiarities of the different dialects of English that developed in West Africa, just as Standard Nigerian English is a product of the Nigerian socio-cultural milieu. On the West African scene Akere maintains, *inter alia*, that

... the English language in West Africa has acquired certain peculiarities which are a product of the different environments within which it is learned and used. Environmental influences deriving from linguistic, social, cultural, political and economic factors have combined to produce the varieties of English which can easily be identified in West Africa. The emergence of West African dialects of English is a function of both linguistic and sociological processes of change in language use and function in a contact situation (Akere 1978: 407).

The central line of argument in this thesis has to do with the fact that the peculiarities of Sierra Leone English should be seen as a product of the contact situation (both linguistic and socio-cultural and socio-professional) between English and the indigenous languages through speakers, as Akere succinctly maintains in the above quote. Since educated Anglophone West Africans use English (in speech and writing) to talk about political, social, cultural, economic and other related issues typical of their African setting, their English is bound to be influenced by the linguistic and non-linguistic aspects of the environment in which the language exists just as native speaker environments in America and

Australia have been able to mould the English language there to be different from that of Britain, the original home of the language. Nigerian English is no exception to such a reality with regard to language change (Akere 1978: 407-408). This is so because the English language was superimposed on West Africans over their indigenous languages and since this is the case, the indigenous languages of the educated speakers of English have left traces on the newer language. For Akere, such linguistic interference is not enough reason to defend the thesis that there is a Nigerian, Ghanaian or Sierra Leonean English: “such varieties are bound to exhibit the different socio-cultural features of the linguistic/ethnic groups using English as a second language” (Akere 1978: 408). For Akere, every other variety of English within West Africa including Nigerian English “has to be seen as a product of its own general social context” (Akere 1978: 408).

Regarding the cultural assimilation of second languages, Akere’s survey of Standard Nigerian English (1978) considers the following points: “kinship terms and their usage, greetings, forms of address and the system of deference, social expectations, ethos, and value orientations, the patterns of conceptualization as they affect the usage of English in Nigeria” (Akere 1978: 408). Akere, therefore, studies how words and expressions used to express the same language functions differ from the British and American varieties of English on the one hand and the Nigerian variety on the other. Consequently, in places with intricate social and cultural uses where indigenous mother-tongues have words to express specific language functions such as greetings, leave-takings, blessings, prayers, abuses, etc., expressions in the second language used to express such language functions will be influenced by the socio-cultural significance attached to such contexts in the first language.

Although Bamgbose (1971) and Akere (1978) have considered linguistic and non-linguistic factors in defending the thesis that there exists a Standard Nigerian English resulting from the linguistic and sociolinguistic co-existence of the English language with other languages in Nigeria, Görlach (1996) notes the historical situation surrounding the English language and other European languages in West Africa and maintains that

whatever European languages were used between 1470 and 1800, they were of very limited function, and were concentrated in isolated ‘factories’ or forts along the coast, affecting few Europeans and African bilinguals (Görlach 1996: 1).

If this were the case, then Görlach’s hypotheses below (1996: 1-2) cannot be ignored for a thorough understanding of the historical development of the European languages, in general, and of English in particular, in West Africa:

1. the influence exerted by Pidgin Portuguese on West African Pidgin English;
2. the fact that before the eighteenth century European languages spoken on the coast were largely oral and non-standard;
3. the unstable nature of the English language spoken then and its ‘broken’ form pointing to learners’ use, and
4. the lack of homogeneity considering both the English and Pidgin used within West Africa.

Taking this into account, eighteenth century historical documents written by West Africans point not only to Pidginised English but also to haphazard English syntax (see Fyfe ed. 1991; Montgomery 1999; Huber 2004 for the case of Sierra Leone; see also chapter four of this study). Citing Antera Duke’s English (in Forde 1956; Todd 1982: 283), Görlach (1996: 3) remarks that “Even if we accept these texts as authentic evidence of eighteenth-century written English, there is not sufficient sociolinguistic context to decide which features are idiosyncratic and which may have been shared by other users of English at the time”.

For Görlach (1996), the situation of the English language in West Africa changed in the nineteenth century due to four interrelated events: (1) the abolishment of the slave trade; (2) the arrival of the ‘the Black Poor’, the Maroons from Jamaica, the Nova Scotians, and the subsequent establishment of the Freetown settlement as a home for the freed black slaves; (3) the settling of the recaptives in Freetown who joined the other settlers and the consequent birth and/or development and spread of Krio, and (4) the creation of an Afro-American state, Liberia, in the region. This large-scale population movement and the consequent ethnic and linguistic mixing helped to augment the use and function

of the lingua franca, West African Pidgin English, and hence by 1880 this lingua franca has been stabilized in all the English-speaking countries in West Africa including Nigeria.

On the English language in Nigeria, Görlach (1996) notes the historical fact that its early adoption in Southern Nigeria and the establishment of English schools was due to cultural, religious, business and linguistic reasons, but also gave the South “educational and economic advantages” over the North irrespective of the fact that the Northerners’ competence in English was much higher (Görlach 1996: 7-8). After independence, as in many other African nations, English remained Nigeria’s national language due to the fact that it was a ‘window to the west’ and hence could ensure both technological and economic advancement; it had lost its colonial flavour since it was the language that was used to decolonise Nigeria; it was (and still is) the most influential international European language, and, it could cement the many ethnolinguistic differences in the country though it was a language “fully mastered only by a very thin upper crust, but which was indispensable for upward mobility” (Görlach 1996: 9). Regarding the types of English evident in Nigeria, Görlach (1996: 9) maintains that the most obvious area to distinguish Nigerian English from other varieties, say International English, is in speech, the reason being Nigerians’ English is greatly influenced by their L1. Citing Jibril (1986), Görlach (1996: 9-10) identifies nine RP variants in the speech of Yorubas, Hausas and Igbos, the three major ethnolinguistic groups. In written texts, Görlach (1996) examines various deviances in (1) newspaper columns such as news reports, editorials and advertisements and (2) literary English with Onitsha Market literature, Amos Tutuola and Chinua Achebe. In the latter discussion, he considers the different degrees through which written English is portrayed in Nigeria: popular English, a native tongue relexified in an English text and a classical and universally accepted English respectively. These deviances apart, Görlach observes that the area which sets Nigerians’ use of English apart from others is most clearly speech.

On his part, Osa (1986) considers the status of English in relation to the indigenous Nigerian languages as a snobbish acquisition. While accepting the

adoption of the English language “as a lingua franca for reasons of political expediency” and as a language of instruction as laudable gestures (Osa 1986: 39), the attitude of the educated class towards their indigenous languages is a matter of concern: “irrespective of relationship, educated Nigerians distance themselves from their tribesmen if they wish by deliberately using standard English language even if there is little or no communication” (Osa 1986: 39). Why are they linguistically distancing themselves when they can easily switch from English into Pidgin? Does the acquisition of English mean some kind of socio-cultural and economic elevation (cf. Spencer 1971)? Essentially, what the educated elite want is to immerse themselves and their families into the English language and its culture, hence:

A significant number of Nigerians want their children to have a solid grasp of the English language from childhood, and they encourage their children by providing well written materials in English and encouraging them to express themselves in English both at home and at school. Some school authorities fine children 10k, 20k, or 50k for speaking the vernacular (indigenous tongue). The aim is to force these children to speak English constantly (Osa 1986: 39).

One may accept the use of an official language of administration and government and language of instruction for the sake of better communication with others, especially with the outside world and for the acquisition of knowledge expressed in that language but not by force nor to the detriment of one’s indigenous mode of communication. But this seems to be the rule in most African countries rather than the exception (see Akere 1978: 408 cited above). The attempt at redeeming the use of indigenous languages in Nigeria through the “Wazobia”⁸ Television series between 1979 and 1983 only succeeded in promoting the three major languages: Yoruba, Hausa and Ibo. Despite all nationalistic attempts at promoting the use of indigenous languages in Nigeria, Osa seems to favour the continued use of the English language as he concludes his article with the following controversial quote from Achebe:

⁸ The three word combination comes from the three major languages *wa* (Yoruba), *zo* (Hausa) and *bia* (Ibo): all meaning “come” (Osa 1986: 39).

Those of us who have inherited the English language may not be in a position to appreciate the value of the inheritance. Or we may go on resenting it because it came as part of a package deal which included many other items of doubtful value and the positive atrocity of racial arrogance and prejudice which may yet set the world on fire. But let us not in rejecting the evil throw out the good with it. Any attempt of evolving an indigenous language as Nigeria's lingua franca and medium of instruction will only make Nigerians waste their time and energy which would have been well spent in other activities (Achebe 1974 cited in Osa 1986: 40).

While we agree with Achebe regarding the significance of the English inheritance for (West) Africa, especially as we are in the era of globalisation with the English language playing the most important role, we consider his rejection of indigenous languages as languages of instruction and as vehicular languages whether in Nigeria, Kenya or Sierra Leone to be somehow linguistically unpatriotic or unaware of the advantages of using indigenous languages in education. African languages deserve to be studied and developed both inside and outside their national territories. The only way to do that is by using them in education, as media of instruction and as disciplines of study (see UNESCO Position Papers 1953, 2003; Bamgbose 1983, 1999; Baptista, Brito & Bangura 2010).

Closely related to Osa's (1986) position is Schaefer and Egbokhare's (1999) article. While recognising the existence of a Standard Nigerian English, Schaefer and Egbokhare's paper consider English in Nigeria (including Nigerian Pidgin English) among the younger generation as a killer language: "the replacement value of English is increasing substantially among younger speakers, thus leading to the abandonment of indigenous vernaculars as mother tongue" (Schaefer and Egbokhare 1999: 381). Minority languages are being used less and less in public spaces like the markets, churches, business places and schools in favour of major Nigerian languages; the trend is increasingly towards English and Nigerian Pidgin English (Schaefer and Egbokhare 1999: 381-382, 389). In some areas of Nigeria, Pidgin English is so widely used that "children are acquiring Pidgin English as their mother tongue" (Schaefer & Egbokhare 1999: 382). The authors maintain that data collected among the Emai speaking people suggest that the younger generation's use English as their preferred means of communication both in and out of the home setting: "Emai children chose English as the medium of interaction with siblings and more frequently than any group selected English

for speech to father and mother” (Schaefer and Egbokhare 1999: 385-387, 389). Adolescents, on the other hand, do retain the mother tongue for use at home while they use English outside of the home setting (Schaefer and Egbokhare 1999: 388-389). Consequently, with “the beginning of a European language, English, replacing an indigenous minority language” (Schaefer and Egbokhare 1999: 389), if these children continue with their intergenerational shift to the new home languages, English and Nigerian Pidgin English (NPE henceforth), the already existing negative perception of the mother tongue and other indigenous languages (see Achebe 1975 cited above) will continue and Standard Nigerian English will become even more ensconced in the Nigerian society than it is now and the death of the mother tongue will then become a reality.

Whereas Schaefer and Egbokhare (1999) have dealt with English in Nigeria and NPE as languages replacing and/or killing indigenous minority languages in Nigeria, especially among young Nigerians, concluding that NPE is slowly becoming a mother-tongue for the younger generation, Igboanusi (2006) focuses on the syntactic innovation processes in the English spoken by Nigerians. Some of these syntactic features, Igboanusi observes, are not limited to Nigeria alone: “they are shared by other new Englishes” (Igboanusi 2006: 394) such as South Asian English (see Kachru 1982, 1983). As such, Igboanusi considers these syntactic features a healthy development in the non-native varieties of English thus indicating that non-native Englishes or ESL can be considered to have common linguistic features. Igboanusi (2006: 397-402) considers the following as syntactic features of Nigerian English spoken by both educated and less educated Nigerians:

- (1) Subjectless sentences: this is a common practice which involves omitting subject ‘it’ in the speech of both educated and less educated Nigerians. For educated Nigerians it occurs as a form of shortening ‘It’s’ and for less educated Nigerians it may be derived from NPE ‘na’ (*it is/is* or as locative/preposition in Standard English). Igboanusi gives examples such as: “Is very far”, “Is the woman” for British English (BrE henceforth) “It is very far” and “It is the woman” respectively.

- (2) Reduplication: Citing Simo Bobda (1994), Igboanusi (1998, 2002b) and Kachru (1982), Igboanusi looks at reduplication as a lexical process of innovation that affects different word classes: numerals (denoting ‘each’), intensifier or qualifier (emphasis) or adjectives (pluralisation). Examples provided by Igboanusi include the following: “Give me *half-half* bag of rice and beans” for BrE “Give me half bag each of rice and beans”; “*Before-before*, food was very cheap in this country” for BrE “In the past, food was very cheap in this country”; “I visited my friend’s campus and I saw many *fine-fine* girls” for BrE “I visited my friend’s campus and I saw several fine girls”. Note: “fine” connotes ‘beautiful’, ‘pretty’, ‘good-looking’.
- (3) Double subjects: this refers to the process in which the subject is emphasized by using double pronouns or a pronoun + a modifier/qualifier. For Igboanusi, this process can be seen as an influence from the colloquial nature of Nigerian languages. For example, “*Me I* don’t have money” for BrE “I don’t have money” and “*We children* were sent to go and play” for BrE “We were sent to go and play” / “Those of us who were young were sent out to go and play”.
- (4) Pidgin-influenced structures: these refer to the omission of prepositions, determiners and other structure words’ omissions which are common in Pidgin and Creole languages, ‘finish’ and ‘o’ as emphatic final markers directly translated from NPE to English. For example “We work farm” for BrE “We are farmers” or “We work on a farm”; “I have maize, yam, *finish*” for BrE “I have maize and yam; that’s it”.
- (5) Structures with discourse particles: these are either drawn from NPE or from the indigenous languages and are used either for emphasis or as a confirmation strategy. These borrowings illustrate code-switching phrases. For example, “Tomorrow is your birthday, *abi*?” for BrE “Tomorrow is your birthday. Isn’t it?” or “I don’t know him *sha*” for BrE “Anyway, I don’t know him”. ‘Abi’ and ‘sha’ are Yoruba discourse particles.

- (6) Verbless sentences: these occur in discourse or in the exchange of pleasantries such as “How?” for British English “How are you?” to mark informality, from NPE or indigenous language influence.
- (7) Substitution: this involves the indigenisation of English idioms through syntactic creation in Nigerian English. For example, “They are *two sides of the coin*” for BrE “They are two sides of one coin”; “He often shouts *on top of his voice*” for BrE “He often shouts at the top of his voice”.

Igboanusi (2006) shows that the existence of the English language in its new ecologies in general and in Nigeria in particular has given rise to the indigenisation of the language through processes such as the above, a result of the contact the English language has had with indigenous languages coupled with the L1’s pragmatic nature. These syntactic features, Igboanusi observes, are a development of the language and are characteristics of new Englishes within West Africa and beyond.

In view of the motto of the “39th Poznan Linguistic Meeting”, “Nothing in linguistics makes full sense except in a diachronic light”, Ugorji (2010) studies Nigerian English Phonology from a diachronic perspective. According to Ugorji, since New Englishes have sparked a lot of research interests in recent times, they can now be considered to have established sociolinguistic, pragmatic, stylistic, structural and pedagogic paradigms. Ugorji further maintains that

New Englishes constitute phenomena in the material world and in linguistic experience; and as entities, they are part of everyday observations; as human behaviour, they are associated with human cognitive systems especially with respect to the intuition of their native speakers; and as cultural entities, they are acquired in a socialisation process or learned and transmitted from generation to generation; and as instruments, they address communication exigencies; and are vehicles of cultures, cross-cultures and socio-cultural ideologies (Ugorji 2010: 131).

Given the above perspectives on new Englishes as observable material and linguistic facts in human behavioural and cognitive make-up, as cultural and social vehicles, characteristically ideological in nature and used as communicative means within their linguistic and cultural settings and across

cultures, Ugorji explores Nigerian English phonology from a diachronic point of view. Thus, he situates Nigerian English within the political history of the language: “while the imperial powers seemed conquerors, not all their weapons could return with them; their English was conquered and nativised” (Ugorji 2010: 132). The English language which was once a weapon of domination has itself been dominated and reprocessed and hence shows the political changes that have taken place in the former colonies. Therefore, he considers the ‘diffusion’ and ‘evolutionary’ models as two important theoretical approaches in his analysis of Nigerian English phonology. The former model is linked to Kachru (1996) and the latter to Schneider (2007) and Mufwene (2001). Both models seem to have diachronic linguistics and linguistic changes as their central concerns. The ‘evolutionary’ model of Nigerian English has reached the ‘nativisation’ stage and has begun the ‘endonormative’ stage, the third and fourth stages respectively out of the five stages proposed by Schneider (2007). We give a brief explanation of Schneider’s model below.

Considering the fact that language and society are intrinsically intertwined (Nagy and Meyerhoff 2008: 1), Schneider’s “Dynamic Model” (2007: 21ff), which provides the “underlying uniform process” of Post Colonial Englishes (PCE henceforward) irrespective of their seeming surface differences, also informs this study. Based on theories of language contact, language evolution, ecology of language, and competition and selection (see Thomason 2001; Mufwene 2001), speakers constantly “keep redefining and expressing their linguistic and social identities” especially as they align themselves with those whose speech behaviour they associate with and wish to be associated with (Schneider 2007: 21). Schneider’s “Dynamic Model” sees PCEs as varieties that follow “a shared underlying process which drives their formation, accounts for many similarities between them, and appears to operate whenever a language is transplanted” (Schneider 2007: 29). The Dynamic Model takes a sociohistorical perspective of language evolution. The model describes five characteristic diachronic progressive stages which proceed from the relocation of English to a new territory “through a period of vibrant changes, both social and linguistic, to a renewed stabilization of a newly emerged variety” (Schneider 2007: 30).

The five stages include (1) *foundation* (the transplantation of English from its original home to a new land); (2) *exonormative stabilisation* (the settlers or group who brought the English language stabilise politically and hence establish a colony); (3) *nativisation* (this stage brings about cultural and linguistic transformation as both settler and indigenous groups forge a new identity and put aside all cultural and linguistic differences that hitherto existed); (4) *endonormative stabilisation* (this stage follows political independence in colonial settings and hence a local linguistic variety emerges and is accepted in formal contexts) and (5) *differentiation* (a nation fully takes control of its political, cultural and linguistic issues without relying on external control for matters of national interest). Each of these stages manifests itself in four different ways, namely: historical and political events; identity construction; sociolinguistic determinants, and, finally structural effects in the language variety.

Ugorji (2010) equally sees a connection between historical events and language in multilingual Africa. With the ‘diffusion’ model of the spread of English in the world, Nigerian English is situated in the Outer Circle, that is, the types of English spoken and used in ex-British colonies in Asia and Africa, so called because of the multicultural and multilingual nature of the countries where they are spoken. Consistent with all these models, including Quirk’s ‘demographic’, ‘econo-cultural’ and ‘imperial’ models of New Englishes, for Ugorji (2010: 133) “the foundations of New Englishes lie deeply in diachrony” just as “the term ‘New Englishes’ itself is a diachronic construct”. In order to achieve his goal, he puts forward the following arguments with respect to the use of the English language in Nigeria: historical facts and contacts, contacts with indigenous Nigerian languages and cultures, and internal political history.

Firstly, early contacts with English traders, evangelists and teachers with different accents including Cockney, Yorkshire and Birmingham began in Nigeria around the sixteenth century. Other non-native speakers of English from Europe (Germans, Dutch, French, Danes and Greeks) also joined the British as missionaries, technicians, medical doctors, sailors and traders. Considering this language situation which involves the use of English by other speakers other than just native speakers, especially in trade, evangelism and education, Ugorji (2010:

133) believes “the development of Pidgin predates English” in Nigeria since communication was basically oral up to the eighteenth century (see also Görlach 1998). With the total control of Nigeria in the nineteenth century by the British, there were already established missionary schools which taught English. While educated people or teachers with Received Pronunciation accents taught in the southwest, Scots and Irishmen taught in the eastern and south eastern regions of Nigeria and only RP native speakers taught in the North when education was introduced there in the twentieth century. When Nigerians took charge of education and the teaching of English in Nigeria, they relied largely on textbooks for the teaching of pronunciation, being teachers “who at the time were ill-equipped to discriminate norms” (Ugorji 2010: 133). This affected the linguistic situation of English in general and English pronunciation in particular during the early stages of the English language in Nigeria.

Secondly, this early situation became further complicated when English spread to the whole country with over four hundred different languages and cultures in Nigeria, as each provided linguistic and cultural input to the evolution of English in the country in a way that was not uniform as in more monolingual and monocultural settings such as New Zealand and Australia.

Finally, with the fusion of the different ethnicities into modern Nigeria today, “the different Englishes that were evolving in different places, at different times, in different dimensions and at different rates were ‘amalgamated’ into what became Nigerian English” (Ugorji 2010: 134), exported from England by the English and developed and used in Nigeria by Nigerians as a lingua franca among the educated, as an official state language and as an international language of communication. Hence, this English with both a colonial and decolonised timeframe should be able to show linguistic materials uniquely Nigerian, Ugorji maintains. And nowhere is the uniqueness of Nigerian English more evident than in phonology (see also Bamgbose 1971; Görlach 1986, 1998; among others).

Based on his diachronic priority with regard to his survey of Nigerian English phonology, Ugorji (2010) points out certain peculiarities of spoken English in Nigeria. Citing Eka (1996), Angogo and Hancock (1980) and Banjo (1995) among others, who propose three, four and four varieties respectively due

to varying factors ranging from models of language acquisition and learning to L1 influence and approximation to international standards, Ugorji considers that, taking into account Nigerian English phonology, the following categories can be distinguished (Banjo 1995 cited in Ugorji 2010: 134):

1. Mother-tongue based: shows heavy L1 transfers spoken by the semi-educated mostly below post primary education;
2. Mother-tongue influenced: shows L1 transfers with no phonological distinctions spoken by those who may have completed primary/secondary education;
3. Close to RP: spoken by those who have a university education; and,
4. RP: spoken by highly educated and some who have training in the humanities and phonetics.

While these may suffice as characteristics of Nigerian English phonology, Ugorji (2010) further analyses these categories following Eka (1996) referring to them as *basilect* (categories 1 and 2 above), *mesolect* (the speech of those who may have secondary education and consequently falling between categories 2 and 3 above) and *acrolect* (category 4). He then focuses on certain phonological features which are clearly distinguishable in the acrolectal variety but which overlap in both the basilect and mesolect varieties. Although synchronic phonology may be used to explain these distinctions, when issues of transmission and acquisition become evident, diachrony appears to be more useful because “the fundamental reason why accents differ is that languages change ... present-day pronunciation patterns reflect the changes which have taken place, modifying earlier pronunciation patterns” (Wells 1982: 93-94 cited in Ugorji 2010: 135). Even though “diachrony and synchrony are intertwined” and it is sometimes difficult to say where one ends and the other begins (Ugorji 2010: 135), with adequate examples Ugorji maintains that in situations of bilingualism “materials which second language learners bring into the learning environment may predispose how they process the materials of the target language and hence how much progress may be made in learning” and as such “data may be synchronic; but analysis is diachronic, recognising not only the facts of the variations and the patterns but also accounting for the why and how of language variation and contact situation”

(Ugorji 2010: 136). In essence, therefore, Nigerian English phonology according to Ugorji (2010) may be seen to be highly influenced by L1 interferences. Once again, this is due to the way the English language has been transmitted and is still being transmitted from early European trade and missionary contacts to the existence of the English language in the linguistic and cultural make-up of the country as a colonial language coupled with the internal political history of the country.

To conclude the discussion on Nigerian English we refer to two important works by Ajani (2007) and Bamgbose (1992)

Even though many educated Nigerians may not agree that there is a Nigerian English, for some Nigerian linguists like Timothy T. Ajani (2007) and Ayo Bamgbose in particular (1992: 148), it is no longer an issue, there is a “Nigerian English” owing to the fact that the English language has been influenced by its co-existence with Nigerian linguistic and cultural realities much like other varieties of English around the world. Those who deny the existence of such a variety base their arguments on the fact that what seems to be Nigerian English are “‘mistakes’ rather than evidence of a distinct type of English in Nigeria” (Bamgbose 1992: 149). Both Ajani (2007) and Bamgbose (1992) make it clear that there is such a variety, taking into account the lexical, phonetic and phonological, morphosyntactic and semantic levels, as well as the context of its use in Nigeria, especially as it co-exists with not only major indigenous languages like Hausa, Yoruba, Ibo and over a hundred minor languages, but with an English-based pidgin language which in some instances might be mistaken for what is known as “Nigerian English”. Bamgbose concludes that “the continued use of English as a second language by a sizeable proportion of Nigerians of different generations is bound to ensure the continued development of a Standard Nigerian English” (Bamgbose 1992: 158). Ajani (2007), on his part, concludes by looking at both sides of the linguistic coin, that is, the influence English is exerting on indigenous languages and vice versa and, second, the implication of these influences not only in contact linguistics but also in the teaching and acquisition of English to and by speakers of other languages, that

not only has English influenced the languages with which it has come into contact around the world, but English itself has been – and continues to be – influenced by other languages, and this influence is responsible for the new forms of English mushrooming all over the globe. The implication of this is quite significant, not only for contact linguistics, but also for the teaching and the learning of English to, and by the speakers of other languages (Ajani 2007).

In sum, therefore, considering the above studies which look at the historical, social and cultural setting of the country and the linguistic background of the speakers of the English language in Nigeria, a new variety of this global language, Nigerian English, has been made possible in view of the fact that the way the EL is used and the purposes for which it is employed in its different domains of use in Nigeria are different from those who use the language as their L1. This new variety co-exists with not only Nigerian Pidgin English, but also numerous indigenous Nigerian languages.

2.3.2. Ghana

Ghana, like Nigeria, has seen the vigorous recognition of the fact that the transplantation of a language from its original home to another means the taking up of linguistic and cultural features peculiar to the new environment by that language: “if a language becomes part of a channel of communication in any community, it also becomes part of that speech community’s culture” (Quarcoo 1994: 330). This simply means that the existence of the English language in Ghana implies the naturalisation of the language by its new speakers. According to Quarcoo (1994: 329) Ghana “had the longest tutelage under British rule” which means that the existence of the English language in the country is as old as the time Ghana and Britain entered into treaty relations. Considering the importation of English and its consequent integration in Ghana, Quarcoo asks “who decides on its grammaticality, standard or correctness, and/or acceptability in its new home?” (1994: 330) Part of the answer to this question lies in the fact that “English was originally not a Ghanaian language, nor African” but after co-existing with Ghanaian languages for over 150 years, Ghanaians have been able to do “a few things to it to enable us to label their English a ‘Ghanaian artefact’” (Quarcoo 1994: 331), especially so as the language has acquired new cultural

identity. Because of the diverse linguistic situation in Africa, the issue of linguistic purity needs rethinking because for the average Ghanaian, English is not a second language since the basic Ghanaian “has at least two indigenous languages before he acquires English” (Quarcoo 1994: 332). Quarcoo further notes that the English language in Ghana can be seen to be democratic and neutral:

the English used in Ghana, and the transformations it has gone through, do not render it a language of foreign culture. Some of the aspects of life that it is used to express ... may not be strictly regarded as traditionally Ghanaian, and yet at the same time, they are neither British, nor Canadian, nor American (Quarcoo 1994: 336).

But looking at Quarcoo’s question again, it is clear that education plays a fundamental role in the establishment of standard levels and in the promotion and teaching of English. In this sense, Boadi (1971) states that (1) English in Ghana as in other ex-British colonies is an educational acquisition and (2) it is an instrumental as well as an integrative medium in Ghana and the world at large and especially for Ghanaian speakers of English. Put in other words, inasmuch as English is an educational possession and achievement, the language also plays specific roles in the country: one’s acceptance and integration into the middle and upper-middle echelons of society with social, political and economic benefits are guaranteed by one’s level of English. This in turn allows one’s projection into the outside world.

These arguments apart, for Boadi, the English language was imposed on Ghana and its people as part of the British and European expansion package just as languages like Latin, Arabic, French, Portuguese, Spanish and others have been imposed on people far from those languages’ original homes. This latter fact denies English any unique position in Ghana whether in terms of its history, its growth or its current situation (Boadi 1971: 49). Consistent with the different political and cultural groups which the colonial administration brought together under their rule in Ghana, coupled with the lack of a consequent common language to serve as a vehicular language and the unwillingness of the British to learn any of the indigenous languages, it was almost impossible that these varied groups could be united by an indigenous language. Under these circumstances, the

use of the English language as the unifying language became evident. The situation turned out to be even more appealing for the use of the English language when education was introduced by missionaries. With the introduction of English as a second language in education, the road to the instrumental and the integrative and the subsequent “official use of English in administration” and other domains was cleared and those “who had the benefit of a western education” gained not only from the western education which they received but also had the opportunity of becoming bilinguals in both English and their respective indigenous languages (Boadi 1971: 49). At independence in Ghana, in 1957, one would have thought that the English language, with its cohesive internal force, would have caused the natural death of the indigenous Ghanaian languages; on the contrary, these indigenous languages were much more cultivated to the point of not only using them on the radio but of developing writing systems for them and hence the awakening of the linguistic and cultural awareness of these languages. The orthographies that were devised ensured the teaching and explanation of “their linguistic structures” as well as the writing of poems and plays in the indigenous Ghanaian languages, a possible but unthought-of activity before independence (Boadi 1971: 50). Since ‘the political wish’ of evolving Akan, one of the Ghanaian languages, as the official language died a natural death, the English language took the role of the lingua franca. As time and expense were on the side of the English language, the oral and written condemnation of colonialism, in short the political struggle for independence, was championed through the English language:

The politicians who sprang up after the war condemned colonialism both on the political platform and on paper with all the animus and vehemence they could command. But, ironically, their eloquence and debating powers could find expression in no other medium than one of the legacies of colonialism, the English language –not because they were not competent in the use of their own first languages but because they had to reach the largest possible number of people within the shortest possible time and at the least expense (Boadi 1971: 50).

As such, the importance of the EL as the national cohesive medium and its international importance in education, politics, business, science and technology

was unquestionable. This new indisputable status that the EL enjoys in Ghana as well as in other ex-British colonies gave way to the naturalisation of the language as it is adopted and appropriated to perform linguistic and cultural functions in a country far from the language's original home. This adoption and appropriation of the English language equally ensures the birth of the different varieties of the EL with the most educated and the least educated varieties occupying the two most extreme positions (Boadi 1971:51). The least educated variety for Boadi is what is known as *Kru* or Pidgin English which does not have, for example, the linguistic and social status that Krio has in Sierra Leone or in Freetown, in particular (Boadi 1971:51-52). Regarding the educated variety, there are sub-varieties in both the spoken and written domains; some are accepted internationally while others are not. Just as in, say, Nigeria (see Bamgbose 1971 for example), the English of the educated population can be referred to as an approximation to the educated British Standard English, the most internationally acceptable varieties of English in Ghana are associated "with the most educated" (Boadi 1971:52).

"Approximation" is an appropriate word to describe the variety of the most educated people since, as Bamiru's (1997) and Dako's (2001) surveys on the lexical component of the English language in Ghana as used by journalists, novelists and other writers have shown, many vocabulary items have both English and Ghanaian origin. It is clear that this lexical co-existence is a product of the socio-cultural situation in Ghana and elsewhere (as some of these words are found in other West African varieties of English). Indeed, as Dako observes, the English language in Ghana places Ghanaians in a very complex situation; it is not only that "[T]he Ghanaianess of English in Ghana is not only observed in vocabulary use, but possibly more so in the distinctive Ghanaian accent and possibly less so in the structural peculiarities of the variety". While some are aiming at native user proficiency, others are claiming that English is now one of their native languages (Dako 2001:47).

In his discussion of the educated variety of English in Ghana, Boadi (1971:53 ff) distinguishes three different views: (1) while some would want to see the educated variety of Ghanaian English used the 'African way', (2) others view the English language in Ghana as "a borrowed foreign language" which should be

used properly to reflect its British origin so that Ghanaians could continue to enjoy the status the language offers them, and (3) some others consider the linguistic background of the educated speakers of English in Ghana to be “a useful characterisation of a Ghanaian brand of English”. Proponents of each of the three sub-varieties have put forward arguments to substantiate their choice.

Those who support the African type of educated Ghanaian English maintain that Ghanaians should remove all the British features of the English language and embellish the language with their African personality and identity. According to them, it is artificial and affected for a Ghanaian to speak English the British way. As such, Ghanaians would lose their personality and identity by speaking or aiming at the British type of English (Boadi 1971: 53).

Against the above school of thought are those who regard English as a borrowed foreign language. These advocates argue that English should retain all its British flavour and therefore educated Ghanaian speakers of English should shy away from not only the American, Australian, Canadian but equally so from the African or Ghanaian way of speaking English. Boadi (1971: 53) warns that such a view is “uncompromising” as “there are more American teachers in the schools today than ever before”. That apart, the current era of globalisation, information technology and internet socialisation, the entertainment industry (music and movies) and fashion are mostly coming from North America which means that American English is more influential than the other settler types. Hence, the influence of American English is ever present should the Ghanaian socio-cultural and linguistic realities fail to influence the type of English used by educated Ghanaians.

The third group, those who see the importance of the mother-tongues as influential in the use of a second language, points out that there would possibly be a good number of Englishes in Ghana considering the number of indigenous languages in Ghana. This is so because each educated speaker of English in Ghana will then be classified as using a type of English different from others based on his L1 since “nobody today would wish openly to oppose the view that first-language habits interfere with the learning of a second” language (Boadi 1971: 54). While this can be true, Boadi admonishes us that in such circumstances

What we must look for are the broad similarities which set together users of English belonging to the various professions and levels of education – lawyers, doctors, university lecturers, post-primary and post-secondary school leavers, etc. It is very likely that there are widespread peculiarities in their use of vocabulary, idiom, grammar, intonation and rhythm which these groups of educated Ghanaians share in common (Boadi 1971: 54).

Still, according to Boadi (1971: 54) some of these educated varieties meet international standards even though it is difficult to draw a neat line between the educated and the uneducated varieties of English.

Another important issue discussed by Boadi (1971) is the role of the English language in education not only in Ghana but in other former British colonies as well. For Boadi, English is mostly acquired through the formal educational means; it is the educational institutions

that set the standards and determine the varieties that are to be used in other sectors of public life: they teach the language most formally and most purposefully. Almost every adult non-native user of English has either received formal education at school or has been taught by someone else who has himself been to school (Boadi 1971: 55).

On this note, much importance is placed on the English language as a discipline and as a language of instruction. The most crucial part of the whole issue is that in ex-British colonies in (West) Africa it is through English that a pupil successfully understands the contents of a discipline or fails to do so, and hence his degree of competence in the language of instruction guarantees his continuing schooling (Boadi 1971: 55; see also Bamgbose 1999). The situation becomes even more complex when we look at the teaching staff and their level of competence or qualifications in teaching generally and more specifically in teaching English as a second language and as a language of instruction at the primary and secondary levels (Boadi 1971: 56-57). While this situation can be true, Boadi cautions teachers as well as education authorities in West Africa that the primary school is the bedrock of the standard of both the education the children receive and their competence and performance level in English:

one must not ignore the fact that a good start in the language is ideally what should be aimed at; and, to the extent that this is a valid assumption, that the

primary schools have a considerable responsibility to fulfil here. A good start at primary school should not be taken to mean large amounts of English. What the educational authorities should aim at is to give children in the early years a very firm grasp of a restricted range of the spoken and written language, so selected to be of use to them and, consequently, providing them with the necessary incentive to go on learning (Boadi 1971: 58).

In the early years of education, the vehicular language of the community is used as the language of instruction which is sometimes the L1 or L2 of the child depending on his ethnolinguistic group and the wider language of communication in the community. In some cases this practice is discontinued at an early stage of schooling or may go on till the end of primary education (Boadi 1971: 57). This case is not very much uncommon in the West African English-using countries (see Bamgbose 1971). Since this practise has positive outcomes considering the UNESCO position papers on indigenous languages (1953 and 2003), Boadi (1971) mentions the issue of having trained and competent teachers in teaching English in the upper stages of primary education so that “adverse effects” of the use of the indigenous languages could be prevented (Boadi 1971: 58-9). In order for children to have a solid background in English, Boadi considers the role of the teacher training colleges: the standards of English must not only be raised but teachers must be equipped in both language skills and methodology of language instruction (Boadi 1971: 59).

At the secondary level, there are more reasons to raise the standards of English. Boadi (1971: 59-60) mentions several reasons why standards should be raised, among them he includes the following:

- (1) entrance into secondary school is highly competitive on both the written and oral aspect of the Common Entrance Examination –understanding English is not only a pre-requisite but a major factor to go through the interview;
- (2) secondary school pupils must attain the expected standards as they have to grasp the contents of other disciplines, answer questions (in written and oral forms), do homework in English and read textbooks in English;
- (3) pupils from other schools now have the opportunity of studying together with other pupils from other regions of the country who have other

languages – the common language of interaction and communication is no longer their L1 or regional languages but English.

Factors that militate against raising the standard, awareness and opportunities of English in secondary schools include (a) the lack of qualified teachers of English, (b) the lack of clearly defined teaching objectives and (c) badly selected teaching content. What made matters worse was the fact that there were only twelve recognised secondary schools which provided the University of the Gold Coast with students (now University of Ghana) in the early fifties (Boadi 1971: 60). Towards the end of the 1950s, the number of recognised schools was tripled through the ‘Accelerated Development Plan in education’ (Boadi 1971: 60). While the lack of qualified teachers of English is one of the factors that militate against the improvement of English, course objectives and the syllabus are the two most important factors responsible for the lack of success in students attaining the minimum required of them in gaining access to university and in becoming competent users of English (Boadi 1971: 62).

For those that are lucky enough to begin undergraduate studies, university teachers equally shift the blame to the secondary school teachers “for not preparing students satisfactorily for work in the university and other institutions of higher education” (Boadi 1971: 62). For Boadi, if freshmen have problems in coping with university work, university teachers should equally “do something to improve their English” (1971: 62).

While the English language has been given a significant role in education in Ghana though beset with some setbacks vis-à-vis competence and performance in the language of education as Boadi (1971) has clearly shown, the role the language will play in the lives of Ghanaians in the future depends largely on education authorities and teaching methodologies (Boadi 1971: 63). The creative use of English in Ghana is now in the hands of those who were fortunate to attend the best schools in the country and those who had the opportunity to go to university. Although English-using West African countries are far behind their French-speaking counterparts in the area of creative writing (Boadi 1971: 63), Boadi asks “whether Ghanaian creative writers can remain completely unaffected by their linguistic background in their search for a suitable medium of expression”

(Boadi 1971: 64). While some would advocate “a distinctively African literature” in English, others call for the use of an African language in creative writing (Boadi 1971: 64; see also Achebe [1965] 1997; Thiong'o 1986). Creative writing in English with a Ghanaian or African taste should not be marred with deviations from the standard norms since the practical purpose of learning a second or foreign language is to reach people beyond one's culture because both “the ‘non-international’ varieties of English ... like the internationally accepted varieties ... will be used on formal occasions and as media for creative literature” (Boadi 1971: 65). In essence, for Boadi (1971), English in Ghana, like in other ex-British colonies, is not only acquired through the formal educational system but it is through English that the educated Ghanaian communicates with other educated Ghanaians from different linguistic backgrounds and with the outside world. Besides, English is a social, economic and political possession; with it, one's possibility of rising above an unfortunate academic, social, economic and political background is guaranteed (see also Spencer 1971). Yet, the acquisition of English is beleaguered with a lot of difficulties ranging from the acquisition of English through untrained and unqualified teachers (notwithstanding the native and non-native teacher dichotomy in learning a second or foreign language), undefined course objectives and content that do not reflect the Ghanaian reality.

2.3.3. The Gambia

Although the Gambia is the smallest country among the English using nations in the West African English speaking countries, the role of the English language as the official language of administration, language of instruction and the language used in the media, judiciary and similar important domains does not differ from the other English-using or English speaking countries in West Africa. The sociolinguistic study of the English language (especially one reflecting the mutual influence taking place with English and all the other languages existing side by side) is as rare in this country as in Sierra Leone (see below). Peter *et al* (2003) maintain that very little is known about the variety of English in the Gambia except for some superficial studies that they cite, for example, Richmond (1989) and some initial findings in Simo Bobda *et al* (1999): “All one can find is that the

Gambia is listed as one of the countries in which West African English is spoken, which may imply that there are no distinguishing features worthy of consideration” (cited in Peter *et al* 2003: 43). The scarcity of literature apart, the fact that the Gambia shares one of its most extended languages, Wolof, with Senegal, and some other common languages with Senegal and Guinea Bissau, with all their cultural undertones, plus the historical fact of being administered jointly with Sierra Leone by Britain backed up with the features that Aku shares with Krio, means it is a country worthy of study for the sociolinguist and the contact linguist in particular. The most striking linguistic reality of the country is that it is the only English using nation in the region whose English-based creole language, Aku, is not a lingua franca or the language of wider communication. Aku is only spoken by its native speakers, a small group of other Gambians who interact with the Akus on a regular basis or by Sierra Leoneans living in the Gambia (cf. Peter *et al* 2003: 46; Holm 1989: 417). Concerning the English language, the peculiar sociolinguistic situation that sets the Gambia apart from other English speaking nations notwithstanding, the English language must be expected to have specific Gambian linguistic and cultural features owing to its unique (socio)linguistic and cultural background and other general features that it may share with other West African varieties.

2.3.4. Liberia

Hancock (1974: 224) believes that “Liberia is the only black African country in which English is a native language. It is also the only country in Africa that owes its English language to the United States rather than to Britain”. While we agree with the fact that Liberia is the only country in the sub-region and Africa as a whole that owes its varieties of English to the United States rather than to Britain, and one of the two countries in Africa (Ethiopia is the other) that were not officially colonised, we qualify the assertion that “English is a native language” in Liberia with ‘English is a native language to only a small proportion of the population’, that is, if current socio-cultural and sociolinguistic conditions permit the continued existence of native English speakers in the linguistic sense of the expression. Even though Hancock further states that the English of this one

percent “has had profound effect upon the English used throughout the country” (Hancock 1974: 221), the fact that (a) “the vast majority of Liberians are indigenous to the country, belonging mainly to the Mande, Mel and Kru speaking peoples” (Hancock 1974: 221; see also Holm 1989: 423-424; Singler 1997), (b) there are “several varieties of English spoken in Liberia”, (c) the “standard Liberian English is used as a first language in very few Liberian homes”, and (d) “the standard appears to be ... a mark of education and cultural achievement” (Hancock 1974: 225) means that the present English spoken in Liberia must have been influenced by the native languages of present-day Liberians. Thus, the exportation of a group of Afro-Americans from the United States to Liberia, just as those exported to Freetown, Sierra Leone, implies that some mutual influence must have taken place with regard to the languages spoken in the community, in this case Monrovia and the country as a whole. It is clear, in essence, that present day Liberian English reflects African features even though the first generation of Afro-Americans taken to Liberia were “the no money, no A.B.C. men that come directly from the plantation” (Singler 1984: 42 cited in Holm 1989: 424).

2.3.5. Cameroon

Colonial French language policy and assimilation in particular, (the linguistic, social, political, and cultural making of Africans into French people, which implies the disregard of African languages and culture) are in sharp contrast with Britain’s indirect rule and its reliance on the local, social and political structures and consequently the respect for the indigenous languages and the subsequent mushrooming of indigenised varieties of English. This is clearly reflected in Cameroon, which has two official languages, French and English, and these co-exist with many indigenous Cameroonian languages including Kamtok or Cameroon Pidgin, an English-based pidgin spoken more widely in the South of the country. Apart from its co-official role, the language of instruction in primary and secondary levels of education in Southern Cameroon, English is also used in religion and the judiciary; it is equally constantly used by elites and “is gradually entering the home environment, where the indigenous languages are expected to dominate” (Kouega 2002: 93). It is competing not only with French (the dominant

tertiary level language of instruction, the language of the media, the civil service, etc.) but with the English-lexified pidgin, the dominant neighbourhood language, especially in the English speaking region of the country. With the current trend in World Englishes, Cameroon English has been accepted as one of the indigenised varieties of this indispensable World language, English (see Anchimbe 2006; Wolf 2001).

Ngefacs (2008), basing his investigation on Labov's (1966) work on the correlation between the user's language and his/her social and educational level, explores the link between mainstream Cameroon English and the Western model of English and observes that "[i]t would certainly be fallacious to assume that the relationship of language to society in a New English context like Cameroon would be the same as that found in societies like England and the United States, where English has been dominant for centuries" especially so as these New Englishes are a reflection of their socio-cultural, socio-economic and sociolinguistic realities (Ngefacs 2008: 407-408). That is, the Englishes spoken in Cameroon, Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, and other ex-colonies of Britain should manifest the respective countries' realities as those spoken in England, the USA, Canada and New Zealand do. Kouega (2002: 94) confirms that "[t]he variety of English spoken in the country exhibits some specific features ... but it also shares some characteristics with neighbouring West African Englishes".

Any literature review on works on the English language in Cameroon will be incomplete without a mention of Anchimbe's (2006) ground-breaking empirical study - *Cameroon English: Authenticity, Ecology and Evolution*. The book (re)presents the indigenised varieties of English or postcolonial Englishes as authentic and natural products of their different ecologies and as such should not be classified as varieties that lack linguistic essence nor be seen as consequences of inappropriate acquisition (see Mufwene 2001; Schneider 2007). The author argues that the English language in Cameroon has become indigenised in several, if not all, linguistic components of the language: the morphological, the lexical, semantic and syntactic. In essence, in Anchimbe (2006) we come to terms with the fact that the English language in Cameroon should no longer be seen or analysed as "English in Cameroon" but as one of the languages of Cameroon and

hence “Cameroon English” (see Wolf 2001; Kouega 2006; Schneider 2007). Even though he does not provide phonological and phonetic Cameroonisms, Anchimbe presents valid analyses of the authentically evolutionary indigenisation of Cameroon English as part of the New Englishes which have evolved in Africa and elsewhere and as such contributes immensely to the study of World Englishes in general and African varieties of English in particular. Implicitly, the lack of a phonological analysis of Cameroon English in this study is due mainly to the fact that “linguistic research on English in Cameroon has largely been focused on the phonological rendition of the language and on cross-linguistic and cross-cultural influences on it in this vast multilinguistic and multicultural setting” (Anchimbe 2006:17). As such, it is time to turn to “other components of the language that deserve a similar level of description” (Anchimbe 2006: 17) he observes.

In describing the “other” peculiar characteristics that Cameroon English displays, Anchimbe presents features that are common in Cameroon English usage and considers them not as deviances of British or other types of Native Englishes, contrary to what other researchers used to portray (Anchimbe 2006: 17), but as typical Cameroon English forms which are drawn or adapted from the ecology just as other varieties of English have features that are products of their different linguistic settings. However, he cautions readers that these Cameroon features are not exclusively found in other Indigenised Varieties of English (IVE hence forward) features: each variety is a reflection of those who use it and the society in which it is used (Anchimbe 2006: 205; see also Schneider 2007). He equally maintains that, if analyses of the other varieties of English are made with the use of British English yardstick, considering the origin of all varieties of English, a sociological, cultural, ecological and linguistic injustice will be committed since “British English is just as sufficiently mixed as any of the IVEs; it has been exposed to contact just in the same manner as the other varieties; non-standard, dialect and other internal varieties have been active in its evolution in similar ways as in the multilingual settings of the other varieties” (Anchimbe 2006: 204).

With the cultural, sociological, ecological and linguistic adaptation of the English language in Cameroon in mind, Anchimbe’s work (2006) presents a

defence of the evolution of English from “English in Cameroon” to “Cameroon English” which coincides with the publications of similar studies on *Cameroon English* within the same period, namely Kouega (2006, 2007).

His discussion begins with the spread of the English language and its related linguistic consequences in the different societies where English is used as a native, non-native and foreign language. Since the worldwide use of the English language has to do with norms, irrespective of who uses the language, the L1, L2 or Foreign language speaker, Anchimbe maintains that “the journey of English around the world and its reincarnations in various areas have been accompanied by prescriptive attempts to fix standards for it” (Anchimbe 2006: 28). He differentiates between the prescriptive and descriptive approach to language (which he calls “permissivism”) and settles with the fact that since “language is dynamic and always changing” it is only “usage” that should determine the benchmark “for standard language” (Anchimbe 2006: 29). With this in mind, he equally distinguishes several notions of English as a global language: the difference between international, regional and national standards; native and non-native dichotomies of language use; code rules as against context rules and the different linguistic identities that are mushrooming within the global context of the English language with a focus on the Indigenized Varieties of English considering their functions and uses, the place of these varieties of English in the educational system, the socio-cultural context of communication and the linguistic features that these Englishes display (grammar, lexical, semantic and phonological characteristics).

After discussing the linguistic consequences of the global spread of the EL after Kachru’s model, Anchimbe focuses on the Cameroon linguistic ecology vis-à-vis the English language. Anchimbe presents Cameroon English “within the geographical and linguistic context in which it exists” juxtaposing and showing “the interaction between languages in Cameroon, the historical evolutionary patterns of these languages, and the impact of contact with them on English” (Anchimbe 2006: 44). On this note, he makes a thorough analysis of the linguistic situation of Cameroon and then discusses concepts on the language acquisition patterns, language use and language context. He equally looks at the place and

impact of the home languages and compares them to Cameroon Pidgin English. He considers the latter from a historical and current sociolinguistic framework and then analyses the status of English and French as official languages in Cameroon from sociohistorical, language contact and language interference perspectives.

Anchimbe presents the theoretical framework for Cameroon English as he looks at the data that he uses throughout the study. He makes references to concepts and theories - language acquisition theories, bilingualism, theories of pidgins and Creole studies - which have been used in the past to study IVEs which were not suitable for “investigating the emergence and evolution of the IVEs in their complete sociohistorical contexts as would generally be the case with *normal* language varieties” (Anchimbe 2006: 67). In order to counteract such non-suitable approach for the study of IVEs, he proposes the “Integrational Filter” and the “Filtration Process” based on Mufwene’s “feature pool” as a way to prove the sources of Cameroon English.

2.3.6. Sierra Leone

Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon and the Gambia, as English-speaking countries, do not show high degree of population movement and settlement with reference to the genesis and evolution of their varieties of English as compared to Liberia (as shown above) and Sierra Leone within the study of New Englishes or Indigenised Varieties of English in West Africa. In fact, there is linguistic as well as historical evidence for tracing the influence of English and its restructured varieties particularly in Nigeria, Cameroon, the Gambia and Sierra Leone (Spencer 1971; Holm 1988/89; Görlach 1996; Huber 1999, 2004; Hackert & Huber 2007, among others). Sociohistorical and linguistic facts around the history of the English language in Liberia and Sierra Leone point to the fact that present-day English varieties spoken in these countries can be traced back to the varieties which were brought by the African American settlers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Jones 1971; Holm 1988/89; Fyfe ed. 1991; Montgomery 1999; Huber 1999, 2004; Hackert & Huber 2007). While discussing the origins of Krio, Jones equally mentions the different dialects of the English language in the early period of the Freetown settlement: “there is evidence from various sources of a

distinctive dialect or dialects of English in the peninsula area of Sierra Leone from the early part of the nineteenth century” (Jones 1971: 67; see also Alie 1990: 51ff). These facts help to support Mufwene’s (2007) hypothesis that not only contact but also population movement is an important factor in the evolution of languages.

Considering this fact, this section on the state of the art on the English language in Sierra Leone has to make mention of the importation of a particular variety of English, namely, the variety brought by the Nova Scotians (re)settled in Freetown in 1792 (Jones 1971; Holm 1988/89; Alie 1990; Fyfe ed.: 1991; Montgomery 1999; Huber 1999, 2004). Among the other varieties of English brought to the settlement, we consider it extremely important in any discussion of the English language in Sierra Leone or Krio and it is the variety that is most documented and studied (Jones 1971: 69ff; see also Fyfe ed. 1991; Montgomery 1999; Huber 2004; Hackert & Huber 2007). Their analyses are not only based on linguistic features of the Nova Scotian variety of English including their phonological and structural properties, but they have also compared the Nova Scotian variety and Krio in particular to African American English (Montgomery 1999), to Gullah and other restructured varieties of English such as the Bahamian Creole (Huber 2004; Hackert & Huber 2007). A discussion on the English language in Sierra Leone should put these diachronic works into perspective so as to establish a strong sociohistorical case for the evolution of English in Sierra Leone.

The sociohistorical and linguistic significance of the settlers’ English notwithstanding, the importance of the English language in Sierra Leone today as in many other Third World countries generally, and, in particular, the West African English-using countries, as the official administrative, legal and language of instruction is unquestionable. It is the language that guarantees upward social and economic mobility (Spencer 1971; Pemagbi 1989). One thing characteristically different about the English language in Sierra Leone (and the Gambia as indicated above) is that very little academic attention has been paid to the co-existence of English with Sierra Leonean languages in relation to the area of the influence the former is exerting on the indigenous languages and vice versa

and the changes that may have taken place on languages in Sierra Leone (except for Jones 1971; Jabbi 1972; Fyle 1975; Sesay 1984; Johnson 1986; Pemagbi 1989; Fyfe ed. 1991; Conteh-Morgan 1997 and more recently Turay 2010).

Turay (2010) is the first in the recent linguistic history of Sierra Leone to trace the nativisation process of the English language in Sierra Leone. Besides proving the fact that “there is an evolving variety of English in Sierra Leone”, he observes that the peculiarities of the English of educated Sierra Leoneans are as legitimate as the other varieties across the globe (Turay 2010: 337-8). Although Turay (2010) has suggested the codification and standardisation of Sierra Leone English, Cheshire (1991: 7) admonishes caution in such a move since “the immense amount of variation that exists in English around the world presents difficulties of codification and standardisation, as well as problems in the choice of a teaching model, none of which can be neglected in the English-language teaching context”. We consider first a nationwide description of Sierra Leone English (taking possible regional and local varieties into consideration in view of the ethnolinguistic background of the educated speakers of the language) and compare its features to Englishes in the region and beyond before thinking of codifying and standardising the Sierra Leone variety.

Apart from Turay’s recent work, this worldwide phenomenon of language contact, variation and change and the emergence of “New Englishes” has not yet attracted many Sierra Leonean linguists or language teachers: “Sierra Leone could be said to constitute one of the ‘relatively blank areas on the map of English sociolinguistic research’ in Africa” (Schmeid 1991 cited in Conteh-Morgan 1997). According to Conteh-Morgan, the reason for the lack of such a study is partly due to the fact that the first-generation intellectuals of Sierra Leone do not view English as a foreign language considering the social and linguistic history of Sierra Leone, particularly in Freetown. In fact, most of the settlers brought to the colony from England, Jamaica and North America did not have an African language as their L1 and were thus acting as “Black Englishmen” because they could speak English convincingly well and also because they were originally from English speaking countries:

This proprietary attitude was reinforced by the fact that the early settlers in and around Freetown did not have an African language. The belief that English is their native language is still largely held by some of their descendants, known as Krios, despite the changed sociolinguistic patterns of language contact and change. Many other Sierra Leoneans have also been socialised into not seeing English as non-native (Conteh-Morgan 1997: 52).

This notion of Sierra Leoneans priding themselves of speaking a native type of English can be noticed from current educated speakers of SLE as well. Consider Fofana's comment here criticising students and teachers alike who do not follow British norms, "Queen's English", as expected of Sierra Leoneans:

I dare say that even among high school and university graduate the Queen's English is being butchered, given a new meaning and a new structure; something that would be bad enough to make the Queen quaver if she heard that from a Sierra Leonean. What this means is that even some teachers of English lack knowledge in the basics of the language because they were not taught them. ... The speaking of the language is in coma. In offices, people do not speak English. In school, they do not. On college campuses, it is Krio, Krio and Krio. ... The downward spiral is alarming. (Fofana 2008)

Note that for Fofana the language is not only the property of the British Monarch, but of Sierra Leoneans as well, since their use of English is expected to reflect British norms, at the same level with British citizens. It is, however, pertinent to highlight a few issues from the above excerpt:

- (1) "*the Queen's English* is being butchered, given a new meaning and a new structure; something that would be bad enough to make the Queen quaver *if she heard that from a Sierra Leonean*" (emphasis mine).

Compare that to what Conteh-Morgan said above "Many other Sierra Leoneans have also been socialised into not seeing *English as non-native*" (emphasis mine). Many Sierra Leonean intellectuals are still of the opinion that English is not only one of the Sierra Leonean languages but that Sierra Leoneans speak "British English". What has not been understood yet is the fact that the "Queen's English" was not the English exported to Sierra Leone (see Fyfe ed. 1991; Montgomery 1999) nor the variety acquired or learned by Sierra Leoneans (teachers were mainly missionaries who were not native speakers of English) (Sesay 1984; Pemagbi 1989; Conteh-Morgan 1997; Turay 2010). Even if we assume that it had been the type of English acquired when Western education was introduced, the

fact that English has co-existed with other languages in Sierra Leone conveys the introduction of “new meanings” and “new structures”.

- (2) “What this means is that even some teachers of English lack knowledge in the basics of the language because they were not taught them”.

The current approach to (second) language acquisition is not teacher-centred (where the teacher is the centre of the learning process) but rather learner-centred (where both the teacher and the learner negotiate the learning process). We agree to some extent and share some of the concerns of Fofana with regard to the teaching and learning of English in Sierra Leone in the sense that an educational reform is necessary with reference to the teaching and learning of the English language.

- (3) “The speaking of the language is in coma ...speaking English, to some, is perceived as a show off ... it is Krio, Krio and Krio”.

It has to be like that because Sierra Leoneans, like other West African English-using people, were not taught (in the traditional sense) to speak English in order to integrate into an English culture but rather to use the language as an instrument to achieve some objectives (social, academic, economic, political) since the language is the official language of administration, education, the courts and other professional areas. What is really taught is literature in English, very distant from the immediate reality of the common Sierra Leonean student (see Wright 1990). Sociologically, the language of wider communication is Krio (spoken by a small number of L1 speakers and by other Sierra Leoneans as L2/L3 speakers); English is the language of the fortunate few (a small number of L2 speakers, while the rest of Sierra Leoneans speak English as an L3/additional language; see chapters four and five).

Returning to Conteh-Morgan (1997), if up to the twenty-first century, taking into account Fofana’s worries and concerns, English is being considered a native language, “teaching approaches and methods would certainly assume a native-speaker type teaching/learning situation” with little or no attention whatsoever to the multilingual nature of the country (Conteh-Morgan 1997: 52-53). Thus, deviant forms are regarded as “substandard” since the norm is the “Queen’s English” which hardly exists in Sierra Leone, linguistically and socio-

culturally speaking.

Apart from the issue of Sierra Leonean intellectuals considering their English as native, Conteh-Morgan also notes the lack of creative writers “who would have to deal with the challenges of how to depict indigenous realities” through the English language (Conteh-Morgan 1997: 53). Despite the perceptions of many educated speakers of English in Sierra Leone and the lack of writers in Sierra Leone on a par with Achebe and Soyinka, the English language in Sierra Leone “exhibits certain patterns which are becoming entrenched, setting it aside from Standard British and other varieties” (Conteh-Morgan 1997: 53; see also Turay 2010).

Conteh-Morgan (1997: 55) mentions four varieties of the English language:

1. *The basilect*, which is characterized by L1 linguistic feature’s transference and clearly unintelligible outside the speakers’ linguistic community.
2. *The mesolect*, which is less influenced by the speaker’s L1 but displays some distinctive phonological features.
3. *The acrolect*, closer to Standard British English on some language levels but differs on the phonological/phonetic level.
4. *Quasi-British English*: this is marked by its closeness to standard British English on all language levels except some phonetic features and discourse strategies.

Consequently, a serious study of English in Sierra Leone taking into account the above-mentioned varieties will determine whether or not the English language has crystallised into “a new language” in Sierra Leone and whether it is still intelligible or not with the home variety and with other varieties of World Englishes.

Pemagbi’s (1989) paper in response (it seems, controversially) to Jabbi’s “Innovative Deviancy in Sierra Leonean English Usage” (1972), not only gives a historical background to the existence of the English language in Sierra Leone but equally mentions the fact that the English language in Sierra Leone, as in many other non-native regions, is an educational and intellectual achievement (Spencer 1971; see also Mufwene 2007: 84; Turay 2010) and hence enjoys a

privileged position:

But it was colonial rule more than any other single agent that established the language and elevated it to the official position it now enjoys. All other functions either directly emanate from the official status of the language, or are sanctioned by it (Pemagbi 1989: 20).

This official status of the English language has social, political, cultural and economic consequences both for the individual Sierra Leonean user of English and for the country as a whole.

While the subtitle of Pemagbi's paper gives "a description and glossary of the 'New English' of Sierra Leone", in support of the fact that English "is not indigenous to the country" and as such has "the formidable challenge to express a completely new environment of flora and fauna, sociocultural patterns and institutions, economic and political practices, food, modes of dress, etc., against a background of heavy multilingualism that is further complicated by an English-based Creole" (Pemagbi 1989: 20-21), for Pemagbi, like for Jabbi, English is still "deficient in Sierra Leone" (1989: 20-21). Current scholarship on New Englishes, though, (see Mufwene 2001; Schneider 2003, 2007, 2011; Anchimbe 2006; Mesthrie and Bhatt 2008; Sedlatschek 2009, among many others) consider these peculiarities in English to express authentic sociocultural, socioeconomic and socio-political realities of the new ecology of the English language as a sign of the naturalisation of the new language in its new environment, and not as manifestations of its deficiency and deviance (see Grieve 1964; Spencer ed.1971; Jabbi 1972; Strevens 1980; Pemagbi 1989; Turay 2010).

We agree with Pemagbi's vocabulary items of Sierra Leone English, which stem from basic sources: indigenous languages, combinations of indigenous languages and English, extensions of Standard English, and special adaptations of Standard English (Pemagbi 1989: 22-24). However, we find it hard to accept his condemnation of Jabbi's (1972) article, which Pemagbi considers pioneering but controversial, considering his analysis of the title of Jabbi's paper and his rendition of Jabbi's findings (Pemagbi 1989: 21-22).

Turay's study (2010) on the peculiarities of the English usage of educated Sierra Leoneans also dismantles these negative conceptions of SLE since

he reveals a degree of systematicity inexistent in deviant or deficient speech. He focuses on Selinker's (1972, 1992) "Inter-language Fossilisation Theory" and Platt *et al* (1984) "Theory of Nativisation" as his theoretical framework in the analysis of his data. He uses newspapers and radio programmes as sources of his data in order to pinpoint the peculiarities of English usage in Sierra Leone. He observes that "forms of English usage peculiar to Sierra Leone are becoming evident. These forms are not haphazard in nature since they appear to show some level of systematicity. A New English is therefore developing in Sierra Leone" (Turay 2010:340). The characteristics are based on phonological, grammatical and discourse features. Essentially, "it is observed that a good number of the respondents consider the peculiarities acceptable" (Turay 2010: vii). These peculiarities are the result of mother-tongue transfer, unfamiliarity with the rules of English, language teaching methodologies, overgeneralisation of language rules and cultural influence (Turay 2010: 338-9).

Naturally, after considering all these approaches to SLE, it becomes pertinent at this stage to reiterate Spencer's position about the English language in West Africa: "English is only part of the total linguistic activity of a typical urban West African" (Spencer 1971: 6). And as such "when languages live side by side within the lives of individuals and societies, a constant reciprocal seepage takes place" (Spencer 1971: 7). This is exactly what can be deduced from Pemagbi's (1989) and Jabbi's (1972) articles, and, equally from Turay's (2010) study which looks at the phonological and structural peculiarities of the new English of Sierra Leone. Such features can in no uncertain terms be considered 'deficient' or 'deviant' neither by Jabbi, Pemagbi nor by any other researcher or reader alike. For as long as English continues to be the intellectual property of those who use it in Sierra Leone, it will continue to show Sierra Leonean linguistic features in its vocabulary, meanings, sounds and structural features.

2.4. Conclusion

This chapter has examined the English language from a global perspective considering ecology as the determining factor in the nomenclatures of the different Englishes around the world. It has also discussed the sociolinguistic and

cultural dichotomies as well as the acquisition patterns between English as a Native Language and English as a Second Language.

Given the title of the chapter, “On English in West Africa: state of the art”, the chapter has presented literature reviews of the five English speaking West African countries plus Cameroon in Central Africa. The reason for this is not only because the author is interested in providing views and positions of the different articles and books reviewed about the English language in these countries or because he wants to make a historical connection between these varieties of English in Africa and that of Sierra Leone, but because he wants to present the English linguistic landscape of West Africa plus Cameroon so as to serve future researchers of these varieties in the different countries analysed.

Since English has been the language of instruction as well as the official administrative, legal and diplomatic language in these countries, we can easily infer that it has remained as the link between the colonised countries and Britain, and/or as a mark of linguistic achievement. However, we cannot forget that English has also been the language through which the activists for independence championed their independence campaigns (see Boadi 1971).

While this work is not advocating the erroneous use of the English language with respect to standard norms of use, that is, not ignoring the linguistic and pedagogical issues relating to the language, it is equally not disregarding the cultural and sociolinguistic context that surrounds the English language in the Outer-Circle, in this case the English language in Sierra Leone. The Outer-Circle types of English are to be seen as the outcomes of British colonialism, the acculturated and indigenised forms of the language. In short, the “colonization” of the English language: “English is now ours, we have colonized it” (Abad cited in Schneider 2003: 233).

Chapter 3

Framework for describing Sierra Leone English

Regarding the spread of English around the world, I maintain that native Englishes, indigenized Englishes and English Pidgins and Creoles among them are due to variation in the ecological conditions which assigned different values to the variables of the language-structuring equation and thus determined varying outcomes from one case to another (Mufwene 2001: 113).

3.0. Introduction

One of the consequences of the widespread dispersal of the English language has to do with the various ways the language has diversified and the subsequent ways it has been described and classified. Whereas English is a native language for some, others use it as a non-native language, and still yet some others use it as a foreign language with an international dispensation, character and status. The present place of prominence that English enjoys in an already globalised world has been considered from various perspectives. For Kachru, "the universalization of English and the power of this language have come at a price; for some, the implications are agonizing, while for others they are a matter of ecstasy" (Kachru 1996: 135). Schneider considers the global spread of the English language as "one of the most remarkable, and perhaps unexpected, sociocultural changes of the modern period culminating in the late twentieth century" (Schneider 2007: 1). While efforts directed towards the artificial creation of a global lingua franca failed, the English language has naturally taken that role:

However, at the same time, and contrary to expectations, English has diversified, developing into homegrown forms and uses in many locations. It has also become an indigenized language, even as a mother tongue, in several countries around the globe. In some countries, the descendants of former colonists or colonizers have retained the language to the present day; in others, interestingly enough, it was the local, indigenous population who have adopted and appropriated the English language for themselves, thus contributing to its diversification and the emergence of new varieties

(Schneider 2007: 1).

The above position can be compared to that highlighted by Mufwene (2001: 106ff) as regards the legitimate and illegitimate offspring of English transplanted by the British Empire (see also Holm 1989: 405). Due to this linguistic expansion, the English language came into contact with other languages and has been subsequently adopted and appropriated to perform communicative functions in different geographical and cultural territories (see Kachru 1996; Mufwene 2001, 2009; Jenkins 2003; Schneider 2007; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008). Each diaspora has its own peculiar ecological characteristics:

The first diaspora, initially involving the migration of around 25,000 people from the south and east of England primarily to America and Australia, resulted in new mother-tongue varieties of English. The second diaspora, involving the colonization of Asia and Africa led, on the other hand, to the development of a number of second-language varieties, often referred to as 'New Englishes' (Jenkins 2003: 5).

With these two dispersals of the English language, "new mother-tongue varieties", "New Englishes" or "second-language varieties" of English came into existence. This is equally highlighted and supported by Baugh and Cable (2002: 2): "the political and cultural history of the English language is not simply the history of the British Isles and of North America but a truly international history of quite divergent societies". Holm (1989) equally talks about this unique transplantation of the English language the world over: "[B]ritain was more successful than any other nation in implanting its language around the globe, both in terms of sheer numbers of speakers and in the proliferation of overseas varieties" (Holm 1989: 405). Consistent with Holm (1989), Kachru (1996), Mufwene (2001, 2009), Jenkins (2003), Anchimbe (2006) and Schneider (2007), it becomes evident that the 'new Englishes' are legitimate and authentic varieties (though heterogeneous in response to their ecologies) of metropolitan English: "All new Englishes are natural developments and legitimate offspring, although some look more like their ancestors than others do" (Mufwene 2001: 197).

The intrinsic and mutual relationship that exists between language and society is sometimes disregarded by language and social studies' researchers,

teachers and students alike (Tonkin 2003). In any given society, people communicate with others without solely relying “on the rules of language as a formal system, but draw equally on their knowledge of the social context” (Tonkin 2003: 2). Their use of language most often reveals their personal, social, cultural, geographical and professional background, economic and political status, and, the general dimension of the topic under discussion. The rules of language are, therefore, not sufficient to determine the dynamic nature of language in society (Spencer ed. 1971; Mufwene 2001; Schneider 2007; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008, among others). Thus, language plays a vital role in human communication, human behaviour and human understanding.

Since language is not only a rule-bound system but a social phenomenon as well, used to identify people, this study considers the English language in Sierra Leone from a sociohistorical and ecological perspective in a bid to determine whether the use of English in Sierra Leone can legitimately be said to identify its users as having a variety authentically based on the Sierra Leonean ecology considering phonological and structural features (see Holm 1989; Pemagbi 1989; Fyfe ed. 1991; Montgomery 1999; Huber 1999, 2004; Mufwene 2001, 2009; Anchimbe 2006; Schneider 2007; Turay 2010). That notwithstanding, it is a proven fact that wherever two or more languages co-exist, there is bound to be mutual influence either through borrowing and/or linguistic interference (see Kirk-Greene 1971, Ansre 1971, Lüpke 2010 for West Africa; Jabbi 1972; Pemagbi 1989; Conteh-Morgan 1997; Turay 2010 for Sierra Leone). Has this co-existence been felt taking cognizance of the fact that the English language interacts with other languages in Sierra Leone, especially with its lexified creole language, Krio? Put differently, given that in West Africa “French, English and Portuguese as the colonial languages have also left imprints on most of the languages and cultures” (Lüpke 2010: 1), to what extent can we say that Sierra Leonean languages have not equally left structural, phonological and lexico-semantic imprints on the English used by Sierra Leoneans, especially as we reflect on the fact that “contact between languages is an important contributor to language change through the transfer of linguistic material (forms, meanings, and form-meaning associations) from one language to the other” (Lüpke 2010: 2)? In

view of the preceding questions, can the English language in Sierra Leone, then, be free from contact-induced language change? From a more theoretical and practical position, the answer to the last question cannot be affirmative because “every new colonial variety of a European language (creole or non-creole) is contact based, by the same competition-and-selection language evolution mechanisms from a feature pool” (Mufwene 2001: 46).

3.1. Issues in Sociolinguistics, Historical and Contact Linguistics

Historical linguistics studies language change and it determines what can and cannot change in a language (Campbell 1998:1-2). Since the primary concern of historical linguistics is language change, that is, changes in (a) language(s) over time, and since change in language is an inevitable process, Campbell cautions those who lament and complain over language change that “language change is just a fact of life; it cannot be prevented or avoided” (Campbell 1998:3). Just as it has inevitably happened before,

... the changes going on today which so distress some in our society are exactly the same in kind and character as many past changes about which there was much complaint and worry as they were taking place but the results of which today are considered enriching aspects of the modern language (Campbell 1998: 3-4).

Therefore, whether we are looking at language change from the perspective of sound change, grammatical change, semantic change, borrowing or L1 interferences and analogy, “language change is not really good or bad”, negative or positive; it is the sociolinguistic conditionings that are attached to such changes that are very significant in the whole process of language change (Campbell 1998: 3; see also Thomason and Kaufman 1988).

The central concerns of sociolinguistics, that is, “the place of language in society” and “the social context of linguistic diversity” (Romaine [1994] 2000: ix) permeate this study on the English language in Sierra Leone as it takes into account the society that uses the language and the language as an entity in itself, subject to change and variation as features “inherent in human behaviour” (Romaine 2000: xi). Thus, the English language in Sierra Leone is studied not as

an abstract object but as an object that has social implications and concerns (Romaine 2000: ix). The study of language change and variation and the effects of the contact of speakers of different languages can only be better understood through a thorough study of the society through language and a study of language with reference to the society. These perspectives have an important effect on language variation and language change since “language is essentially a human cultural product situated in an ever-changing historical context” (Romaine 2000: 164).

In this respect, Thomason and Kaufman’s (1988) claim that social factors are primary determinant and linguistic factors are secondary in the linguistic outcome of language contact is in line with Romaine’s (2000) ideas on “the place of language in society” and “the social context of linguistic diversity” cited above. Even though their claim has elicited very strong criticisms from other researchers (for example, Sankoff 2001; King 2002; Aikhenvald 2002; Mufwene 2007; to name only a few, cited in Thomason 2008), we agree with Thomason and Kaufman’s claim that:

... it is the sociolinguistic history of the speakers, and not the structure of their language, that is the primary determinant of the linguistic outcome of language contact. ... linguistic interference is conditioned in the first instance by social factors, not linguistic ones. Both the direction of interference and the extent of interference are socially determined; so, to a considerable degree, are the kinds of features transferred from one language to another (Thomason and Kaufman 1988: 35).

Mufwene (2007) equates the peculiarity of language change and variation to that of race: “the whole distinction between internally versus externally-motivated change must have to do with another legacy from the nineteenth century: the ideology of language purity, which is itself related to that of race purity” (Mufwene 2007: 64; see also Kachru 1996). As such the outcomes of race and linguistic contact are considered “less normal” and “unnatural developments” especially when viewed from the perspective of the dispersal of Europeans and consequent colonisation and all it entails, linguistically and culturally (Mufwene 2007: 64; see also Jenkins 2003). For Mufwene

[T]he distinction between putatively the “unusual emergence” of creoles and the “normal evolution” of non-creole varieties must also have to do with a myopic perception of colonization as a recent phenomenon, correlated only with the dispersal of Europeans around the world since the Great Explorations of the 15th century. Unfortunately, this position overlooks, or downplays, the important ecological fact that, for instance, the emergence of the Romance languages has to do with the Roman Empire, which is a past instance of colonization (Mufwene 2007: 64).

While the Romance languages and other European languages, as non-creole languages, are considered normal and natural, creoles and non-native varieties of European languages are generally reckoned as imperfect languages. This situation seems to contradict the fact that both the Romance languages and these creoles and the non-native varieties of European languages share common processes of birth and development. They are all products of population movements and language contact, which is related to the exportation and consequent spread of alien languages and cultures to other people, resulting, as it were, in language shifts and the steady predominance of the colonial/alien language. However, the language contact situation that ensues does not become complete without some form of naturalisation and consequent modification at the detriment of the local languages in some cases (Mufwene 2007: 64). An important case in point is that of English:

[T]his expansive and replacive evolutionary process is also true of the birth and subsequent spread, with modifications, of Old English as one of the consequences of the colonization of England by Germanic populations since the 5th century, although it also resulted in the demise of the continental European languages that the colonists had brought with them (Mufwene 2007: 64).

Whereas the European languages that the expansionists and colonialists brought with them, especially the case of English in Africa, did not die, some amount of indigenisation and linguistic and cultural adaptation took place owing to the fact that the contact was not only linguistic but also socio-cultural (see Holm 1988/89; Huber 1999; Mufwene 2001, 2009; Schneider 2007). However, the impact of the socio-cultural factors outweighs that of the linguistic factors with regard to language change and variation. In other words, we cannot have a linguistic change in a language contact situation based solely or primarily on linguistic factors. Mufwene (2007: 65) notes: “all causes of change in any language are external to its

structure, lying in the communicative acts of speakers, such as the accommodation that speakers make to each other in order to be (better) understood and exaptations they make of old materials to convey new ideas”. Therefore, according to Mufwene, just as others (Thomason & Kaufman 1988), linguistic factors depend highly on social factors.

Why are social factors considered primary and linguistic factors secondary as regards language change and variation? Part of the answer has been given by Thomason and Kaufman (1988: 4): “the history of a language is a function of the history of its speakers, and not an independent phenomenon that can be thoroughly studied without reference to the social context in which it is embedded”, and the other part by Milroy (1992), who says, *inter alia*, that:

... if we bear in mind the fact that although change is observed in systems, it must be brought about by speakers, the apparent contradiction is resolved. When linguists speak of a close contact situation, they are usually thinking of contact between *systems*, but what actually occurs is contact between *speakers* of different languages: the changes that result and that are then observed in the system have been brought about by speakers, who form weak and uniplex ties when two populations first come into contact. So, strictly speaking, it is not really *language* contact at all, but *speaker* contact. In such situations the model would predict that the innovators in close contact situations are those who form weak ties both inside and outside their own community, and not the central members of either community (Milroy 1992: 199-200).

Considering the “social context” of Thomason and Kaufman and the “weak and uniplex ties” of Milroy cited above formed by speakers in a language/speaker contact situation, while we do not neglect the internal linguistic factors, following Thomason and Kaufman (1988) and Thomason (2008), we underline the fact that the changes that are observed in the language systems are a result of, firstly, the social relationships of the speakers and then the linguistic systems. That is, languages cannot bring about changes on their own without considering the speakers and their social connections within a particular language contact community.

Both Sankoff (2001: 640-641 cited in Thomason 2008: 43) and Thomason (2008: 43) agree that there is a correlation between social and linguistic factors in determining which types of language features can be borrowed or predicted and

under which social circumstances or conditions. However, Thomason and Kaufman (1988) do not claim that

... any kind of language change can be absolutely predicted, in any kind of situation. The fact that certain types of contact-induced change are possible in a given contact situation therefore does not mean that we can confidently expect to find them. In internally- as well as externally-motivated language change, even the most natural and common changes often fail to occur. To put it slightly differently, an intense language contact situation is a NECESSARY condition for extensive structural interference to occur, but it is not a SUFFICIENT condition (Thomason 2008: 44).

In essence, therefore, each language contact situation is a unique case in itself.

In sociolinguistic terms, Thomason considers “changes under conditions of full bilingualisms” as one of the two categories that determine language change and variation (Thomason 2008: 48). In this kind of change, imperfect learning is said to play no role. What is involved is non-basic vocabulary, a few structural features and basic lexical items. This sort of interference can be compared to borrowing (see Thomason and Kaufman 1988) and in most cases linguistic features from a second language are introduced into the first language.

If imperfect learning is the case, phonological and syntactical features are predominant in the interference. Equally so, “the lexicon and morphology may also be transferred from one language to the other” (Thomason 2008: 48), that is, *shift-induced interference*, “the shifting of an entire speech community to another group’s language” occurs (Thomason 2008: 48). This language shift involves that shifting speakers (1) are not able to perfectly learn the target language (TL), especially those marked features lacking in their first language (L1), and, (2) transfer linguistic features from their L1 to the TL.

The above mentioned interference features (1 and 2 above) become the shifting group’s version of the target language (TL2), the indigenised or the non-native variety (see also Mufwene 2009). Thomason notes that “if the shifting group is integrated into the TL speech community, original TL speakers may borrow a subset of the TL2 interference features, thus forming TL3, a melded version of the TL” (Thomason 2008: 48). But, how do we know that an internal

change has occurred? Thomason (2008) mentions five basic steps in claiming that a change has occurred language-internally:

1. compare languages looking at the languages in question as wholes, that is, looking “for a series of independent, unrelated structural changes in the proposed receiving languages” (Thomason 2008: 49);
2. identify source languages: “it must be possible to show that the proposed source language is or was in contact with the proposed receiving language and that the contact situation was intense enough to make structural interference a reasonable prospect” (Thomason 2008: 49);
3. identify structural features in both the source and receiving language(s);
4. prove the inexistence of interference features in the receiving language before contact, and
5. prove the presence of the features in the source language before contact.

Although this study concerns the social/external factors in relation to the English language in Sierra Leone (Sierra Leone English to be more accurate), we equally cannot dismiss the linguistic/internal factors because as Thomason cautions,

... establishing an external cause does not exclude an internal cause. Multiple causation is common, and a complete explanation for a given change in a contact situation must take potential internal as well as external motivations into account. The reverse holds too, of course: if there is any evidence of significant language contact, external motivations must be considered as well as internal causes in efforts to explain particular changes (Thomason 2008: 49-50).

As such, though the five steps are more related to proving internal factors, it is necessary to note that, no matter who is involved in the innovation and its consequent spread, children or adults, one thing becomes clear:

[E]ven if the innovation is entirely linguistic in nature, however, the spread of any innovation through a speech community must certainly be social at least in part, because it is governed by such things as social networks, prestige, and various demographic factors (Thomason 2008: 50).

It is these social or external factors that are primarily explored (chapters four and five) before considering the linguistic or structural evidence (chapter six) with regard to Sierra Leone English.

As outlined in Thomason (2008: 52), firstly, the social factors take prominence over the linguistic factors with regard to language change and variation: “without language contact, there can be no contact-induced linguistic change”. Secondly, contrary to Weinreich’s position: “in the interference of two grammatical patterns it is ordinarily the one which uses relatively free and invariant morphemes in its paradigms...which serves as the model for imitation (Weinreich 1953: 41; Thomason 2008: 52-53) we consider Thomason’s position to be more logical. That is, the social dealings of the different language communities, between and among each language community, are more significant than the structure of their respective languages in a language contact situation as regards language interference and the direction of the influence each language is exerting on the other: “the social relations between the two speech communities, not the structure of their languages, determine the direction and even the extent of interference” (Thomason 2008: 53). The predominance of the social factors over the linguistic factors should not be seen as if the latter are irrelevant. Thirdly, the presence or lack of imperfect learning and the consequent interference features should be seen as “a social fact with linguistic consequences” (Thomason 2008: 53). This means that the linguistic features that are invariably transferred from the L1 to the TL or that are imperfectly acquired “are conditioned by the sharp distinction between the two social situations, not vice versa” (Thomason 2008: 53).

It is the social factors and the social context through which a language is acquired and used that determine its crystallisation into either a “new variety” or a “new language”. Put differently, the exportation of a language to different social settings and conditions and its acquisition by a new group of people with an inherent cultural and linguistic manifestation will cause that language to acquire new meanings, uses and functions especially so as the new owners of that language will use the new language to express their peculiar socio-cultural, political, economic and other related realities. The fact that English was brought to Sierra Leone by non-native speakers at the initial phase of the Freetown settlement

coupled with the fact that it is acquired through the scholastic means rather than natural interactions implies that those who speak English in Sierra Leone have (an)other language(s), and, therefore, their variety of English should be seen to be influenced by the other languages that they speak (see below; see also chapters four and five). This should not be seen as the only factor responsible for the nativisation of English in L2 contexts, in Sierra Leone in our case. Other factors such as the educational level of the user (given the fact that English is an educational achievement), the speakers' frequency of speaking English, the type of English he/she is exposed to, among others can also be seen as significant factors in the nativisation process (see chapter six).

3.2. On the ecology, evolution and indigenisation of (a) language(s)

This section considers language ecology and evolution (3.2.1.) and then language indigenisation (3.2.2) as important theoretical frameworks in our description of Sierra Leone English.

3.2.1. Language ecology and evolution

A study of English in Sierra Leone involves the analysis of the relevance of settlement and colonialism as well as the massive spread of the English language to remote areas far from its native land, England, through various means such as religion, education, science and technology, international business and politics, i.e. the impact the language exerts on its speakers and their other languages and vice versa:

Those who aspire to influence aspire also to a command of English: one cannot go far in a profession anywhere in the world without sooner or later encountering the desirability of knowing English (Tonkin 2003: 17; see also Section 76 of the 1991 Constitution of the Rep. of Sierra Leone, *Government of Sierra Leone* 1991).

Yet, this linguistic influence of the English language requires a price. The language is constantly changing and is constantly being remodelled to suit not only new local ecologies but also new linguistic needs, hence the enfranchising of some varieties of the English language as “legitimate”, “good”, “correct” and “proper” and the disenfranchising of some other varieties as “illegitimate”, “bad”,

“incorrect” and “improper” (Mufwene 2001). This classification of the different varieties of English seems to ignore the ecological factor of language. According to Anchimbe (2006: 79), citing Gould (1993) and Mufwene (2001):

... each human language exists in an ecology analogous to a biological ecology. This is the decisive environment that sets the rules for competition both among individuals within a species and among species that share the same habitat.

The term ‘ecology of language’ was first used by Haugen in the 1970s in a series of papers that he delivered (Mühlhäusler 1996; Fill 2000; Mufwene 2001). For Haugen (1972: 323 cited in Fill 2000: 61), language ecology refers to the “study of interactions between any given language and its environment”. Haugen further maintains, *inter alia*, that “the true environment of a language is the society that uses it as one of its codes” (Haugen 1972: 325 cited in Mühlhäusler 1996: 3). In essence, therefore, Haugen “sees more in the ecology of language than just sociology of language or the study of speech situations or contexts” (Mühlhäusler 1996: 3). The existence of a language in a society, therefore, presupposes that that language forms part of that society and its use will inevitably reflect that society from various standpoints. Still, if that society has speakers of other languages, this ensures language contact as speakers make choices on which language(s) to use, when, where and for what purpose(s). So, the ecological factors of a language must be taken into consideration when studying the historical development of any given language in any given area as “there is in fact a close relation between a language and the culture of the society which uses it” (Akere 1978: 412). On a similar note, Thomas Luckman observes that:

The existence and functioning of languages and the changes they undergo are closely linked to concrete social structures and the dynamic relations between individuals, groups, institutions and society (Luckman 1975 cited in Akere 1978: 408).

Following this line of thought, this study not only focuses on the English language in Sierra Leone, particularly in Freetown, dealing with its development, its natural setting, its structural tendencies (phonological and morphosyntactic evidence) and

the role the language plays in the lives of those who use it in Freetown in particular and in the country in general, it also traces the origin of English in Sierra Leone and Freetown and looks at the future of the language, considering the way Sierra Leoneans naturally adapt the language to express their characteristic socio-cultural, socio-economic and socio-political experiences, therefore, supporting Achebe's position which states that:

I feel that the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. But it will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home, but altered to suit its new African surroundings (Achebe [1965] 1997: 349).

We can deduce from the above observation that English is also the linguistic property of the Sierra Leoneans who use it but it is adapted to suit the linguistic environment while still in communion with other varieties of English. Some other language enthusiasts have equally maintained similar views in relation to the appropriation of European languages in settings other than their original homes. Thus, with regard to the ownership of these former colonial languages, Moore considers that

The problem is to make the people of England realize, and in France for that matter, that their languages are no longer their sole property, because they have almost defeated themselves by their own success in propagating their language ... (Moore 1965 cited in Boadi 1971: 51)⁹.

As a consequence, then, apart from the above position, Mühlhäusler makes it clear: "it is ecological factors which bring languages into being, define their boundaries and decide on their growth and survival" (Mühlhäusler 1996: 3).

Ecology is the most important factor that determines the competition both among species and among individuals in a particular environment (Mufwene 2001: 21, 145; see also Anchimbe 2006: 78ff). In linguistics, ecology plays a very decisive role in the evolution of languages or language varieties (Mufwene 2001:

⁹ Compare with: "It is unreasonable to regard any language as the property of a particular nation and with no language is it more unreasonable than with English" (Quirk 1962 cited in Boadi 1971: 65).

21; Anchimbe 2006: 79). As such, when we put these issues into perspective, ecology becomes compelling in the evolution of a language or a language variety, be it a creole or non-creole variety of European languages (Mufwene 2001). Mufwene's (2001: 136) observation that population movement and the consequent contacts of different metropolitan dialects explain "the restructuring of English in the United Kingdom during the colonization of the New World" can also be used to account for similar linguistic outcomes in colonial settings elsewhere, and it does indeed become convincing in the Sierra Leonean context. We only need to buttress that, as Mufwene (2001: 136) further clarifies, just as "ecological specifics of the contacts varied from one setting to another", so also are the linguistic outcomes different. On this note, we would expect the Sierra Leonean ecological reality to mould the English of its users different from other postcolonial settings given the fact that the linguistic history and current linguistic dispensation of the speakers of English in Sierra Leone are different from other places where English is used as a native or as a second/additional language. In this case, in Sierra Leone, the initial contact was more between different restructured varieties of English and African languages and less with metropolitan dialects (see chapter four for a discussion of the linguistic situation of the Freetown settlement; see also Holm 1988/89; Fyfe ed. 1991; Montgomery 1999; Huber 1999, 2004; Hackert and Huber 2007). Even so, the restructuring equation following Mufwene (2001) remains the same. However, we need to adapt Mufwene's (2001: 136) questions for a better understanding of the sociohistorical setting of the English language in Sierra Leone as regards its ecology, evolution and current state:

1. Which populations were present in the Freetown settlement and in what proportions relative to each other?
2. What language varieties were spoken in the Freetown settlement and what were their structural typological features?
3. How heterogeneous was the lexifier and what specific lexical and structural choices did it offer that competed with one another?
4. Regarding ethnicity and social class, what intergroup patterns of interaction were established between and among members of the Freetown Settlement?

While answers to these questions explain and account for the evolution of Krio and its sister pidgin and creole languages including West African English (see chapter four for a discussion of these questions; see also Spencer ed. 1971; Jones 1971; Holm 1989; Huber 1999, 2004; among others), they are equally pertinent in the context of the evolution of English in Sierra Leone since the latter is also contact based, irrespective of the fact that Krio evolved through normal and natural interaction while English was and is still being acquired through the classroom (see below; see also chapter four and five). Regarding these two situations, we need to put Mufwene's position into perspective, especially when we consider the restructured varieties of English that were brought to Freetown (see Fyfe ed. 1991; Montgomery 1999; Huber 2004):

The ecological factors and selective restructuring which produced creoles are of the same kind as those which produced "normal" language change. Contact at the interdialectal level is a critical factor in almost any case of language evolution (Mufwene 2001: 137).

On this note therefore, we need to rephrase the above questions when talking specifically about English in Sierra Leone even though we know the linguistic outcome of language contact is a restructured language or language variety. Thus, since we assume that "nothing in linguistics makes full sense except in a diachronic light" (Ugorji 2010), some questions will be the same as those above while others will be slightly expanded or modified. In this way:

1. a. Which populations were present in the Freetown settlement and in what proportions relative to each other? (As mentioned above, this question helps to explain the historical evolution of Krio. However, it is equally pertinent in the sociohistorical discussion of the development of English in Sierra Leone).
- b. Which populations are present in Freetown today and in what proportions relative to each other?
2. What language varieties are spoken in Freetown and what are their structural typological features?
3. How heterogeneous is English and what specific lexical and structural choices does it offer that compete with one another?

4. Regarding ethnicity and social class, what intergroup patterns of interaction are established between and among members of the Freetown population?

Given the above language-contact-related questions, which try to place Sierra Leone English within its sociohistorical and ecological perspectives, we outline the theoretical approaches to language evolution and see how best these fit in the context of the English language in Sierra Leone.

According to Mufwene (2001: 145ff), language evolution can be studied from various perspectives: structural, pragmatic and ethnographic. Our focus in this study is structural: a description of certain phonological and morphosyntactic features present in Sierra Leone English. Structural language evolution involves

[T]he long-term changes undergone by a language (variety) over a period of time. From the point of view of structure, they consist in different ways of producing sounds, of expressing things (morphosyntactically, lexically), or of encoding meanings (Mufwene 2001: 145).

Having the structural type of language evolution in mind as defined by Mufwene above and focusing more on a phonological and morphosyntactic description of Sierra Leone English, this study also tests Nichols's (1994) two types of language evolution: progressive change toward increasing complexity and natural selection of existing variation (Nichols 1994: 276-7 cited in Mufwene 2001: 146). The former refers to the evolution of a language or language variety independent of the environment where the language is used, while in the latter case a language or language variety evolves out of the existing variation within the social and cultural milieu in which the language is used through contact of the different dialects or varieties of its speakers.

Contrarily to Nichols's argument that "there are very few instances of natural selection in human language" (Nichols 1994: 276-7 cited in Mufwene 2001: 146), we agree with Mufwene (2001, 2009) and Schneider (2007) that New Englishes, including Sierra Leone English, are not only a variation of the parent British English or any other native variety but are new creations which are a product of the idiolects of individual speakers and their mutual accommodation. Besides that, each of the speakers of English in Sierra Leone does not only have

multilingual tendencies but lives in a constant language contact situation (Fyle 2003: 115-117; Mufwene 2001: 146 - 147; Schneider 2007: 8). As such, natural selection through individual speakers' idiolects and communicative acts are determinant in the linguistic evolution of English in Sierra Leone and should not be interpreted as linguistic progress or decay since

[L]inguistic systems may evolve as much toward more structural complexity as toward more simplicity, just as they may be restructured without becoming more complex or simpler. Why they change is not well understood, but it seems clear that systems are not passed on intact from speaker to speaker. Speakers accommodate each other (a practice which need not produce changes in communal system) and innovate by exaptation to meet different communicative needs. Such adaptations do not necessarily improve the system and are not necessarily conscious in the first place. Linguistic evolution is therefore not planned, at least not in the most natural form of the process. ... The evolution of a language proceeds through individual speakers, through individual speech acts and their idiolects, with ecology working on variation, as entailed by the coexistence of idiolects (Mufwene 2001: 147).

Considering the above perspective, we can say that the linguistic outcomes of restructured languages can either be complex or simple but these outcomes do not come about consciously or are not passed on naturally wholesale from one generation of speakers to another but come about as speakers adapt to others' idiolects. However, (in the Sierra Leonean context), we need to know, *when* these individual idiolects or selections lead to a new language variety. In other words, how do we know that the individual Sierra Leonean English speakers' idiolects have produced a Sierra Leone English variety taking into consideration that it is impossible to talk about a language variety (group selection) without idiolects (individual selection) (Mufwene 2001: 147)?

The above question highlights the importance of competition-and-selection in living languages and the way speakers negotiate with one another communicatively paying attention to "both structural and nonstructural factors to the selections that speakers make, as well as how accumulations of the selections determine the evolutionary trajectory of a language" in any language community (Mufwene 2001: 147). This is why Mufwene (2001: 148ff) considers a language as a species and why language evolution should be seen from a competition-and-

selection perspective as in biological evolution (Mufwene 2001: 147), especially if we take into consideration the fact that “the agents of language evolution are individual speakers” (Mufwene 2001: 148). Hence, the importance of individual speakers in a language community as regards language evolution, spread and change. This is further clarified by Mufwene (2001: 151) thus:

Nothing by way of focusing or change would take place without individuals interacting with one another, setting their respective features in competition with one another by dropping some features, or accepting some new ones, or even by modifying their respective individual systems. Little by little, linguistic features spread in a community, affecting a whole language or most of it, and often leading to a minor or serious reorganization of its system. Speciation into separate subspecies (identified as dialects or separate languages) obtains when networks of communication have little contact with each other and make different selections even out of similar feature pools.

In this context, this work studies the phonological and morphosyntactic features of Sierra Leone English in order to identify those linguistic features this variety has and which features are common among those who use the language in Freetown taking into account the tenet that members of the same language community are more prone to speak alike than those from another speech community of the same language. The role of the individual speaker as the agent of the transmission of linguistic features in a language community is noted by Mufwene (2001):

... idiolects of the same dialect are likely to show more similarities than dialects of the same language ... Like a species, a language is an aggregating construct, an extrapolation from individual idiolects assumed to share common ancestry and several structural features....Through accommodations, some features gain selective advantage over other competitors which are selected out. In some cases, a network begins using a feature which is more typical of a different network even when most of the members of the two networks do not interact with each other (Mufwene 2001: 150-151).

This position shows the importance of individual speakers not only in the evolution of a language or of a language variety, as noted above, but also in the change and the propagation of linguistic features in a particular language community. This leads to the idea that a language is more like a species than an organism.

In contrast to the biological analogy of a language as an organism which lays premium on the group level, the variety or dialect, the consideration of languages as species puts emphasis on the individual's identity in a language community. For Mufwene (2001: 148ff), it makes more sense to regard a language as a species than as an organism based on the following:

1. the language as a species analogy captures variation within a language, especially internally motivated language change, as it looks at individual differences in language systems (sounds, morphosyntax, lexicon);
2. the species analogy also ensures ease in capturing why some speakers may participate in a change while others may adamantly do so;
3. the species analogy also records the variable speeds of changes in a language;
4. the language as a species analogy can also account for the reasons why a language can be successful in a particular community but may not in another;
5. the language as a species analogy also shows the difficulty in pinning down the difference between a dialect and a language but shows clearly that "a language is an extrapolation from idiolects" (Mufwene 2001: 149) which places the individual speaker at the centre of the evolution of a language or language variety.

Given these reasons, we submit, following Mufwene (2001: 150-151 cited above) that the individual speakers' idiolects (and not dialects) share common features in a language variety.

Accordingly, a language becomes the totality of its speakers' individual ways of using the language (idiolects), especially as these different ways interact or come into contact with others and ensure the consequent procreation of offspring just like the biological species interbreed to create new offspring (Mufwene 2001: 150). The contact of the different idiolects ensures speakers' accommodations of each other's individual variety and hence promotes the similarities of the individual systems (Mufwene 2001: 151). Essentially, therefore, the role of the individual speakers makes it easier to understand why we should consider a language a parasitic species: "a language does not exist without

speakers” just like parasites do not exist without their hosts (Mufwene 2001: 151-152).

If we assume the parasitic nature of language, Mufwene’s (2001) hypothesis that language evolution is only possible through competition and selection becomes evident. The competition and selection approach to language evolution or to the evolution of a language variety demonstrates that there is no perfect acquisition of a language: a language is a conglomeration of the different features of all its speakers which is analogous to gene pool (Mufwene 2001). The language-species analogy and the complex adaptive nature of language, therefore, ensures selection, as Mufwene (2001: 47) maintains that a language

is a species because it exists only as an extrapolation from similar but varying idiolects, just like a biological species is an extrapolation from the existence of individual organisms. It is a complex adaptive system because its structure is multi-modular.

However, selection does not mean that a language can be acquired wholesale as an offspring inherits a gene from another organism, since one acquires a language with some amount of modifications and recreation:

a language is “acquired” piecemeal, selectively, and recreated in a way that makes every idiolect different and imperfect replication of the units and principles of a language (hence of its system) the default and normal condition in language production (Mufwene 2001: 47-48).

Naturally, adding another language is taking that language “apart and putting it back together in a manner that is not identical with the starting point” (Mufwene 2001: 48). This equally means that no two speakers will recreate the same language the same way not only because they have not been exposed to the same externalized version of the language but also because human beings are endowed with the biological ability to internally process languages (Mufwene 2001: 48).

Considering the interactions of people in a particular language community, that is, the contacts of idiolects through individual speakers, it has been observed that population movement is at the core of language contact (Mufwene 2001: 48; see also Thomason & Kaufman 1988). Hence, we study the role Freetown played with regard to Krio and English not only from a sociohistorical perspective but

also the role it is continuing to play in the current position of privilege that English enjoys, as the official language of education and administration in Sierra Leone. We also pay attention to the fact that the speakers of English have other languages, especially as we consider the ensuing variety within its ecological setting. Besides, Freetown is known historically as a settler community and it also became a centre of refuge during the height of the rebel war in Sierra Leone (1991 - 2002); thus, the importance of population movements in relation to language evolution and change. The settlement explains the evolution of restructured Englishes brought by the settlers and the subsequent contact with other languages which produced not only Krio but also its sister pidgin and creole languages in West Africa (see chapter four; see also Holm 1988/89; cf Montgomery 1999; Huber 1999, 2004).

Considering the "partial-inheritance" and "partial-recreation" aspects in language acquisition, what role do the other languages of the speakers of English play in the current sociolinguistic status of Freetown as the capital city of Sierra Leone? Krio and the other Sierra Leonean languages are expected to influence the English of Sierra Leoneans since interferences from the language(s) one speaks are determining factors in the acquisition of another language either by a child or an adult (Mufwene 2001: 52). Such influences naturally happen, no matter what effort the learner makes to have a comfortable command of the target language in question:

it is an instantiation of selection from among competing alternatives in a feature pool including both native and xenolectal options. It is one of the forms of selection in language development, one of those that account for communal language change when such modifications spread across the population, beyond the level of just a few idiolects (Mufwene 2001: 52).

This spread from individual idiolects to communal language variety is seen as another characteristic of selection in language development, the communal model of the language which members select from. The choices which individual speakers make are also determined by "who a learner or speaker wants to be associated with", or the communicative networks that speakers form, notwithstanding variation within a particular language community due mainly to

the fact that there are various networks (Mufwene 2001: 52). Essentially, therefore, language evolution becomes "selections that speakers make during their communicative acts, while accommodating other speakers or exapting some forms or constructions to meet new communicative needs" (Mufwene 2001: 52).

Even though competition and selection has been said to be a feature of creoles and other mixed languages, since language acquisition is individual and not communal, irrespective of the fact that a language is used by a community, the fact that "the mind of every individual learner/speaker is an arena where different options from the same target language and/or from the languages known to him/her compete with each other" (Mufwene 2001: 52), competition and selection can also become one of the factors of varieties of English around the world considering the obvious fact that English is one, if not the only, target in most communities where English is used as a second or additional language. In this regard, the English language in Sierra Leone is not an exception. While it is clear that influences from other languages produce creole languages, the same can also be said of varieties of European languages in Africa and elsewhere. Thus, Sierra Leone English is a product of the influences of the other languages spoken or known by those who speak English in Sierra Leone just like English and other European languages were influenced by other languages or emerged through language contact. In essence, therefore, "competition and selection are thus inherent in the dynamics of language evolution" (Mufwene 2001: 55).

After examining all these perspectives, let us re-examine the Haugenian metaphor of the ecology of language which considers some of the questions highlighted by Haugen (1972), as we paraphrase them below, though not in the order put forward by Haugen (1972: 336 cited in Mühlhäusler 1996: 3-4) as guiding principles in studying a language within a particular linguistic environment:

1. How is the language classified in relation to the other languages in the community?
2. Who uses the language?
3. Where is the language used?
4. What other languages do its speakers use?

5. Does the language show any internal variety?
6. Does the language have any institutional support?
7. How do the speakers of the language relate with the language in terms of status and identification?

While the above questions and principles can be seen as constraints that can be applied to all language communities in the world, the case of the English language in Sierra Leone (one of the languages used in the country, the official state language and one of the languages in education if not the most important in and of education), the object of this study, is a specific case study of Indigenised Varieties of English and, thus, not all of the questions Haugen asks are answered in this study. We take a particular interest on issues related to the aforementioned questions (1 to 7 above). Those questions in Haugen (1972: 336) that are left out are not totally discarded but are seen to have limited relevance in this study at this time.

Furthermore, from a more specific perspective, a study of the role the English language plays in Sierra Leone in general and Freetown in particular and the attitude of its users should be seen to answer the following specific questions (see also Anchimbe 2006: 79):

1. Is the English language one of the major languages in Freetown / Sierra Leone?
2. Is the English language acquired at home or in school (and hence classified as a High- or Low-status language)?
3. Are the speakers of English the majority in Freetown / Sierra Leone?
4. Is English a superimposed language on people in Freetown / Sierra Leone?

Findings to the above questions point to the interconnectedness of languages for both its users and the society in which those languages exist.

3.2.2. Language indigenisation

While there are constant debates among those who use English as a native language and those who use it as a non-native language regarding the legitimacy of the latter's variety, Mufwene (2009), referring to the indigenisation of English in North America, argues that "all English varieties spoken outside England have

been indigenized” (Mufwene 2009: 353). What then is the indigenisation of English?

For Mufwene (2009: 353), the indigenisation of English is the adaptation of the language “to the communicative habits and needs of its (new) speakers in a novel ecology”. He further maintains that

The adaptations entail structural influence from languages previously spoken by the new speakers as well as additive, substitutive, and subtractive alterations in response to the cultures of its new users as determined by the fauna, flora and other geographical conditions they deal with. They also entail adjustments to the socio-economic structure that regulates the new speakers’ social behaviors (Mufwene 2009: 353).

Consequently, since the socio-cultural aspects of the new users of the language and their original and/or previous linguistic experience play a prominent role in their lives, some lexical items of this new language that have nothing to do with the physical, cultural and social reality of the users are made redundant, some others take up new meanings, while other words and expressions are introduced reflecting the new cultural reality of the new language (Mufwene 2009: 353-4).

Can we say then that Krio and the other (major) languages of Sierra Leone have influenced English? Has the English language in Freetown acquired features or characteristics that are purely Sierra Leonean, that is, has the language been adapted to the Sierra Leonean fauna, flora, socio-cultural, socio-economic and socio-political contexts under which the language is used?

There is a Sierra Leonean English appropriated by its users and adapted to the aforementioned contexts and in response to the linguistic habits of those who use English in Freetown because “the ecology of the appropriation determines the extent to which some of the languages that English came in contact with have influenced it” (Mufwene 2009: 365; see also Pemagbi 1989; Turay 2010).

One of the successes of the Freetown ecology in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with regard to the structural adaptation of the English language in Sierra Leone is the development of not only West African English but also the other English pidgin and creole languages in the region (Jones 1971; Holm 1989; Huber 1999, 2004). While some researchers maintain that Krio originated in the region and was then taken to North America during the height of

the slave trade and brought back by the Settlers in the eighteenth century, some others have proven the contrary (see chapter four; see also Holm 1989; Huber 1999, 2004). We know that the Freetown Settlement was very instrumental in the development of the restructured Englishes in West Africa (creoles and non-creole varieties). This fact is not completely dissociated from the general indigenisation of languages as Mufwene notes that

... the process of indigenization cannot be dissociated from the population movements that bring the language to the new geographical space, which entail adaptations of the newcomers both to the new ecologies of the host populations and to cultural practices (including languages, if these survive) brought by some of the other newcomers (Mufwene 2009: 354).

In our case, we can say that, since the settlers in Freetown came from different places and with various restructured Englishes and were later joined by the recaptives with many African languages, Freetown paved the way to the subsequent linguistic adaptation of the restructured Englishes to what is today Krio and its sister pidgin and creole languages in West Africa and beyond (in The Gambia, Nigeria, Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea; see chapter four).

Apart from population movements, colonisation has also been seen as one of the factors responsible for the indigenisation of European languages in Africa and Asia (see, for example, Makoni 1993), a process which must be distinguished from creolisation:

... the development of creoles underscores the fact that the emergence of “indigenized Englishes” may be described likewise. Differences lie especially in the fact that in the latter case the target language varieties have been scholastic and transmitted artificially through teaching, whereas the target varieties for creoles were transmitted naturally through interactions by trial and error ... In both cases, the new speakers modify some features of the target language, which amount to the local adaptations identified ... as indigenization ... from the point of view of their outcomes, as divergence and speciation into new varieties (Mufwene 2009: 356).

Thus, while the adaptations and the subsequent evolution of the restructured varieties of English brought by the settlers into Krio may have happened through naturalistic interactions in Freetown, the indigenised English varieties are a result of English being taught in the classroom, since English continues as Sierra

Leone's official language of education and administration.

However, since languages are not only "complex adaptive systems" in the sense that they are "constantly being reshaped to meet (the) communicative needs" of those who use them, but they are also "influenced by the ecological conditions under which they are put into use" (Mufwene 2009: 355; see also Mufwene 2001), we can expect that the English language in Sierra Leone has been reshaped or modified by its new speakers to meet their linguistic needs as Mufwene indicates:

[R]egardless of whether the most salient structural features of the metropolitan or scholastic varieties introduced to particular colonies are standard or nonstandard, colonial varieties are marked by various degrees of divergence from the original targets (Mufwene 2009: 356).

Essentially, therefore, one of the most important questions that this study seeks to answer is the extent to which English has been adapted to the ecological conditions in Sierra Leone considering the linguistic habits of the users of English in Freetown. Indeed, indigenisation or the linguistic adaptation of languages in new linguistic settings has to do with the linguistic outcome of the contact between the different speakers of the new language. For Mufwene, the constant contact of speakers leads to language evolution (Mufwene 2009: 355; see also Mufwene 2001), either through contact of dialects of the same language or through the mutual influence that normally happens when speakers of different languages interact within the same socio-linguistic and socio-cultural milieu. Hence,

The common evolutionary trend in the case of both "indigenized Englishes" and creoles is that they have diverged structurally from their respective standard / scholastic and nonstandard varieties targeted by the earlier learners. Both are outcomes of indigenization as adaptation to new ecologies under the communicative pressures of their new speakers and the substrate influence of the languages previously spoken by these populations (Mufwene 2009: 357).

Regarding the indigenisation of English, three characteristics can be deduced from the above quote:

1. creoles and indigenised or non-native Englishes are structurally different

from the parent and/or native English varieties;

2. creoles and indigenised or non-native Englishes are outcomes of linguistic adaptation of either the standard or nonstandard varieties, and

3. creoles and indigenised or non-native Englishes are influenced by the previous linguistic experience of their new speakers.

In essence, therefore, what we have today as Krio is an outcome of either the trade activities of Europeans, more especially the English in West Africa in general and in Sierra Leone in particular and/or the naturalistic interaction of the different people (re)settled in Freetown from 1787 to 1863 with their different restructured Englishes and other languages in the settlement (see chapter four; see also Holm 1989; Fyfe ed. 1991; Montgomery 1999; Huber 1999, 2004). Can we say then that the English used by Sierra Leoneans present the three characteristics highlighted above? If the answer is affirmative, the axiom that (some) Sierra Leoneans speak British English then becomes untenable, unfounded and baseless (see Conteh-Morgan 1997; see also subsection 2.3.6. in chapter two) because some other varieties considered as native Englishes today (American, Canadian and Australian varieties of English, for example) are “as indigenized as the so-called “nativized Englishes” associated with former exploitation colonies” (Mufwene 2009: 357). The divergence from the homeland variety (British English) is due mainly to the fact that these varieties have been adapted to the linguistic needs and habits of their new owners and are greatly influenced by their previous linguistic experiences irrespective of the fact that in some varieties these speakers are of European descent (Mufwene 2009: 357). Hence, “the emergence of locally characteristic linguistic patterns” (Schneider 2007: 5-6), the localisation and acculturation of the homeland variety to meet the socio-cultural and socio-economic needs of the new speakers become the norm rather than the exception for both the indigenised and native varieties of English since “both ‘indigenized Englishes’ and ‘native Englishes’ are outcomes of language contact” (Mufwene 2009: 357-358). Structurally, the same arguments can be given for both, that is, substrate languages have played a major role “in determining what particular features of the dominant language would normalise in the new speech communities” (Mufwene 2009: 358). Where then does the difference lie between

these varieties of English? According to Mufwene, to answer this question, we should take into account

the varieties that were targeted by the new speakers (colloquial or scholastic only), the extent of structural / typological differences between their languages and those of the target language (determining how faithfully the target could be learned), the mode of transmission (through normal, naturalistic interactions or through the school system), the proportion of native speakers relative to the learning populations, and the degree of social integration of the populations in contact (Mufwene 2009: 358).

With regard to the above situation, the target for the Sierra Leonean users of English is the scholastic English since the mode of transmission has always been (and still is) through the school system. As for social integration, this is a fact that cannot be assessed due to the low number of native English speakers in Sierra Leone (be they English or Americans or other L1 speakers of English), a fact which basically goes in line with Mufwene's argument that

“indigenized Englishes” are so different from “native Englishes” because they evolved in settings where their non-European speakers have interacted more among themselves, in settings where they have always been the overwhelming majorities, than with speakers of the metropolitan varieties (Mufwene 2009: 359).

In fact, since (pre-) colonial days, there have always been very few British people in Freetown for Sierra Leoneans to interact with. Finally, we can also say that the languages of Sierra Leone, including Krio, to some extent, are structurally and typologically different from English.

Having discussed the parameters / issues involved in the indigenisation of English as outlined by Mufwene (2009) regarding English in North America, it is clear that there is a Sierra Leonean English as we have argued above and in consideration of the following:

1. English came to Sierra Leone through population movements starting from the settlement of Freetown, missionary activities and colonialism and mostly by people other than native speakers;
2. English is not an L1 for Sierra Leoneans born and raised in the country;

3. English is neither a community language nor a home language in any part of Sierra Leone;
4. English in Sierra Leone is acquired through the school system and has been taught and is still being taught by people who have themselves acquired English through the scholastic means and not through natural and normal interactions;
5. English is used as an official state language and language of education and hence used only by the (Western) educated elite;
6. English has been appropriated by Sierra Leoneans to meet their communicative needs and has been influenced by the ecological conditions of the country through localisation and acculturation;
7. The structural features of the English of Sierra Leoneans differ from the parent and native English varieties and reflects linguistic adaptation of the speakers' L1, and
8. Socialisation in English is more among educated Sierra Leoneans and less with native English speakers and happens more in formal professional and business contexts.

Given the above situations of the English language in Sierra Leone, we now turn to the theories of language contact and interference, and the concept of interlanguage in relation to the acquisition and use of English in Sierra Leone. These are juxtaposed with Mufwene's competition-and-selection hypothesis in a bid to determine (a) the role each individual speaker plays in language change, (b) the relevance of (language) ecology to the evolution of a language variety and (c) the most feasible features to be taken over to another language.

3.3. On language contact, interference and interlanguage

Language contact can be studied from various perspectives: language acquisition, language production, the function of language in society, individual and societal bi- or multilingualism, language change, among others (Weinreich 1953; Thomason and Kaufman 1988; Thomason 2001, 2010; Myers-Scotton 2002; Winford 2003, 2010; Matras 2009, 2010; Hickey 2010, among others). The linguistic manifestations in these domains are what contact linguists study. As for

this study, we seek to study the acquisition of English as a second language and as an instrument of education in Sierra Leone, its consequent use in several contexts, and, the subsequent linguistic effects that the language manifests. What then is language contact and how does language contact manifest itself in a particular language community?

Although Weinreich's (1953) pioneering work signals language contact as an academic discipline, it was not until towards the end of the twentieth century that the area became recognised as an independent field of study (Inverno 2011:72; Swolkien 2014: 63ff; see also Holm 1988/89, 2000, 2004). Its recognition was first in Pidgin and Creole studies and has now been broadened to encompass "a wider language of contact phenomenon" which involves European languages in similar restructuring processes and outcomes just as Pidgin and Creole languages (Inverno 2011:72). For Inverno,

contact linguistics has only recently been established as an independent academic discipline but the scientific study of language contact dates back to the late nineteenth century ... when there was a surge in the study of contact vernaculars as a means to counter-evidence the traditional claims in comparative historical linguistics that language change was internally-induced only and that hence language mixture was impossible (Inverno 2011:76).

Studies along the years have shown that language change is not only due to internally motivated factors, external factors can as well propel change in linguistic systems. This is why some researchers have considered contact linguistics as a sub-field of linguistics which studies "the varied structures of contact between languages, the phenomena that result, and the interaction of linguistic and external ecological factors in shaping these outcomes" on both the bi- or multilingual individual or group (Windford 2003: 5). For Swolkien (2014: 69 citing Oksaar 1996)

contact linguistics today is a wide-ranging interdisciplinary area which studies language contact (on the macro-analytic level) as arising from cultural, economic and political encounters between various ethnic groups and on the micro-analytic level considers bi- or multi-lingual individuals. Given the fact that 70% of the world's population is multi-lingual this, of course, calls for a re-thinking of most of the leading

linguistic theories and methodologies which assume monolingualism and homogeneity of speech community as the norm.

On this note, the individual bi- or multilingual speaker, the group of bi- and multilingual speakers and the community in which they live are determining actors or players in language contact processes, the outcomes and the directions of language change.

For Windford (2010:170ff), there are two broad categories of contact-induced changes: “those due to borrowing, and those due to what has variously been called “interference”, “transfer”, “substratum influence”” or “imposition”. For our study, we concentrate on the second group –interference, transfer, substratum influence and imposition phenomena–, the non-deliberate linguistic carry-over of features from one language into another in language contact and change, although we will not discard borrowing as an influential phenomenon in language contact and change. The reasons are not far-fetched. In the first place, the English language in Sierra Leone is acquired as a Second or Additional Language in educational settings and as such, the influence of the mother-tongue, interference, transfer and substratum influence which are usually associated with second language acquisition (SLA henceforward), play a significant role (Windford 2010:170). However, there is no clear-cut distinction between borrowing and interference since both language processes are manifested in situations of language contact and involve a source language (SL) and a recipient language (RL) (see van Coetsen 1988, 2000; Aikenvald 2002). But given the fact that this study concerns Sierra Leoneans’ use of English, which is an L2 in Sierra Leone, the agents are second language users and as such they impose linguistic features of their L1 while speaking the L2. This phenomenon is explicitly explained here:

If the recipient speaker is the agent, as in the case of an English speaker using French words while speaking English, the transfer of material (and this naturally includes structure) from the source language to the recipient is borrowing (recipient language agentivity) (van Coetsen 1998:3 cited in Windford 2010:171)

But if the reverse obtains, when “the source language speaker is the agent, as in the

case of a French speaker using his French articulatory habits while speaking English” (van Coetsen 1998: 3 cited in Windford 2010: 171), this is known as imposition. Consequently, borrowing in most cases involves just the lexicon rather than structural aspects of the language. Since Sierra Leonean speakers of English have other languages, including Krio (the intermediary lingua franca, an English-lexified creole and the most widely spoken language in the country), and they are more proficient in their L1s than we would expect them to be in English, the transfer of linguistic features of the mother tongue and those of Krio of these speakers to English is therefore expected.

Whereas Weinreich (1953) sees language contact as centred on the bilingual speaker, Matras (2010: 66) considering current research in the field, observes that “language contact is about the way in which linguistic systems influence one another”. Hence, for him, “contact-induced language change is consequently seen as change that is “external” to the language system” (2010: 66). For Matras (2009: 1), language contact can be seen to be manifested in various domains such as language acquisition, language processing and production, conversation and discourse, social functions of language, language policy, language typology and language change and hence, though controversially, Matras (2009) observes that

‘Contact’ is, of course, a metaphor: language ‘systems’ do not genuinely touch or even influence one another. The relevant locus of contact is the language processing apparatus of the individual multilingual speaker and the employment of this apparatus in communicative interaction. It is therefore the multilingual speaker’s interaction and the factors and motivations that shape it that deserves our attention in the study of language contact (Matras 2009: 2).

On this note, one of the ways in which we approach language contact processes and outcomes as regards the use of English in Sierra Leone is based on three interrelated issues:

- 1) How educated Sierra Leonean speakers of English draw on the phonology of their first languages while speaking English;

- 2) How the structures of the first languages of Sierra Leoneans are carried over into English, and,
- 3) Which phonological and structural features of Krio as the lingua franca may be considered as primary causes, should we not be able to trace these features in the current study to the first languages of most Sierra Leoneans.

Even though bi- or multilingual speakers have been known to take centre stage in language contact issues, for Matras, “multilingual speakers do not ‘block’ or ‘switch off’ one of their languages when communicating in another, but ... they have full, complex linguistic repertoire at their disposal at all times” (Matras 2009: 5). It is this linguistic repertoire at the disposal of bilingual and multilingual speakers that manifests itself each time they communicate.

Thomason (2010) is of the opinion that language contact has as its principal factor, the interaction between speakers in a speech community: “face to face” communicative acts of speakers through the transfer of linguistic features from one speaker to another (Thomason 2010: 32). Thomason (2010: 34) outlines the following as conditions for contact-induced language change:

- 1) Consideration of the receiving language (Language B) as a structural whole
- 2) Identification of the source language (Language A)
- 3) Identification of the shared features in A and B (say in phonology and syntax)
- 4) Confirmation that those features have existed in A for a long time; i.e., that they are not innovations
- 5) Identification of internal causes.

Although “there is often no clear-cut dichotomy between internally and externally motivated change” and since we all know that “the agents of internally motivated language change are native speakers of the changing language, or non-native speakers who have a native-like fluency in the language” (Thomason 2010: 36), the following are considered as the major social factors of contact-induced language change (Thomason 2010: 36ff):

- 1) presence or absence of imperfect learning;
- 2) intensity of contact, and

3) speakers' attitude.

With regard to the linguistic factors, Thomason considers a) typological distance between the linguistic systems; b) universally marked features, and c) the degree of integration into the system. Thomason takes the interference phenomenon in language contact a bit further. For her, the structural differences between the languages in contact play a significant role in the linguistic outcomes:

In contact-induced language change, the degree of typological distance between specific subsystems of a source language and a receiving language helps to predict the kind of interference that may occur under differing degrees of contact intensity (Thomason 2010: 40).

Given the fact that English co-exists with Krio, the English-lexified creole of Sierra Leone which is the lingua franca and language of social integration in big towns and cities in the country, we believe Krio's phonological and structural features are more easily transferred into English than say the other languages of Sierra Leone given the intensity of the contact between the two languages in the complex linguistic repertoire of Sierra Leoneans as bi- or multilingual speakers. The analogical similarity between the two is another point to consider in the easy integration of Krio linguistic features into English.

Hickey's (2010) position on the issue of language contact does not seem to differ from those of the researchers mentioned above. For him, "language contact always induces change" and this has happened throughout history: "history does not provide instances of speech communities which adjoined one another, still less which intermingled, and where the languages of each speech community remained unaffected by the contact" (Hickey 2010: 7). However, the nature and degree of the contact determines how languages influence one another and the direction the influence takes. (Hickey 2010: 7). Apart from distinguishing between internal change (change within the systems of a language among monolingual speakers in the same community) and external change (change induced by contact through speakers of different languages), substrate and superstrate languages (the power relation between languages in a community, the latter being attributed more significance in terms of social status) (Hickey 2010:

7ff), Hickey (2010), like Matras (2010), places the locus of contact on the bilingual speaker and argues that

The communicative competence of the bilingual then includes making the appropriate choices of structures for communication in given contexts. Whatever the degree of awareness by bilinguals of the separateness of their linguistic (sub)systems, the presence of competence in two languages fulfils the precondition for the adoption of material from one language into another (Hickey 2010: 9).

The adoption or rather the transfer of linguistic features from one language to another is most crucial for unguided adult language learners. Giving the example of adult uneducated Irish people shifting to English in the nineteenth century, Hickey observes that “adult language learners of a second language use the phonetic realizations of phonological units from their first language when speaking the second” (2010: 11). How then can we explain what obtains in most ESL contexts, where English is taught as a discipline in the educational system and is the language of instruction almost throughout one’s education? The following discussions on *interlanguage* guide us on some of the explanations given both on contact and interference phenomena.

Introduced by Selinker in the 1970s (Makoni 1993; Matras 2009), *interlanguage* (IL) “refers to a learner language” (Makoni 1993: 97). For Matras (2009: 74) an interlanguage “is an individual learner’s idiosyncratic use of target language structures, which may be variable in different contexts and of course subject to change as the learning process continues”. Both Makoni (1993) and Matras (2009) consider interlanguage to represent a developmental social and psychological learning process of the L2 with a starting point and a proficiency stage (Makoni 1993: 97; Matras 2009: 74). Traditionally, the language of the learner has been classified as an ‘incomplete’, ‘defective’, ‘deficient’, ‘approximative’, and ‘transitional’ version of the target language (see Makoni 1993: 97; see also Matras 2009: 74). Against this traditional school of thought, the alternative approach sees IL as a product of four main factors: (1) the L2 learning/acquisition environment, (2) the influence of the learner’s L1 and/or recently acquired languages, (3) the learner’s variety of the L2, and (4) the learner’s developing variety of the target language (Makoni 1993: 97; Matras

2009: 74). These factors contribute immensely to the development of, and proficiency in, the target language. These factors equally manifest themselves in what has been considered as 'transfer' or 'cross-linguistic influence' (Makoni 1993: 97). This alternative to the traditional approach ensures a positive view of the learners' communicative and linguistic experience and their "creativity in adapting and re-shaping elements of the target language to their own communicative needs" (Matras 2009: 75; see Mufwene 2001; see also Schneider 2007), especially if the acquisition environment is formal and not naturalistic and if the learner has to deal with a typologically different language in a second language learning/acquisition context (Makoni 1993: 97).

Despite the influences L2s are susceptible to, or rather the susceptibilities of ILs to influences, learner languages are said to be systematic, capable of constituting idiosyncratic features on their own irrespective of the fact that an IL has been considered as a continuation of the learning process (Makoni 1993: 98; Matras 2009: 75). This systematicity of ILs, though doubtful for some researchers like Makoni (1993: 98), for example, has been compared to a certain degree to the systematic nature of adult grammars notwithstanding the extent and type of systematicity. Makoni (1993: 98) maintains that

an adult native speaker's grammar may be systematic because of the presence of a number of linguistic forms which function as variants of the same form. A second language speaker's IL may have fewer variants of the same form, but still may be systematic. In some extreme cases, it is even doubtful whether much insight is gained by describing a learner's IL as systematic, particularly if the same form is used in a number of diverse forms.

The misgiving expressed by Makoni (1993) in the above quote regarding systematicity in ILs is unsustainable just as the author conveys the unsustainability of random variation expressed by others: "random variation is not peculiar to IL, it is also found in adult grammars" (Makoni 1993: 98). If this latter observation is looked into deeply, we should ignore Makoni's doubt that ILs are not systematic and maintain that both adult native language production and grammars are just as systematically deviant as ILs.

Another property of ILs that set them apart from adult grammars of native

speakers from a psychological perspective is permeability. ILs are "easily influenced by the speaker's mother tongue forms (transfer) and by over-generalisation and incorporation of target language forms" because they are permeable (Preston 1989: 105 cited in Makoni 1993: 98). Although the permeability of ILs has been regarded as a "fiction" (Preston 1989 cited in Makoni 1993: 98), still this characteristic feature of ILs makes them porous to invasion from other influences other than internal ones and, as such, unstable in production and grammatical status since rules are constantly being revised in certain proficiency levels and hence become widespread, particularly in the developmental stages (Makoni 1993: 98-99). This is further buttressed by Matras (2009: 75) when he observes that "interlanguages usually presupposes some continuation of the acquisition process" since in reality "language learning is often characterized by learners failing to achieve full proficiency in the target language" although they are usually able "to sustain successful and effective communication in it".

The success and effectiveness of the learner in maintaining meaningful communication in the target language is socially triggered. Selinker (1972), quoted by Matras (2009: 75) uses the term *fossilisation*, an alternative to transfer, to refer to the cognitive mechanism which brings about "a non-target-like end-state". On this matter, we put into perspective Matras's observation regarding the social factors which help produce fossilisation in second language acquisition:

Although fossilisation is normally viewed as the outermost limits of a learner's achievement potential, one must bear in mind that positive social factors may play a role in promoting fossilisation; thus, learners might lose the motivation to expand their knowledge of the L2 once they are satisfied with their own ability to communicate efficiently with others and once their speech is understood and accepted by listeners (Matras 2009: 75).

These social factors, among them positive feedback in the presence of open and explicit errors, may lead to the habitual adoption of errors, the use of substandard forms and rules, unwillingness to restructure one's language in the face of corrections, or over insensitivity to negative feedback; in other words, to a state of fossilisation or interlanguage stabilisation. Hence, the stabilisation of the structural systems of the target language (phonological and morphological

interferences), especially as second language acquisition, "is a fundamentally different cognitive process" (Matras 2009: 75; see also Makoni 1993: 99). Therefore, SLA is the only language learning process whereby the first language plays a major influence. The influence of the L1 does not only provide the speech of an individual with stabilisation features but also that of an entire speech community, especially if the speech community or a sector of this community shares the same L1 or if the target language is being acquired under similar social conditions such as input, language use opportunity and feedback (Matras 2009: 76).

Another factor promoting interlanguage stabilization has to do with community bilingualism "as each individual learner receives supporting feedback from fellow learners of a similar background" (Matras 2009: 76). Such linguistic accommodation leads to collective interlanguage stabilisation, that is, a group or speech community abandons their linguistic habits and shifts to another language with 'shift-induced interference', 'contact-induced language change' and 'imperfect second language learning' rolling the dice with the ultimate linguistic outcome of a new language variety or the structural modification of that particular second language (Thomason and Kaufman 1988: 38; Matras 2009: 76-77). This is particularly true in the case of creole language creation or formation and the structural re-shaping or adaptation of European languages in Africa and elsewhere with the more glaring example of 'New Englishes' mushrooming all over the world.

For Gass and Selinker (2008), 'an interlanguage' (IL) is the language system that learners create which should not be seen "as a deficit system, that is, a language filled with random errors, but as a system of its own with its own structure" (Gass and Selinker 2008: 14). The most important aspect of IL is that "the learners themselves impose structure on the available linguistic data and formulate an internalized system" (Gass and Selinker 2008: 14). Whereas the IL system has numerous elements from the native and target languages of the learner, there are other elements (novel forms) which do not originate from neither the native language (NL) nor the target language (TL). These novel forms "are the empirical essence of interlanguage" (Gass and Selinker 2008: 14).

A crucial concept of interlanguage is that of fossilisation, “which generally refers to the cessation of learning” (Gass and Selinker 2008: 14). Hence, fossilisation has been defined as a linguistic form, feature and rule which has become “permanently established in the interlanguage of a second language learner in a form that is deviant from the target-language norm and that continues to appear in performance regardless of further exposure to the target language” (*Unabridged Random House Dictionary of the English Language* cited by Gass and Selinker 2008: 14). Others (Long 2003, mentioned in Gass and Selinker 2008: 14) have considered stabilisation as a more appropriate concept in describing learners’ language system given the fact that permanent cessation of learning is difficult to pin down. However, we need to note that stabilised or fossilised forms exist irrespective of the learners’ exposure to the target language.

Given the above definitions and characteristics of ILs, can we say then that the English language in Sierra Leone is an *interlanguage* or a “new” type of English? A part of the answer to this question has been provided in the preceding section and a more sustained answer will be provided later in this and subsequent chapters. However, looking at the contexts of the existence and use of the English language as we highlighted them above (in the concluding part of the previous section), the first part of the question is half-way answered. That is, given that (a) English is acquired in Sierra Leone in the classroom through non-native speakers who were themselves taught English from similar inputs, learners having very little exposure or opportunity to use the language except in the classroom and its related formal contexts (in most cases), and (b) the users of English in Sierra Leone have other languages which have unquestionably influenced English (particularly Krio), we determine these as the primary steps towards the indigenisation or localisation of English in Sierra Leone (see Mufwene 2001, 2009; Makoni 1993: 101ff; Turay 2010; see also the preceding section). Furthermore, considering the areas of use and range of purposes for the use of English in Sierra Leone: language of instruction, official language of the state, of parliamentary debates, of the media, of international co-operation and communication, among other domains, we can deduce that English is a localised language in Sierra Leone, especially in the urban areas. The majority of people

who live in the rural areas use Sierra Leonean languages in their day to day activities and as such they have very little contact with English; they use English in strictly formal situations and on very limited occasions. Those in the urban areas have a more privileged position in relation to the frequency of hearing and using English (that is, those who can speak and understand English). In general, we can say that English is not replacing any of the indigenous languages in Sierra Leone in any noticeable way. From a sociolinguistic perspective, if any language is replacing any (other) language(s) in Sierra Leone, it is Krio both in the urban and rural areas because, as in other English-using countries in Africa, the English language in Sierra Leone is used mostly in official institutional settings in urban areas and in very formal contexts. This reality has led many researchers to declare that English in Africa is used as a Second Language in urban settings and as a Foreign Language in rural areas (see chapter two where literature on Anglophone countries in West Africa proves this thesis; see also Makoni 1993: 102). On this matter, Makoni's position on the Zimbabwean rural/urban dichotomy is very clear:

[I]n the rural areas, because of the homogeneity of the local population, very little English is likely to be used or heard. In the urban areas English may be heard over the radio and is used in the media. In the rural areas, radios are rare, television, known, but hardly seen, and videos, virtually unknown. The circulation of newspapers does not normally extend to rural areas. The homogeneity of the rural population, and the absence of technologies, such as radios, means the rural population's exposure to English is confined to the classroom (Makoni 1993: 102).

The Zimbabwean sociolinguistic reality of English which Makoni describes above, notwithstanding the existence of both native and non-native speakers in Zimbabwe and the period when his article was written, is not different from the typical English-using African country, especially if analysed from the non-native speaker perspective as it obtains in Sierra Leone and other non-native English-using African countries. Literature on the different West African English-using countries highlighted in chapter two makes similar pronouncements. As such, the question whether there is a Sierra Leone(an) English, an emerging/"new" variety of English, can be ascertained and sustained from two interrelated perspectives: (1) the formal existence of the language in the country two hundred and twenty-

eight years since the establishment of Freetown as a settlement for freed slaves who brought restructured Englishes to their new home would, under normal circumstances, promote the evolution of localised/indigenised norms (see chapter four and five for a discussion of this issue; Holm 1988/89; Huber 1999, 2004; Hackert and Huber 2007; see also Mufwene 2001, 2009; Turay 2010); and, (2) the "new" variety is restricted to urban areas and naturally excludes the rural areas, where English is almost non-existent. The two factors mentioned above are the reasons why Freetown is chosen as a case study. Regarding the localisation of English in Sierra Leone, Freetown meets all the requirements necessary for the indigenisation of the language in the country (see Makoni 1993; Mufwene 2001, 2009, 2010). We are of the opinion that a phonological and structural description of the English language used by Sierra Leoneans in Freetown would give us an insight into whether there is a systematic difference between the English of Sierra Leoneans and that of other speakers or users of English around the world and whether the Sierra Leonean type is stable enough to be regarded an emerging or "new" variety, although the issue of stability has often been ignored in languages, especially learner varieties (Makoni 1993: 103; see Turay 2010).

3.4. Some concepts on language change and variation from a historical sociolinguistic perspective applicable to this study

Since we are not just looking at language change and variation in the English of educated speakers in Sierra Leone but rather focusing on current linguistic features which might set it apart from other Englishes mushrooming around the globe with a view on the history of English in Sierra Leone, it seems of prime importance to explain certain concepts about language change and variation as conceived in (historical) sociolinguistics scholarship.

Whereas many linguists have tried to explain the causes of linguistic change and more especially that regarding phonological change, yet no agreement has been reached as to why languages change. The disagreements notwithstanding, some schools of thought have pointed out that climate or geographical location, racial or anatomical background, etiquette, social conventions and cultural traits, ease and simplification, foreign influence, desire

to be distinct and social climbing and external historical events as principal reasons why languages change (Campbell 1998: 283-285). Recent literature on language change has divided the causes into internal (linguistic/language internal explanations/factors) and external (social explanations/factors) (Campbell 1998: 286ff; see also Thomason & Kaufman 1988; Labov 1994; Hickey ed. 2010). Internal causes, as the name implies, are

what human speech production and perception is and is not capable of – that is, the internal causes are determined for the most part by the physical realities of human biology, by limitations on control of the speech organs and on what humans are able to distinguish with their hearing or are capable to process with their cognitive make-up (Campbell 1998: 286).

Essentially, internal factors have a very strong relationship with human physiological and cognitive make-up and is as such both physical and psychological in nature. On the other hand, external factors, are both outside the human biological structure and outside language itself:

They include such things as expressive uses of language, positive and negative social evaluations (prestige, stigma), the effects of literacy, prescriptive grammar, educational policies, political decree, language planning, language contact and so on (Campbell 1998: 287).

Looking at the two types of language change, the internal and the external, we can see that there is an interaction between the two. This is so because a change in one linguistic system will affect the other systems. For example a change in the production of a particular phoneme in a word will affect the perception of the same. As Campbell puts it “a change in sound may have deleterious effects on aspects of the meaning side of language, and a change in meaning/function can have consequences for the sound system” (Campbell 1998: 287). How then can we explain linguistic change?

Even though it is difficult to explain or predict the causes of language change considering the multiple causes and conflicting or competing principles postulated by researchers, the most realistic reason why languages change is to meet the functional/communicative needs of languages (Campbell 1998: 295).

People use languages to communicate with one another and in that process a series of causes may trigger a change in the linguistic system. Therefore, Campbell observes that

given that multiple causes frequently operate simultaneously in complex ways to bring about particular linguistic changes, to explain linguistic change, we must investigate the multiple causes and how they jointly operate in some cases and compete in others to determine the outcome of linguistic change (Campbell 1998: 297).

On this note, it is imperative that, in describing Sierra Leone English we have to consider the multiple external and internal causes so that we do not invalidate some causal factors and consider only those we are more inclined to accept as valid reasons for the ensuing language features of the English of educated Sierra Leoneans. We have to look at, firstly, social (external) causes before assessing the linguistic (internal) causes.

For Milroy (1992), the history of human natural language has shown that language is always changing. The way we use English today was not the same way past generations used to speak or write it: the lexicon has changed, new syntactic structures have come up and pronunciation has changed and is constantly changing depending on one's linguistic background and the milieu in which English is spoken. Change is an inherent phenomenon in human language and hence "there is no such thing as a perfectly stable human language" (Milroy 1992: 1). Just as change is an intrinsic characteristic of human natural language, variation has also been seen as a fundamental aspect of language as "languages are never uniform entities; they can be observed to vary geographically and socially, and according to the situational contexts in which they are used" (Milroy 1992: 1). Although it is true that,

the equation of uniformity with structuredness or regularity is most evident in popular (non-professional) attitudes to language: one variety – usually a standard language – is considered to be correct and regular, and others – usually 'non-standard' dialects – are thought to be incorrect, irregular, ungrammatical and deviant. Furthermore, linguistic changes in progress are commonly perceived as 'errors' (Milroy 1992: 3).

Tagliamonte (2012) indicates that for a language-variation-and-change-oriented

sociolinguist, what is traditionally regarded as error is “an indication of the variable but rule-governed behaviour typical of all natural speech varieties” (Tagliamonte 2012: 2), that is, “real language in use” for Milroy (1992: 66).

Given the above and given the fact that language internal structures are incomplete without social reference or implication, we believe that language change “is a product of speaker-activity in social contexts, which cannot be wholly explained from within the properties of language systems themselves” (Milroy 1992: 4). This position is equally reiterated by Labov’s doubt “whether internal factors can be successfully separated from social factors” (Labov 1994a: 1). Although most times, when people talk about languages they think just about the grammatical or structural aspect, language is much more than that. For Labov, a language is “the instrument of communication used by a speech community, a commonly accepted system of associations between arbitrary forms and their meanings” (1994a: 9). It is a social activity used by people to communicate with others and without speakers using a language, that language is either inexistent or dead. This goes in line with Tagliamonte’s definition of sociolinguistics as “the interaction between language, culture and society” and hence any study of language presupposes or rather alludes to “a social connection because without this human component language itself would not exist” (Tagliamonte 2012: 1). We would therefore define Sierra Leone English as the variety of English used by educated Sierra Leoneans in their day-to-day communicative acts within its domains of use in the country. And while language is in use, speakers make use of the solidarity constraint in language (Milroy 1992) with others in the community. That is, they use language so that others can understand them. The prestige norms are usually those of the upper-middle social class. And lower-middle class speakers tend to speak or imitate those immediately above them as “linguistic changes do not originate in the highest or lowest social classes, but in groups centrally located in the socioeconomic hierarchy” (Labov 1994b: xii).

What then is language change? According to Labov,

Language change involves a disturbance of the form/meaning relationship so that people affected by the change no longer signal meaning in the same way as others not affected – older people in the same community, or people of the same age in neighboring communities.

The result is a loss of comprehension across dialects and ultimately, mutual intelligibility (Labov 1994a: 9).

While these disturbances may be frowned at the beginning of the process of language change, they become firmly rooted in the language along the years and then consequently appear “as very natural and not defective” to the ordinary speaker/user of the language (Labov 1994b: 4). It is only “traditionalists in professional and editorials chairs” who would not accept these forms as they are used in society (Labov 1994b: 4).

Milroy’s concept of “solidarity constraint” mentioned above can also explain changes taking place within a community of speakers. In this way, for example, any study of variation in the English pronunciation of Sierra Leoneans should take into consideration that the English of educated speakers exists in a socially distinct environment. The prestigious pattern here is not RP and therefore Sierra Leoneans look up to other Sierra Leoneans for norms just as other speakers of varieties of English look up to other speakers within their territories or linguistic environments when speaking English. Milroy clearly puts it while referring to the Belfast community:

we can suggest very plausibly that the so-called ‘prestige’ motivation to adopt RP forms is overridden here by the solidarity constraint, which requires the speaker to conform to local community norms rather than to norms that are viewed as ‘external’ (Milroy 1992:14).

On this note, we can also say that educated Sierra Leoneans accommodate each other using the local norms rather than external norms when speaking English to one another. Hence, linguistic changes that may have occurred in the English of educated Sierra Leoneans can be explained along the lines of “consensus on norms of usage in a speech community” (Milroy 1992: 17). This is why at this stage we look at speakers within the Freetown community even though we expect them to display some variation since language use is heterogeneous (as is always the case)¹⁰.

¹⁰ A more detailed study which will encompass all provinces and major towns and cities will be taken at a later date.

In conclusion, the study of Sierra Leone English this thesis pursues, will consider the following tenets: (a) language is not only a mental and abstract entity, but a social phenomenon; (b) “variation is inherent in the individual, the group, the community, and beyond” (Tagliamonte 2012: 21); (c) whatever variations and changes in a given language, be they phonological, morphological, syntactical or semantic, are seen to be constrained in the grammar of the language and we cannot describe the existing variables in a language without taking the grammar of that language into consideration. Hence, just as phonological variables “are constrained by the grammar” (Labov 2001a: 84 cited in Tagliamonte 2012: 21) so also are morphological and syntactic variables “constrained by semantic distinctions and/or structural configurations whose development can be traced in the history of the language” (Tagliamonte 2012: 21).

3.5. World Englishes, New Englishes and Postcolonial Englishes

"New Englishes" have been referred to as consequences of British colonial policy from a sociohistorical, cultural and political perspective (Makoni 1993; Crystal 1997, 2004; Schneider 2007; Ugorji 2010). Makoni (1993: 103ff) highlights four factors responsible for the emergence of "New Englishes": British colonial language policy, localisation, the teaching force, and pedagogical implications. These four factors apart, "New Englishes" constitute a new whole linguistic, psychological and cultural experience. Ugorji (2010) is very clear in this respect:

New Englishes constitute phenomena in the material world and in linguistic experience; and as entities, they are part of everyday observations; as human behaviour, they are associated with human cognitive systems especially with respect to the intuition of their native speakers; and as cultural entities, they are acquired in a socialisation process or learned and transmitted from generation to generation; and as instruments, they address communication exigencies; and are vehicles of cultures, cross-cultures and as socio-cultural ideologies (Ugorji 2010: 131).

In this sense, Sierra Leone English, as a New English variety, demonstrates the linguistic and cultural experience of those who speak English in Sierra Leone; this variety can be observed both from a cognitive perspective coupled with the fact

that it is a communicative instrument that meets certain requirements and can be used to express what is typically Sierra Leonean.

From a colonial perspective, Crystal (1997, 2004 cited in Schneider 2007) narrates the processes that led to the global spread of the English language from the seventeenth to the twentieth century which later culminated in the linguistic revolution of the English language in the later part of the twentieth century. For Schneider, this is “only part of the story” since English was considered in many countries as a foreign language imposed by the British Empire considering that the language was (and, possibly, is still) “alien to a substantial proportion of the indigenous population and an unwelcome reminder and heritage of colonialism” (Schneider 2007: 1-2). Schneider seems to question why (some of) these countries did not abandon the use of this linguistic legacy at independence: “intuitively one could have expected it to be abandoned as fast as possible after independence” (Schneider 2007: 1). Despite all the negative ideas attached to the English language as a language representing “foreign dominance and loss of political and cultural sovereignty” (Schneider 2007: 2), the English language has stayed even after independence and does not seem to go; hence, its indigenisation:

English has managed to stay, not only in formal and official functions; it has indigenized and grown local roots. It has begun to thrive and to produce innovative, regionally distinctive forms and uses of its own, in contact with indigenous languages and cultures and in the mouths of both native populations and the descendants of former immigrants, making ever deeper inroads into local communities (Schneider 2007: 2; see also Mufwene 2009).

While one may not dispute the fact that English has become one of the indigenous, native or “common” languages, through adaptation and appropriation, of those who speak this universal language, one thing is much more evident: that is, the indigenisation of the English language in its different ecologies has diversified the language in its phonological, lexical and syntactic components. This can be noticed listening to two speakers of English from two different English-speaking or English-using countries due mainly to the development of indigenous and regional varieties which most times compromises intelligibility (Schneider 2007: 2, 8). This diversification does not only involve countries where

English is spoken by descendants of ‘English settlers’ or ‘English immigrants’ in the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand but also countries (such as Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Uganda, etc.) where English has taken a more formal or official status before and after these countries gained their independence from Britain. With the former group, the variation involves dialect contact since there was “contact between immigrants of various social and regional backgrounds” (Schneider 2007: 4). The linguistic variation becomes even more evident when one takes a closer look at users from the latter group of countries. Hence, the postcolonial perspective of the English language maintained by Schneider who states that Postcolonial Englishes “are products of a specific evolutionary process tied directly to their colonial and postcolonial history” (Schneider 2007: 3).

As for the relationship of the history of colonial and postcolonial Sierra Leone with the evolution of English as a state and official language of education, politics, administration, business, international communication and its consequent indigenisation, chapters four and five seek to provide answers to this question in considering that

what counts here is not the colonial history or the former colonial status of a given country per se, and also not specifically British connection, but rather the type of contact situation caused by these historical circumstances, the expansion and relocation of the use of a single language to new territories where a characteristic type of language-contact situation evolves (Schneider 2007: 3-4, 2003: 235).

That is, these chapters (four and five) will trace the relocation of English to Sierra Leone, the contact the language has had with other languages in Sierra Leone as it is adopted and appropriated, the use of the language in education in Sierra Leone and the language policies implemented so far with regard to the prominence of English or other languages. This also reminds us of the fact that postcolonial Englishes should be seen as a field of linguistic investigation both from general and specific cases (Schneider 2007). What are then Postcolonial Englishes (PCE)? Does the English spoken and used by Sierra Leoneans qualify as a Postcolonial variety of this universal language? If so, what characteristics does it share with other PCEs? If no, how different is Sierra Leone English?

Postcolonial Englishes are varieties of English “shaped and determined by the sociohistorical conditions of their origins and by the social nature of man” (Schneider 2007: 8). These two factors –(a) the sociohistorical conditions that shaped PCEs and (b) the social nature of human beings– will become essential in this study of SLE, and their assumption will lead to a positive answer to the preceding question about the consideration of SLE as a postcolonial variety. Firstly, the sociohistorical facts surrounding the Freetown settlement, which is the birthplace of English in Sierra Leone, point to varieties of English that were brought, shaped and developed by circumstances different from those where “native” English people were settled in or emigrated to (the case of North America (USA and Canada), New Zealand and Australia). The people who were settled in Freetown were not native speakers of English in the strict sense of the word (see chapter four). In fact, the English they brought has been analysed as a restructured variety (see Holm 1989; Fyfe ed. 1991; Montgomery 1999; Huber 1999, 2004; Hackert and Huber 2007). The second fact is that the English language is an educational acquisition in Sierra Leone which raises the possessor to the upper social, political and economic echelons of society due to its special position in the state and its role in the educational system (Schneider 2007; Spencer, ed.: 1971). That is, all those who speak English in Sierra Leone acquired the language through the school system and use the language with others who also acquired the language through the same means; these include family members, friends, colleagues and acquaintances.

With respect to the fact that man is a social animal, we should expect Sierra Leoneans who speak English to be more closely associated with other Sierra Leoneans with whom they communicate in English than with people whom they are less likely to interact with on a regular basis and as such we should expect Sierra Leoneans who speak English to “accommodate and adjust their speech forms to those of their friends and neighbors to express solidarity, which is the reason why there are dialects and varieties of languages” (Schneider 2007: 8; see also Mufwene 2001: 146-147 cited above). After all, we humans associate with those around us and as such the way we speak languages “depends upon and at the same time signals an individual’s background” (Schneider 2007: 8). This

implies that Sierra Leoneans who speak English should be able to speak a variety that betrays their Sierra Leonean background (consciously or otherwise) just as we are able to distinguish an American from a British or Australian hearing them speak English. This is evidently framed by Schneider, thus: “in most instances, as soon as a person starts to speak, listeners will be able to roughly assess where the speaker grew up, in which social circumstances, how formal or casual is the speech situation being framed” (Schneider 2007: 8).

According to Schneider (2003, 2007), the emergence of New Englishes and their consequent synchronic differences can be explained from a diachronic perspective (Schneider 2003: 235). Although the linguistic growth of these new varieties of the English language are as a result of the "colonial expansion of the British Empire" to the different parts of the world (Schneider 2003: 235), the linguistic relevance of these varieties has more to do with the new linguistic situation that developed during the era of colonialism coupled with the postcolonial implications (Schneider 2007) than with the colonial context *per se* through which they evolved. That is, we cannot talk about New Englishes or Postcolonial Englishes without making reference to the sociohistorical and sociocultural contexts that brought them into existence, viz: the colonial history of the English speaking/using country in question and the languages with which English came into contact through individual speakers.

Therefore, although the colonial expansion of Britain propelled the linguistic scenario, we are concerned here with the linguistic consequences of these historical contacts including the relocation of varieties of restructured Englishes to Sierra Leone and the typical language contact that evolves (Schneider 2003: 235, 2007: 3-4 cited above). On this note, the colonial history of Sierra Leone or the relation between Sierra Leone and Britain are important only from a sociohistorical and/or sociocultural context. What we explore in this study is the contact situation that arose first with the arrival of the settlers with their restructured Englishes and African languages and then the consequent linguistic implication with the declaration of Freetown as a British colony and the subsequent declaration of the rest of Sierra Leone as a British protectorate. These historical facts manifested themselves in different contact scenarios: economic,

political, religious, cultural, educational and linguistic; all of these contacts culminated into various stratifications and differentiation. While all the other contacts are important, our focus is essentially the linguistic contact and the ensuing effects as regards the introduction and use of English first in Freetown and then in Sierra Leone as a whole taking into consideration the fact that language is an important instrument of communication in any given society (see chapter four and five). This position is further manifested in the different ways language is transmitted and acquired from generation to generation, either through the normal (informal acquisition) or scholastic (formal classroom transmission) means. While it is a linguistic fact that Krio is an offshoot of the linguistic situation of pre-colonial and colonial Freetown, it is to be explored whether Sierra Leone English is an outcome of those two periods including the scholastic context through which English is acquired in Sierra Leone. We know that the sociolinguistic situation in Sierra Leone is a complex one considering the multilingual nature of the country: various indigenous languages including Krio exist side by side and these (especially Krio) co-exist with English (no matter the minimal nature of the co-existence of English with the other indigenous Sierra Leonean languages). However, considering Gupta (1997 cited in Schneider 2003: 235), and taking into account the colonial history of the country, which label best describes the role of English in Sierra Leone: “monolingual ancestral English”, “monolingual contact variety”, “monolingual scholastic English”, “multilingual contact variety” or “multilingual ancestral English”?

The various models which have been proposed to describe and explain the different varieties of English worldwide (see subsection 2.2.) have considered the disparate linguistic and colonial history of the English speaking world, with the exception of the English speaking countries in the Caribbean where English is considered a Second Dialect - ESD - (Görlach 1991b: 12 cited in Schneider 2007: 13).

There seems to be a general consensus that most ex-colonies of Britain use English as a Second Language with a prominent official role in politics, education, jurisdiction and other such important domains notwithstanding the existence of strong indigenous languages (Schneider 2003: 237). They, therefore,

fall under the monolingual scholastic English group. SLE is not an exception to this trend. What is more interesting is the fact that English co-exists with Krio (an English-based creole language) in Sierra Leone, especially in Freetown. While some researchers have maintained that "creoles are actually dialects of their lexifiers" (Schneider 2007: 11; see also Mufwene 2001), we need to understand that both language varieties, Postcolonial or New Englishes and their creoles, whether in West Africa, Asia or on the Caribbean Islands, irrespective of the varying circumstances that brought them into existence, are products of language contact and as such there is some amount of relationship between them, especially as both contribute to the sociolinguistic reality of the countries where they are spoken (see chapter six).

Regarding the notion of nativeness and consequently norms of correctness, whether or not Sierra Leone English can be classified as monolingual scholastic English, the ENL, ESL and EFL dichotomies further put users of English in Sierra Leone into the ESL category (the Outer Circle according to Kachru's classification of World Englishes) when we consider the political, sociolinguistic and pedagogical matters of the language in the country. In essence, monolingual scholastic English is just another name for ESL/Outer Circle. The native and non-native speaker dichotomy has further complicated the theoretical approach to New Englishes (this is a point that we shall address later on in this and the subsequent section). However, while "the traditional view holds that only native speakers fully command a language and have proper intuitions on its structural properties"(Schneider 2007: 17; see also Kachru 1997: 4-5 cited in Schneider 2003: 238), some users in the ESL/Outer Circle countries have qualified as functional native speakers, whereas those in the ENL countries have been regarded as genetic native speakers.

When we put the political and sociolinguistic aspects aside, we are confronted with norm orientations in the teaching aspect of the English language in all English-speaking or English-using countries. Given (a) that "all language users and varieties are functionally adequate in their respective contexts and internally well-structured" (Schneider 2003: 238); (b) that "PCEs emerge and are spoken in sociolinguistically complex circumstances, and they are therefore

characterized by a high degree of variability" (Schneider 2007: 17), and (c) the existence of other indigenous languages in contact, whose norms should be adopted by teachers of English in Sierra Leone, especially as we know that Britain and the other ENL varieties have been considered as the 'centres' of correctness while ESL varieties and consequently New Englishes have been relegated as 'peripheral' with negative perception towards them? We know that "it takes a very long time –generations or even centuries– for regional speech differences to emerge, stabilize, and become recognizable in the public mind" (Schneider 2007: 9), but has the existence of the English language in Sierra Leone for more than 200 years not been able to mould an internally well-structured language variety that is capable of determining notions of a stable variety of English?

In the following sub-section we look at the "Dynamic Model", the evolutionary cycles of New Englishes following Schneider (2003, 2007), and show SLE evolutionary development taking the model into consideration.

3.6. The evolutionary phases of New Englishes

Based on the concepts of language contact, ecology of language evolution and the principles of competition-and-selection and language indigenisation (see Thomason 2001; Mufwene 2001, 2005, 2009; Hickey ed. 2010), the five-phase "Dynamic Model" or the evolutionary cycles of PCE developed by Schneider (2003, 2007) subscribes to the fact that "speakers keep redefining and expressing their linguistic and social identities, constantly aligning themselves with other individuals and thereby accommodating their speech behavior to those they wish to associate and be associated with" (Schneider 2007: 21; see also Milroy 1992; Labov 1994; Campbell 1998; Tagliamonte 2012). How does this happen? A straightforward answer would be: World Englishes, New Englishes and PCE are developed, shaped and spoken/used in bi- or multilingual settings, as such in language contact situations (Schneider 2003: 335; 2007: 21),

by people with a variety of ethnic origins and linguistic histories, in forms which are shaped not only by regional and dialectal diversifications but also by complex processes of language contact and also dialect contact, new social environments and discourse contexts (Schneider 2003: 335).

Essentially, language contact and language ecology roll the dice for the evolution of the various Englishes around the world. We, therefore, put into perspective the ‘Dynamic Model’ of Schneider (2003, 2007) for the evolution of Sierra Leone English as we juxtapose it with the historical process starting with the restructured Englishes brought to Freetown by the early settlers and the sociolinguistic setting which determines its use in Sierra Leone today.

Before looking at this five-phase model, let us quickly put into perspective some of the developmental patterns of English as presented by Schneider (2010). We need to state at the outset that the evolution of Sierra Leone English follows the normal path as other PCE:

English was transported to new locations, introduced into regions where other indigenous languages had been spoken, by English-speaking traders, missionaries and settlers. World Englishes had been shaped by the contact between English-speaking migrants and local, resident populations who, initially in any event, had no choice in the matter (Schneider 2010: 373).

Hence, English was brought to Sierra Leone by traders, the settlers and the Christian Missionaries most of whom did not speak English as a native language even before the country was officially colonised (see chapters four and five). Crucially for the evolution of English and Krio, the locals and the traders, and later the settlers, had to relate with one another and this propelled the development of what is regarded as West African English and Krio and its consequent spread through missionary activities to other West African countries and beyond. However, during the colonial period there was an unequal relationship between the locals, settlers and the representatives of the British Empire:

The representatives of the British Empire were the carriers of political power, explicitly or implicitly, and dealing and trading with the Europeans meant new opportunities, so from the early days of colonial history, a knowledge of English promised a share in these attractions for indigenous people (Schneider 2010: 273).

This new linguistic situation initiated the emergence of contact forms of English which, in the case of Sierra Leone, had already begun with the traders and the

settlers' restructured varieties of English in Freetown and its environs (see chapters four and five). Hence, the transfer of pronunciation habits, the lexicon and sentence patterns from the indigenous languages into English became the norm especially as many people became interested in the new language and were taught by other people who were not native speakers of English. This gave origin to the appropriation, transformation, the birth and nativisation of a New English (Schneider 2010: 373-374).

Apart from the complaint tradition of educated speakers of English in the countries that have adopted English as one of their languages, this deploring and deficient new linguistic property of an indigenous population with their own languages (see Pemagbi 1989 for the case of Sierra Leone; see also chapter two) is adopted and spread "gradually until even policy-makers accept it" (Schneider 2010: 374). This is so because the English language is only used as an official language of administration and education as we show in chapter two vis-à-vis the different English speaking West African countries. Consequently, its spread is conditioned by the indigenous/local models "rather than through the adoption of so-called 'native-speaker' models" (Schneider 2010: 375).

A recurrent developmental pattern which we should mention here is the fact that there was social distance between the newcomers and the local people, whereas the missionaries established a close relationship with the locals:

Missionaries tended to live together fairly closely with indigenous population, and thus provided linguistic models. Settlers usually built their own communities, largely separate from indigenous populations, and the relations between them soon tended to be marked more by competition than collaboration – which implied distancing, seclusion and even outright hostility (Schneider 2010: 375-376).

This was evident in the Freetown settlement: there was total distance between the settlers and the indigenous people of Freetown and even among the different settler groups themselves (see chapter four for a discussion of this issue).

Another developmental pattern worth mentioning is that related to the type of rule introduced by the British Colonial system. The 'Indirect Rule' system which the British introduced in the colonies, especially in Africa, where "indigenous power structures were recognized" and "local leaders were educated

in British institutions with the intention of making them friendly to British interests” ensured the ensuing language contact situation (Schneider 2010: 376). When the British left at independence, political power was given to the fortunate educated groups, but “genuinely British speech models” became more scarce and “the language-teaching duties and the role as linguistic models fell more strongly upon local speakers of English” (Schneider 2010: 376). What linguistic features, then, do we expect such English varieties to have?

According to Schneider (2010: 376ff), varieties of English around the world display fairly different linguistic features –in phonological, lexical and syntactical levels– due mainly to contact effect with the indigenous languages in each country. However, some of these features cut across regional and continental boundaries:

More interestingly, and perhaps surprisingly, many similarities have also emerged from all these contact processes, despite all differences in input languages and varieties, and in their respective historical and social settings (Schneider 2010: 377).

Some of these similarities are outlined in Schneider (2010: 377- 379) and are summarised below:

- (1) *Koinéization*: “an intermediate, middle-of-the road variety” which is like all the dialectal forms of a variety spoken in a particular country.
- (2) *Emergent bilingualism*: in the absence of a common language, a *lingua franca*, in a particular community, people tend to shift to each other’s language in situations of language contact. However, the language of the group which wields more political power tends to be the language that the lower-status group will acquire. In this case. English tends to be the language that promises one an upper social status.
3. *Substrate transfer*: bilingualism is a result of language acquisition. In the process of acquiring a second language, one’s linguistic background and habits are manifested through the transfer of features which are inexistent in the target language. Some local lexical components are also transferred.
4. *Sequence of contact effects*: the area that first signals contact effects is the lexicon: “words travel easily” (Schneider 2010: 377). Words denoting place

names, designations, plants, animals, local customs and cultural objects are the first to be noticed in the target language followed first by phonological transfer and then grammatical structures, which are the last to be influenced.

5. *Contact effects in line with cline of contact intensity*: the intensity of social contacts will determine the previous sequence of effects. If the contact is superficial, only the lexicon is transferred/borrowed. An intensive contact will result in morphological and structural transfer.

6. *Structural nativization*: when all of the above have obtained, the wheel propelling “the evolution of a ‘New English’” completes its motion; a new language variety is born: “a new dialect of English ... has been ‘nativized’ or ‘indigenized’” (Schneider 2010: 378).

7. *Adoption of indigenous forms*: in countries where there are native speakers of English, these innovative forms of indigenous speakers of English, are adopted by native speakers with the exception of grammatical forms which are reluctantly accepted.

8. *Appropriation of innovative linguistic forms for social purposes*: words and sounds are more easily accepted and hence are used socially. These features show a mark of membership or “a symbolic expression of attitude” and “signals a desire for social solidarity” (Schneider 2010: 378-379).

Therefore, despite the variations among the PCE caused by the type of colonisation instituted and the consequent historical facts of each English-using country, there are many similarities in the process of transplanting a language from one region/country to another. In fact, Schneider (2007: 21ff) outlines a five-phase ‘Dynamic Model’ which describes “the developmental process and, its constituent elements, emphasizing those aspects which are most widely shared and observable but also at times suggesting characteristic modifications” (Schneider 2007: 29). This model can be convincingly applied to the history of English in Sierra Leone, which follows the principal process in the evolution of PCE: that dealing with settlers and indigenous groups, although the settlers in the case of Sierra Leone brought with them restructured varieties rather than native-speaker varieties of English (see Holm 1989; Fyfe ed. 1991; Montgomery 1999; Huber 1999, 2004). Hence, the Freetown settlement also witnessed the

reconstruction of the “us” and “them” group identities (Schneider 2007: 29; see also chapter four and five). The sociohistorical facts that led to the evolution of English in Sierra Leone have to be made clear before we explore present day Sierra Leone English because, as Schneider puts it,

In the beginning, a group of settlers in a foreign land consider themselves as an extension of the “us” of their country of origin, clearly separated from the “other” of the indigenous population of their country of destination. In the course of time, however, for one reason or another, in the settler community bonds with the former homeland weaken and are gradually dissolved, so that in their eyes the country of origin turns into an “other”, while a new, regionally based construction of “us”, gradually incorporating the indigenous population is being developed (Schneider 2007: 29-30).

The establishment of the Freetown Settlement in 1787, the evolution of West African English and Krio and its sister Pidgin and Creole languages in the region and beyond from the restructured varieties and the consequent development of nationhood in Sierra Leone are all interconnected. This is well-captured here:

Typically after having shared the land for many decades and even centuries, both groups recognize that this need to co-exist will continue for good, and they move more closely towards each other, both socially and linguistically ... and it also typically involves a stage of nation-building intended to diminish ethnic boundaries and to develop a pan-ethnic feeling of nationhood (Schneider 2010: 381).

Cultural and linguistic differences lead to mutual recognition and understanding and subsequently to nationhood, social moves that will be discussed in the subsequent chapters. We cannot forget that PCE are “identity-driven”, and this justifies a diachronic study which must necessarily precede a synchronic one. In this thesis we propose such study for SLE in order to put into perspective Schneider’s views who states *inter alia* that

(1) Extralinguistic factors, like historical events and the political situation, result in (2) characteristic identity constructions on the sides of the parties involved. These, in turn, manifest themselves in (3) sociolinguistic determinants of the contact setting (conditions of language contact, language use, and language attitudes), which, consequently, cause specific (4) structural effects to emerge in the form(s) of the language variety/-ies involved (Schneider 2007: 30-31).

The four processes – the historical events around the Freetown Settlement, the construction of the Freetown society (people, languages, organisation), the ensuing sociolinguistic determinants which propelled the evolution of a characteristic variety of English and Krio, both of which spread to other West African countries and beyond (The Gambia, Nigeria, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea) – coupled with the “ethnographic ecology” of the then Freetown Settlement should be made clear before a discussion of present-day Sierra Leone English. Considering the fact that Sierra Leone English as it is today is the outcome of “sociolinguistic conditions of language contact, linguistic usage and language attitudes” (Schneider 2010: 381) processed and moulded in the Freetown Settlement, let us now briefly look at the five-phase ‘Dynamic Model’. Each phase has four different levels: socio-political background, identity constructions, sociolinguistics conditions and linguistic effects.

Phase one - Foundation (Schneider 2007: 33-36)

This phase signals the coming of a group of people and with them a new language. Even though the number of the migrants or settlers may be insignificant, the fact that they can use their language among themselves is very important. Their relationship with the indigenous people is at first not very friendly and the newcomers consider themselves superior due to their educational, military or any other type of social status they enjoyed and local population might seem to lack. The seemingly friendly relation would soon become violent because of the way the settlers might want to control the local population.

This consequently sets in the recognition of each other’s existence and hence the distinct character trait of each group is clearly manifested. The settler group would want to reign over the indigenous group as they see themselves as representatives of a superior power as well as wanting to establish a cultural copy of the *modus operandi* of their homeland. The indigenous group, as the rightful owners of the territory, would resist this.

Given the fact that both the settler and the indigenous groups have different languages, the sociolinguistic situation that manifests itself is an

interesting one. Settlers are normally brought from different dialect groups from their homeland and this ensures dialect contact among the settlers. The interaction between the settlers' groups and the indigenous groups set the language contact wheel in motion. The limited contact between the settlers and the indigenous group at the beginning is supported by the fact that the settlers, conscious of their power (military, cultural, political and otherwise), do not bother to learn the language of the indigenous people. On the contrary, some elements of the indigenous group tend to learn the language of the settlers. Sometimes, the locals are forced to learn the language of the migrants to serve as interpreters. This sets in L2 acquisition and minimal bilingualism.

Consequently, "koinéization, incipient pidginization and toponymic borrowing" become the three linguistic effects of the sociolinguistic reality that obtains. Linguistic accommodation sets in as a "middle-of-the-road" variety of the different dialects with a "phonetically or grammatically intermediate "interdialect" form" is made possible (Schneider 2007: 35). The indigenous languages would relatively not influence the language of the settlers at this stage. Original names for places are mostly retained from the local languages.

This phase, in the context of Sierra Leone, would contextually be explained as the coming of the Europeans to West Africa, in general, and to Sierra Leone, in particular during the slave trade, followed by the establishment of the Freetown Settlement, the declaration of Freetown as a British colony and the subsequent Missionary activities. Sections 4.2 and 4.3 discuss this phase in detail.

Phase two – Exornomative stabilization (Schneider 2007: 36-40)

At the inception of this stage, there is seeming political stability under foreign influence, in our case, Britain. Colonies or dependent territories are officially established. English, in this case, serves as the language of administration and education, and a small number of native speakers are there as expatriates. Interestingly, the colony, as it is now known,

serves the purpose for which it was founded –accommodating new settlers and providing agricultural lands; serving as an outpost for trading activities, for the military, or for missionary activities; securing political control and naval routes; providing a dumping ground for criminals and

other folks unwanted at home (Schneider 2007: 36).

The aforementioned activities require more land and an expansion of the territory of the colony and consequently more contacts with the indigenous population. This also ensures a significant number of the indigenous population seeking contacts with the colonisers as a means to “advancing their status or economic prosperity” (Schneider 2007: 37).

Settlers begin to have mixed identity: settler-cum-local. Mixed marriages produce “children of mixed ethnic parentage” and hence these children “develop a hybrid cultural identity” (Schneider 2007: 37). Members of the indigenous population who have knowledge of English begin to feel more competitive than those in their group who do not have this new linguistic wealth. Segregation enters the indigenous community as those who speak English associate more with the Europeans or settlers.

Bilingualism spreads as more and more indigenous members become familiar with English and are competent in, at least, one of the local languages. Interestingly,

For the indigenous population a command of English gradually turns into an asset, opening roads to higher status or specific commercial options. Especially in exploitation colonies schools are established to train an indigenous elite in English and European manners, to produce a stratum of indigenous people expected to assist the British in maintaining their dominance and in ruling the country (Schneider 2007: 38).

Consequently, the English language and its culture were spread among the local community as the highest achievement of civilisation. During this stage, linguistic correctness is of limited importance and a “learners’ interlanguage, enriched by indigenous vocabulary and interference patterns” sets in (Schneider 2007: 38). The settlers equally get exposed to both indigenous languages and the varieties of English growing among the indigenous users of English.

The growing cultural and linguistic contact among the different groups influenced “the linguistic system(s) of English” firstly on the lexical level with slow inroads on the syntactic and morphological levels as well (Schneider 2007: 39). The English language is now moving toward a local language variety and in

some contexts ... ecological conditions are such that already at this stage stable and expanded pidgins develop and creolization occurs. Within the Dynamic Model this is regarded as one pole of a continuum of contact-induced effects of varying intensities (Schneider 2007: 40).

A new language variety is born.

Given the fact that Freetown was declared a British Crown Colony in 1808 and Fourah Bay College was established in 1827, we could designate this period as the beginning of this phase, even though it can be joined with phase one taking cognizance of the fact that there was some amount of organisation in Freetown before it was declared a British Crown Colony. The declaration of the rest of the country as a British Protectorate in 1896 and the expansion of education and the consequent interethnic relations among Sierra Leoneans and representatives of the British Crown gave a stronger impetus for the birth of Sierra Leone English taking into consideration the intensity of the contact between those who speak English and the other languages that were in existence and in contact with English in the whole country. Considering also the fact that the early settlers brought with them some restructured varieties of English, this phase could be seen as the phase that brought English to Freetown. The contact with the indigenes and the other Recaptured Africans that were brought to the settlement paved the way for language contact and the ensuing Pidginization and Creolization of these restructured Englishes. Discussions in sections 4.4, 5.1 and 5.2 should throw more light on this phase.

Phase three - Nativization (Schneider 2007: 40-48)

As the most significant phase, “cultural and linguistic transformation” takes root at this level. The different groups in the country realise that transformations are taking place at various levels: traditional, identity, socio-political associations/groups are formed, a combination of the old and the new is created and language use “becomes a major practical issue” (Schneider 2007: 41).

At this stage political independence is gained and a semi-autonomous state is created and the difference between the indigenous and the settler groups is reduced although “differences in cultural backgrounds, ethnicity, language,

prosperity, and lifestyle, and also status and political power are not wiped away all of a sudden, but they are gradually reduced in importance” (Schneider 2007: 41). The initial boundaries between “us” and “others” become blurred and both become “us” as the different groups approach each other for the good of all.

Since “political independence is a precursor of linguistic independence” (Greenbaum 1996a: 11 cited in Schneider 2007: 41), linguistic development takes place as regular contacts at all levels are maintained by all groups. Likewise, linguistic acculturation and assimilation occur as more and more indigenous people look up to English as the language of national integration and international communication. We equally witness the beginning of the complaint tradition as people complain of the deteriorating standard of English.

English is structured at all levels at this stage to reflect the identity of the new nation and the identity of the people that are now making use of the language for their peculiar realities. The users of the new language are no longer “passive recipients of linguistic forms”, but are themselves “language builders” (Schneider 2007:45). A new language variety has been created out of the social and cultural milieu in which it exists.

With independence achieved in 1961 and the mantle of responsibilities now in the hands of Sierra Leoneans, English is now used more and more among Sierra Leoneans especially in matters of state. This promoted the flourishing of the creation of an authentically and ecologically made Sierra Leone English. Political representatives, teachers, government institutions’ directors and other administrative responsibilities are now in the hands of Sierra Leoneans from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. English became the neutral functional administrative language among Sierra Leoneans and hence Sierra Leoneans became creators of a locally made English spoken at home and abroad. Sections 5.3 and 5.4 discuss issues related to this phase.

Phase four – Endonormative stabilization (Schneider 2007: 48-52)

This phase follows immediately the independence of the new nation and as such the country now has the mandate to decide its own linguistic matters and has now become culturally self-reliant.

The erstwhile settlers now consider themselves to be part of the new nation and the new identity and hence “the role of ethnicity, and ethnic boundaries themselves, will tend to be redefined and regarded as increasingly less important” since it has now been realised that ethnicity is “but a social construct” rather than a biological one (Schneider 2007: 49). As “nation-building” becomes the watchword of the new nation, all other differences are seen to be peripheral.

This stage truly shows the birth of a new nation as

the newly achieved psychological independence and the acceptance of a new, indigenous identity result in the gradual adoption and acceptance of local forms of English as a means of expression of that new identity, a new, locally rooted linguistic self-confidence (Schneider 2007: 49).

The initial stigma attached to this new variety is positively assessed as it now becomes recognised as an adequate form of expression. Whereas in formal contexts the former colonisers’ variety is imposed, especially in education, in informal and oral contexts “all English-speaking communities tolerate some degree of deviance” (Schneider 2007: 50). The symbolic expression “English in X”, being X the name of a region or country, is replaced by “X English” particularly as it is reflected in literary creativity (Schneider 2007: 50).

Linguistic change and nativisation has now been able to mould a distinctly recognisable language variety, different from that which was originally brought. The new language variety has stabilised, not totally homogeneous and free of variation, but the ethnic and social heterogeneous forms are suppressed.

The process of nativisation which began in the period before and immediately after independence becomes complete during this phase. Linguistic progress has taken place and so in symbolic representation English has grown stronger roots in Sierra Leone and hence it is now firmly rooted in the Sierra Leonean Linguistic Landscape (SLLL henceforward). It is now Sierra Leone English. A Sierra Leonean is known by the way he speaks the language both at home and in the international scene. Chapter six and the corpus contained in the attached CD should throw light on this phase.

Phase five - Differentiation (Schneider 2007: 52-55)

This stage marks complete political, cultural and linguistic independence. The emergence of the new language variety is now complete and can no longer be disputed. Internal linguistic differentiation comes to light as differences “between individuals with respect to their economic status, social categories, and personal predilections come to light and can be given greater prominence” (Schneider 2007: 53).

People’s identity construction is narrowed down; the immediate community takes prominence over the national:

the citizens of a young nation no longer define themselves primarily as a single social entity in relation to the former colonial power but rather as a composite of subgroups, each being marked by an identity of its own (Schneider 2007: 53).

One’s identity is now based on his/her sociocultural and sociolinguistic defined group.

The aforementioned network groupings trigger “group-internal linguistic accommodation” and shows off in the new language variety “as markers of group membership” (Schneider 2007: 53).

Linguistically, the emergence of a new language variety gives rise to new dialects birth based on group identities within the national territory. Differences are shown in “accents, lexical expressions, and structural patterns” and hence this phase “marks the onset of a vigorous phase of new or increased, internal sociolinguistic diversification” (Schneider 2007: 54). However,

depending on the relationships between people of different ethnicities in a nation and, consequently, the identity constructions of communities along ethnic grounds, such dialect differences may be reinforced or may actually develop afresh as markers of ethnic pride, or they may be relatively inconspicuous and be hardly perceived (Schneider 2007: 54-55).

This phase is hardly attainable in monolingual English communities. This phase is only possible in bi- or multilingual communities where indigenous languages co-exist with English and individuals show high levels of proficiency in either two or

more languages.

Given the spread of education and the importance given to English in present-day Sierra Leone and the use of English in the media and social networks and all other spheres in Sierra Leone, English should be seen to taking a route leading to differentiation. This simply means that regional and ethnic affiliations should be seen to be reflected in the English of educated speakers in Sierra Leone. However, the findings of the different language enthusiasts regarding Sierra Leone English must first be consolidated before an approach to this stage is made. A research into the regional or ethnic affiliations of educated speakers of English in Sierra Leone would complement this phase.

3.7. Conclusion

This chapter has provided us with theoretical and conceptual orientations as to how we should approach the study of Postcolonial and World Englishes. The spread of English on a global scale should first be seen within sociohistorical and ecological contours. Outside these, we would be doing linguistic injustice to those who acquired and appropriated these varieties within socio-cultural milieus completely different from where these varieties are spoken as native languages. The acquisition pattern which is partial in nature, since they are not heritage languages in these societies, and their subsequent evolution is structural in nature. This simply means that these varieties undergo long term changes in sounds, the lexicon and morphosyntactic properties (Mufwene 2001). Hence, our sociohistorical and ecological perspective in this study.

The sociolinguistic settings and the contact of other languages in societies where these language varieties are used permit the contact of language systems through speakers and the ensuing linguistic effects of the transfer of other systems from other languages known and used by the new owners of these language varieties. This provides the basis for language indigenisation which is also a response to the ecological conditions that prevail in societies where these varieties are spoken.

Closely related to the above language contact and indigenisation process is the fact that these language varieties are spoken in multilingual settings, and

hence interlanguage, fossilisation and stabilisation phenomena should be seen from sociocultural and cognitive perspectives since the speakers of these language varieties are shifting to another language and the linguistic apparatus of their other languages are not switched off while they are using the new linguistic property. Therefore, the speakers of PCEs/WEs are continuous learners. This is why the synchronic differences that these language varieties (ESL varieties) show vis-à-vis their L1 counterparts (the ENL varieties) should first be explained from a diachronic perspective.

Given the above as one of our theoretical orientations, the chapter concludes by explaining and situating the evolutionary development of SLE by following Schneider's (2007) five- phase "Dynamic Model".

Chapters four, five and six try to elucidate this sociohistorical development of SLE within its ecology.

Chapter 4

A Sociolinguistic history of the English language in Freetown

Freetown, it may here be observed, is the great source of blackman's English, which runs down the whole coast except about Accra, where the people have learnt somewhat better, and amongst the Krumen, whose attempts are even less intelligible to the Englishmen (Burton 1863:I:214 in Huber 1995: 68 cited in Görlach 1996: 7).

4.0. Introduction

The (trans)shipment of people and the consequent diaspora of restructured varieties of the English language through Granville Sharp's philanthropist move to (re)settle the Black Poor in London and consequently other people like them in the Americas to Freetown 228 years ago was not only a salvation and civilizing mission but was also meant "as a potential utopian frontier of the mind and soul: a new beginning, in which humanity could rectify its past sins" (Bledsoe 1992: 186; see also Alie 1990: 48). For Alie (1990: 51), Sharp "envisaged a free and independent community" which "would serve as a nucleus for the spread of Christianity and European civilization in Africa". Therefore, the existence of the English language with its divergent dialects in its new ecology in Freetown, the 'Province of Freedom' (Fyfe ed. 1991: 2), which has attracted some language enthusiasts (Spencer 1971; Jones 1971; Jabbi 1972; Holm 1989; Pemagbi 1989; Fyfe ed. 1991; Conteh-Morgan 1997; Montgomery 1999; Huber 1999, 2004 and Hackert and Huber 2007) should be seen as a contact-induced variety considering the linguistic diversity of the settlers' Englishes and their co-existence with speakers of other languages (African languages for that matter) in varying circumstances in a society in which different people and a plethora of languages existed side by side in especially two important phases: settlement (1787-1850; 1808-1863) and colonisation (1808 & 1896). Like in other English-using (West) African countries, at independence in 1961, English remained as the official state

and administrative language, and, as the language of instruction with social, political and economic implications in Sierra Leone. Can the use of English in Sierra Leone, then, be free from contact-induced change? What role did Freetown play in the birth of West African English and the English lexified Pidgin and Creole languages in West Africa and beyond?

To answer these questions and consistent with the two periods mentioned above, this chapter intends to:

- a) give an account of the people who were settled in Freetown as they co-existed with one another and with the indigenes of the Settlement;
- b) establish the structure of eighteenth and nineteenth-century Freetown society in relation to the people and their use of language, more especially the English language;
- c) review the varieties of the English language brought and used by the Freetown Settlers taking into account the other languages spoken in Freetown; and,
- d) discuss the role played by the Freetown settlement and Sierra Leoneans in the birth, development and spread of not only West African English but also English lexified Pidgin and Creole languages in West Africa and beyond.

In view of the above objectives, this chapter is a sociohistorical and (socio)linguistic appraisal of eighteenth and nineteenth-century Freetown settlement with a focus on one of the most documented variety of English, the one brought by the Nova Scotian Settlers, with the aim of determining whether present-day English language usage in Sierra Leone, Freetown in particular, can be said to show contact-induced language restructuring and change examining the history of the settlement vis-à-vis the language, the people and the society.

As observed by Spencer (1971: vii) with reference to the social and cultural background of the English language in West Africa, “sociolinguistic elucidation must precede descriptive work”. Since the preceding chapter has discussed the theoretical, methodological and descriptive framework of the study together with the relationship between historical linguistics, sociolinguistics and contact linguistics with regard to language variation and change, in general, and with particular reference to the English language and the variations and changes that have taken place through time in the different places where English is used,

especially where it is used as a second/official language, this chapter is a sociohistorical and sociolinguistic analysis of pre-colonial and colonial Freetown. The focus will be laid on the non-native or restructured variety of English brought to the (West) African English-using countries in general and Sierra Leone in particular, and special emphasis will be put on the sociohistorical context and the sociolinguistic reality through which the English language was or is acquired and the changes that have taken place or are taking place through contact with the indigenous languages. It also gives an overview of the sociohistorical context of the English language with reference to the linguistic attitudes of the Settlers and native speakers of the language when Freetown was established as ‘the province of Freedom’ and the consequent declaration of Freetown as a British Crown Colony in 1808.

4.1. The Sierra Leonean Linguistic Landscape

The adoption of English as the official administrative and diplomatic language, and, the language of instruction in the former British colonised countries in Asia as well as in Africa demands a thorough sociolinguistic investigation. This is particularly so since the English language has become one of the ‘indigenous languages’ in these countries considering, first, its use, function and status, and, second, its continued co-existence with indigenous languages. Through this linguistic contact there is a presence of the English language in the indigenous languages and vice versa through ‘loans’ or ‘adoptions’, resulting thus, in a situation of mutual influence. This is closely related to Jenkins’s two dispersal phenomena of the English language:

The first diaspora, initially involving the migration of around 25,000 people from the south and east of England primarily to America and Australia, resulted in new mother-tongue varieties of English. The second diaspora, involving the colonization of Asia and Africa led, on the other hand, to the development of a number of second-language varieties, often referred to as ‘New Englishes’ (Jenkins 2003: 5).

With these two exportations of the English language, “new mother-tongue varieties” and “New Englishes” came into existence. This is equally highlighted and supported by Baugh and Cable (2002: 2): “the political and cultural history of

the English language is not simply the history of the British Isles and of North America but a truly international history of quite divergent societies”. Holm equally talks about this unique transplantation of the English language the world over: “[B]ritain was more successful than any other nation in implanting its language around the globe, both in terms of sheer numbers of speakers and in the proliferation of overseas varieties” (Holm 1989: 405). It is from this international perspective and the success story of the language that we will approach the issue of the English language in Sierra Leone.

Bearing in mind the Sierra Leonean Linguistic Landscape (SLLL), and the country’s language policy which does not give an equal opportunity to all languages spoken in the country in terms of use and function, we would not consider Sierra Leone to be a multilingual country but rather a country with linguistic diversity (Sengova 1987; Kamanda 2002; Fyle 2003). This is so because multilingualism means identical prominence of languages in relation to education, language identity, status and language policy implementation (see UNESCO 1953, 2003; Dalby 1981; Bamgbose 1999; see also Baptista, Brito and Bangura 2010, among others).

For Fyle “[t]here is perhaps no truly monolingual country in Africa, even if one thinks only in terms of indigenous languages” (Fyle 2003: 115). He further maintains that “in Africa the average person is of necessity a multilingual animal, not just a bilingual one” (Fyle 2003: 117). The latter quote goes in line with our view that, Sierra Leone, like most African countries, has what should be considered linguistic diversity instead of multilingualism. Put differently, there is individual multilingualism not societal multilingualism. This can be buttressed with the following example from Fyle (2003: 116): “[i]n Sierra Leone, for example, a person may be a Vai speaker, before being a Mende speaker, before being a Krio speaker, before being an English speaker, before being a French speaker”. No matter the discrepancies, in order to have a functional multilingual society, there has to be linguistic equality with regard to education, identity, and language status. What is evident in Sierra Leone, like in other African countries, is the existence of individual multilingual tendencies rather than societal multilingualism, as shown in the SLLL diagram below:

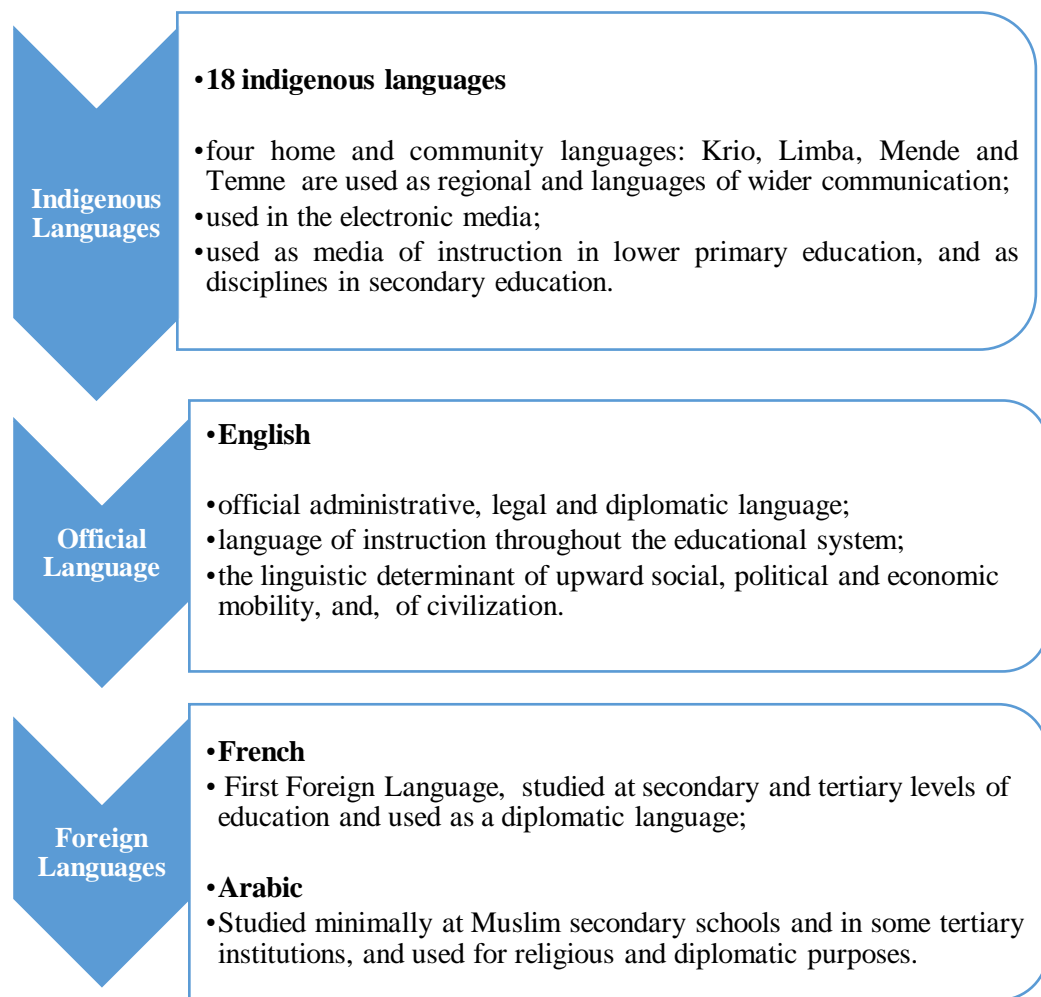


Diagram 1. Sierra Leone Linguistic Landscape

Given the above description of the Sierra Leonean Linguistic Landscape, we provide the linguistic map of Sierra Leone below:



Map 3. Ethno-geographical distribution of Sierra Leonean languages (Sengova 1987: 523)

This linguistic landscape should give us an insight into the picture of languages used in Sierra Leone and their respective importance. Even though foreign languages are not normally accorded space in linguistic landscapes, the place of French (and Arabic as well among the highly educated Muslim clerics) is slowly becoming successfully evident as languages that have some significant number of users/speakers in Sierra Leone. They thus play a part in the linguistic diversity of Sierra Leone. We excluded some other languages such as Nigerian Pidgin English (NPE) and Liberian English (LE) (restructured Englishes in this case) in the foreign language category, especially so as the former is seriously influencing Krio at the moment, owing to the fact that these two languages, NPE and LE, are mutually comprehensible not only to educated Krio speakers but to a

good number of average Sierra Leoneans as well. This mutual comprehensibility is a result of the many Liberian and Nigerian citizens resident in the country since the early 1990s due to the civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone. We also need to state here that there are some common cross-border languages (Soso, Krim, Vai, Mende, Koranko, Fula, Kissi and the like) spoken along the border areas of the three sister countries –Guinea Conakry, Liberia and Sierra Leone– but since these can be classified as indigenous languages there is no need to classify them as foreign or international but as transnational languages.

4.2. The history of English in Sierra Leone

As with all European languages, the diaspora of the English language in Africa, in general, and in Sierra Leone, in particular, is due to several factors: trade, colonialism, evangelism, and, the Second World War (Jenkins 2003). In the case of Sierra Leone, we consider the slave trade, the Freetown Settlement, colonialism and evangelism as factors for the diaspora of the English language. With regard to the historical perspective of the English language in Sierra Leone, our concern here is to study the language from the context of the speakers/users: “the history of a language is intimately bound up with the history of the people who speak it” (Baugh and Cable 2002: 1). Therefore, just as the present day language of the English people reflects centuries of contacts, developments and events, the current use of the English language in Sierra Leone is expected to show a similar reality, especially so when we examine the different circumstances that brought the language to Sierra Leone and its present state –from business contacts, to religious events, colonialism, and the present era of information technology and globalisation.

As noted above, in the history of English expansion two diasporas can be distinguished. The first diaspora was to America, Australia and the other “new mother-tongue” Settler’s regions. The second dispersal is the transportation of English to Asia and Africa. With regard to this, Jenkins notes: “[T]he second diaspora took place at various points during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in very different ways and with different results from those of the first diaspora” (Jenkins 2003: 7). In this section, therefore, we consider, first, “the

different ways” through which English came to Sierra Leone and, then, “the different results” that are noticed in Sierra Leone considering its co-existence with not only Sierra Leonean indigenous languages and other West African languages on the one hand, but with European languages on the other, namely, Portuguese. The different ways and results are juxtaposed with Fyle’s metaphorical considerations of languages (a) as being part of culture: “[l]anguage itself is part of culture and in many respects its highest and most important manifestation” (Fyle 2003: 118) and, (b) as living things which are prone to change depending on the situations and events that surround them:

Languages are living things, they are subject to constant changes, not only internally as regards their sound systems, their vocabulary and so on, but also in the extent and the importance of their uses, in response to such factors as social change, variation in population density, social mobility patterns, improved communication technologies, political and economic needs, and so on (Fyle 2003: 117).

We hope to show that the English language in Sierra Leone reflects both the cultural aspects of the country and the changes and variations that are the outcomes of the circumstances that surround English in Sierra Leone apart from the internal phonological and lexical modifications.

4.2.1. The slave trade and the development of restructured English

While the Portuguese were the pioneers of the slave trade in West Africa, the English participated equally in this business: “The Portuguese maintained their monopoly of the slave trade until the seventeenth century, when this trade was taken over first by the Dutch and then the English, French, and other North Europeans” (Holm 1989: 410). With their participation in the slave trade, the English made several expeditions to take slaves from countries in West Africa, namely Sierra Leone, the Gambia, Ghana and other present day English using/speaking West African countries and consequently established, first, forts and, then, families with African women to make the slave business more viable (Holm 1989: 410; see also Huber 1999: 62). With these two establishments, the forts and the families, the wheel for the use of the English language or varieties of the English language was thus set in motion. While the African women of the

English were said to speak “a stable pidginized variety of English or an unstable learner’s variety or even a second-language variety of English”, the third generations of these families spoke “a creolized variety of English” and the Afro-English children “grew up speaking not only the creole but also the language of their mother’s ethnolinguistic group” (Holm 1989: 410). Considering this, therefore, we can say that the birth of English-based pidgin and creole languages in West Africa came about through the British involvement in the slave trade. However, such restructured varieties of English were not short of influences from both the African indigenous languages and some other European languages involved in the slave trade, particularly Portuguese (Holm 1989: 411).

As for the Gold Coast, Huber (1999: 57) observes that there were three groups of Africans who had contact with the Anglophone traders: those who had regular contacts with the English traders because of their geographical proximity to the trading posts; African interpreters, usually referred to as the “linguists”, in the service of the whites, and, finally the mulattos, predominant in the coastal areas. With reference to the last group, Huber (1999: 62) notes that “the presence of the mulattos ... shows that there must have been frequent sexual contacts between white men and African women” (see also Holm 1989: 410 mentioned above) and this situation helped the latter to develop some competence in the English language and speak “a second language version of English” (Huber 1999: 62). With the increase in use and number of speakers of these restructured varieties of the English language in West Africa, “British traders had the advantage of not needing interpreters in West Africa since English was spoken along the whole Guinea Coast” (Holm 1989: 411).

Another factor for the widespread use of the English language in West Africa was the exportation of Afro-Americans with their restructured English and other English-based Creole speakers from Jamaica and other plantation centres which saw the beginning of the establishment of Freetown as a settlement for freed slaves and hence the consequent establishment of, first, Freetown as a British colony and then the rest of Sierra Leone as a Protectorate (see Fyfe ed.: 1991; Montgomery 1999; Huber 2004). Furthermore, recaptured Africans on

slave ships *en route* to slavery were brought to the Freetown settlement from the interceptions made by the British on the high seas (Holm 1989: 411–412). Thus,

Sierra Leoneans were particularly influential in shaping West African English as it developed in the nineteenth century. Their Krio spread as a second language not only to the nearby indigenous groups in Sierra Leone, but also throughout much of the rest of West Africa (Holm 1989: 411–412).

On a similar note, Ali Mazrui maintains that “the impact of Sierra Leone on West Africa as a whole was perhaps more in the spread of the English language than of Krio” (Mazrui 1975: 41 cited in Wolf 2001). In Sierra Leone, the influence

came to be centred on Fourah Bay College, established in 1827 as virtually the first modern institution of higher learning in sub-Saharan Africa. Year after year the College sent out Africans to propagate the Gospel and to spread liberal education in the English language in different parts of Western Africa (Mazrui 1975: 41-42 cited in Wolf 2001).

The success story of the Sierra Leonean missionaries, especially as their activities were related to education and civilization, is expressed in the following lines:

The Sierra Leone men are thus forcing on civilization, and English customs, teaching the people the use of writing and printing and bringing about the adoption of written laws. They are doing what we cannot, for we cannot use the means they do to accomplish their purposes (Townsend to Venn, 3.4.1866; CMS CA2/085 quoted by Ajayi 1965: 197 cited in Huber 1999: 139).

As such, the spread of the English language and Krio and its consequent influence on Pidgin English in West Africa by Sierra Leoneans was due to the fact that, after Britain successfully gained control of certain areas, the British sent Sierra Leonean Krios to the other regions (the Gambia, Nigeria, Cameroon including Guinea Equatorial) as administrators, missionaries, traders and teachers rather than British citizens (Holm 1989: 412). However, when Britons “predominate in the colonial empire that was British West Africa from the 1880’s until independence”, British administrators and educators were sent to the aforementioned countries to replace Sierra Leoneans as “the pidgin and creole varieties of English were ... being viewed as barbaric and antithetical to Britain’s

‘civilizing mission’” (Holm 1989: 412). It is important to note that only a small fraction of West African children received Western education at the beginning of the twentieth century, “this was begun in the child’s ethnic language and then continued in standard English, with fines for children who spoke Pidgin in the classroom” (Holm 1989: 412). Of particular importance to the above fact is one of Hannah Kilham’s prayers in the colony of Freetown:

I would not close the day without Thy goodness, O my heavenly Father, in permitting me to see the desire of my heart in the instruction of dear African children through their own language [Hannah Kilham (from her diary) 1831 cited in Hair (1987: 563)].

This points to the fact that Sierra Leone, like Ghana and Nigeria, (had) favoured the importance of the child’s L1 in education even during the colonial period. It is interesting to note that these restructured varieties of the English language referred to above (the pidgin and the subsequent creole)

were spoken around Freetown before it was settled from Britain and the New World in the late eighteenth century. This English may well have been influenced by the restructured variety of Portuguese spoken by traders and their Afro-European descendants in the area (Holm 1989: 413).

Holm (1989: 413 citing Dalby 1970: 289) equally maintains that restructured Portuguese was not only spoken in Sierra Leone but also co-existed with English for a century or more.

In a nutshell, therefore, we can note that the activities of the Europeans in the slave trade gave rise to restructured European languages in Africa. These restructured languages became more established with colonialism. In the case of Sierra Leone, in general, and Freetown, in particular, restructured English became more evident with the arrival of former slaves who fought on the side of the British in the American revolution, namely, the Black Poor, former slaves originally settled in Nova Scotia, the Jamaican Maroons and later joined by the recaptives, among others, who together formed the indigenous Krio¹¹

¹¹ This term refers to one of the ethnolinguistic groups of Sierra Leone, the descendants of the Settlers from England and Nova Scotia as well as the Maroons. It is also used to refer to their language, which is the most widely spoken language in Freetown as well as Sierra Leone as a

ethnolinguistic community in Sierra Leone (Holm 1989: 413ff; Alie 1990: 51ff; Huber 1999: 73). Taking into consideration first that the “English” spoken by these settlers from the New World was not Standard English (Fyfe ed. 1991; Montgomery 1999; Huber 1999, 2004) and, second, that the intercepted Africans settled in Freetown brought many African languages with them, we can only say, at this stage, that the slave trade paved the way for the introduction of some form of restructured English in Sierra Leone especially so when we consider the fact that the Krio community (as well as the people living in the suburbs of the Freetown peninsula and the rest of the country) had limited access to the target language, that is, standard English.

4.2.2. The Freetown settlement

The establishment of Freetown as “the Province of Freedom” in 1787 (Holm 1988/9; Alie 1990; Fyfe ed. 1991; Huber 1999), marked the beginning of the period which paved the way to the colonisation of Sierra Leone and consequently the linguistic ecology of both English and Krio. A plethora of Englishes and African languages brought by the settlers or the immigrants dominated the linguistic scene of the Western Area of present-day Sierra Leone. Four main groups were settled in Freetown, three with different varieties of English basically due to their different linguistic backgrounds:

1. the Original settlers/The Black Poor from England (resettled in Freetown in 1787),
2. the Nova Scotians, African slaves who helped the British during the American War of Independence (resettled in Freetown between February and March, 1792),
3. the Maroons from Jamaica (resettled in Freetown in September 1800), and,
4. the Recaptives – Liberated Africans settled in Freetown between 1808 and 1863 with their diverse African languages (see Holm 1989; Alie 1990; Huber 1999).

Apart from these four groups of settlers there were Europeans as well, most of whom were British, though the resident Europeans’ group did not have a

whole.

significant number of people –its total population was not up to 1% by 1811 (Huber 1999: 80)– and their mortality rate was very high. There were also other minority settler groups: 34 freed slaves from the United States who arrived in 1816; 1100 soldiers of the 4th West India Regiment discharged and settled in nearby villages (Kent, Waterloo, Hastings, Wellington and York) in April, 1819 who brought with them New World restructured Englishes which may have left some linguistic imprints on Krio. In addition to this, another group of soldiers, the 2nd West India Regiment arrived in Freetown one month later “to replace the disbanded Royal West African Corps”. Eighty-five Barbadian convicts were brought and bought their liberty in Freetown after two or three years’ service on public works (Kuczynski 1948 cited in Huber 1999: 81).

Though initially the Krus were insignificant in terms of number in Freetown, when slavery was abolished they immigrated to Freetown since their source of income (working on slave ships) had been cut in what is today Liberia. They consequently started to work on land as cooks, servants, or in timber factories up the Sierra Leone River: in Freetown “every family has a Krooman, to carry water, wood, and often to cook” (Davies 1835: 25 cited in Huber 1999: 82; Fyfe 1962: 78, 136 cited in Huber 1999: 81, 82). Even though they are considered a migrant group, not staying for more than two years in a particular location (Huber 1999: 82), in 1816, they obtained land and built a “Kru Town”, which still stands to date, in the western part of Freetown far from both the (re)settled population and the settled liberated Africans, whom they looked down upon “with most sovereign contempt” as

[T]hey are perfectly exclusive: none but their tribe may dwell in Kroo-town; none are invited or induced to visit it. Their peculiar habits are rigidly maintained; no innovation is permitted. Under the influence of one ruling impulse, the requirement of wealth to become “gentlemen,” and to return as such to the Kroo coast, they take no interest in the general concerns of the town, and, as much as possible, avoid unnecessary intercourse with their fellow colonists (Rankin 1836: 162-63 cited in Huber 1999: 82).

Though much has not been known as to whether the Krus influenced Krio due mainly to their exclusive way of life, considering their employers who were mainly slavers, traders, explorers, and the English Navy, some linguists like

Tonkin see them as important diffusers of Pidgin English (Huber 1999: 83; see also Tonkin 1971: 143).

The indigenous Sierra Leoneans who were said to be living in and around the Freetown peninsula at about this time were the Temne people who were very useful to the Settlers as they helped some of the emigrant women in preparing cassava, sold local products to the settlers and worked on their farms (Huber 1999: 80). However, as the influx of the settlers increased, “the Temne cannot be considered to have lived “in” the colony” (Kuczynski 1948: 75 cited in Huber 1999: 80).

How was the linguistic situation like with the various languages spoken in Freetown then, especially when we consider that the settlers from England, Nova Scotia and Jamaica “either spoke a New World variety of English as their first language or had at least been exposed to one for some time” (Huber 1999: 85) and the Krus and the recaptives spoke various African languages?

Considering their dissimilar linguistic and cultural backgrounds, these settlers were settled or (re)settled at some distance from each other (Huber 1999: 77ff) thus paving the way for some amount of social, cultural and linguistic segregation. The Nova Scotians and the Maroons were particularly hostile to each other because of the latter’s involvement in containing the Nova Scotians’ rebellion against the Sierra Leone Company which broke the promises made before bringing them over to Freetown. Equally so, the Krus looked down on the recaptives with condescension. Despite the differences and seeming conflict between and among the settlers, all the settler groups did not associate with the indigenous population:

The standards they [Settlers] set themselves in dress, in food habits, in speech, were western standards. They did not mingle socially with the indigenous Africans around them with whom they felt they had nothing in common. In fact, they were not encouraged to mix. They prided themselves on their knowledge of the English language, and this language dissimilarity from the rest of the population was a further factor in keeping the groups apart (Porter 1963: 34 cited in Huber 1999: 86).

The recaptives subsisted through agriculture and had similar houses with those of their Sierra Leonean counterparts, the indigenes, and lived in the villages out of Freetown with a similar lifestyle to that before their capture in their countries of

origin, except for a few recaptives who lived in Freetown. The Settlers, on the other hand, particularly the Nova Scotians and the Maroons, isolated themselves from the rest of the others and lived in Freetown. As such, there was not much social or cultural contact between and among the different groups. Porter (1963: 43, 48-49 cited in Huber 1999: 87) maintains that there was a “‘caste-like structure of discrete status groupings’ with Europeans at the top, followed –in descending order– by the Settlers, the Liberated Africans, and the Tribal Africans” and “the Creoles are taught in schools separate from the liberated African children. This distinction inspires the Creole children with ideas of their own superiority”.

The mutual misgivings between the Nova Scotians and the Maroons, the condescending attitude of the Krios towards the Liberated Africans and the consequent superiority complex of the Krios (also known as Creoles) over the rest of the indigenous population did not help to unite the different linguistic, cultural and social shades of the inhabitants of Freetown and its environs. However from the 1830s these differences began to fade away although it was not until the 1860s that the Liberated Africans became incorporated into the Krio society due to their economic achievement which consequently made it possible for some form of isolated cases of mixed marriages between the Settlers and the Liberated Africans (Huber 1999: 87-88).

The social and cultural distance between Nova Scotians and Maroons became even greater due to the linguistic superiority of the Nova Scotians over the Maroons: whereas the Nova Scotians were said to speak English very well as their mother-tongue, the Maroons spoke corrupt English (Jones 1971: 67; see also Huber 1999: 88), so much so that the Nova Scotians felt offended if addressed in the “Maroon idiom” (Huber 1999: 88). Because of this socio-cultural and socio-linguistic differences and geographical space between the above-mentioned Settler groups on the one hand, and between them and the rest of the inhabitants, both the Liberated Africans and the indigenous Sierra Leoneans may have been minimally linguistically influenced by the Nova Scotians as well as the Maroons in speaking English or some form of it. The different degrees of proficiency in English among the ethnic groups are well described by Hannah Kilham (1828 cited by Huber 1999):

[T]he children in the villages have but little opportunity of hearing *conversation* in English, excepting in the barbarous broken form of it, which prevails in that district, and which consists but of a very limited number of words (some suppose not more than fifty): the written language of their English books of course appears quite as a foreign tongue in comparison with this; therefore, although many learn in time to *read* and to *spell*, those who are thus circumstanced cannot be expected to *understand* what they read. The children of the Free Town schools have superior advantages in this respect – their parents being chiefly from the American Continent or Islands, they are brought up by them in *speaking* as well as reading the English language (Kilham 1828: 7 cited in Huber 1999: 89).

From the above situation, we can see that apart from the social, cultural and linguistic distance that existed among the inhabitants of Freetown and the surrounding villages, the use of the English language during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was minimal. There were very few British born citizens in Freetown then as noted above, the way the immigrants were settled was not socio-culturally and socio-linguistically all-inclusive; that is, each group was settled exclusive to the other(s). Rather than creating a situation that amalgamated all the different groups, the Sierra Leone Company, first, ensured that there should be no unity among the different groups possibly for fear of a rebellion against them. Equally worth noting is the fact that when Britain declared Sierra Leone a Crown Colony in 1808, Freetown was directly governed, while the rest of the country became a British Protectorate in 1896, 88 years after the declaration of Freetown as a British Crown Colony. This socio-political segregation surely implied differences in the Colony. One of the areas where these differences are made evident is in the English language. Since children living out of Freetown had limited access to the English language, one would not expect their use of English to be on a par with that of children in Freetown. And even in Freetown, the social distance that existed between the different Settler groups should be seen as very unaccommodating linguistically and culturally speaking.

Given the socio-cultural and socio-linguistic situation of Freetown, one would argue that the social milieu was one of cultural and linguistic exclusion. In the following section, we analyse the colonial system vis-à-vis the system's efforts in bridging the social, cultural and linguistic gaps that existed then, particularly with reference to the English language.

4.3. Colonisation and evangelism

Fourah Bay College, established in 1827 as a theological institution, was known as the ‘Athens of West Africa’ with reference to its being the first in West Africa and for the academic excellence of the institution and its graduates. What does this association imply? While Greek speakers maintained that non-Greek languages “sounded like the mere bleating of goats” (Hair 1987: 560), Freetown through Fourah Bay College pursued a different linguistic tradition from that of Athens: “Nineteenth-century Freetown may or may not have been, as it was once called, the ‘Athens of West Africa’ but in one respect at least it improved on Athens” (Hair 1987: 560). How did Freetown or Fourah Bay College improve on Athens?

Christianity does not have a sacred language as does Islam. Christianity is considered a polyglot religion embracing all people and their languages, and, as such it supports the study of other languages, indigenous languages for that matter, “to enable instruction and conversion” (Hair 1987: 560), a very important procedure used by many missionaries. However, although Latin was used in medieval Europe by the Catholic Church, and, later, Catholic missionaries vigorously studied and used Latin American and Asian languages in propagating their religion, African languages were not initially given such consideration. But the Protestant reform

gave an impulse to the study of unwritten languages, and this accelerated with the late eighteenth-century development of evangelical missions. As a result, Freetown was the first recipient, in the Outer Worlds, of a renewed urge to present the Christian scriptures in every spoken tongue of man (Hair 1987: 560).

From the Settlers’ arrival in 1787 up to the Declaration of Freetown as a British Crown Colony in 1808 and the rest of Sierra Leone as a Protectorate 88 years later there was no linguistic uniformity (Holm 1988/89; Huber 1999). That is, many languages were spoken in Freetown and no linguistic group attempted to approach the other and learn their language(s) except for the Krus and the Recaptives who may have learnt some forms of English working in the houses of the Krios, that is,

Settlers from England, Nova Scotia and the Maroons and the mixed marriages between children of the Krios and the Recaptives. Besides the varieties of English spoken by the Settlers from Europe and the Americas could not be considered to be Standard in the strict sense of the word considering that most of them were ex-slaves and some were poor, uneducated, convicts, ex-service men, prostitutes and among them very few British born citizens (Holm 1988/89; Huber 1999).

With such a sociohistorical linguistic background, the establishment of Fourah Bay College in Colonial Freetown, a city without any intellectual centre before then, witnessed the enthusiastic study of African languages in the 1830s up to the 1870s as a way to propagate the Christian religion in African languages and to ensure communication through the mother tongue, thus guaranteeing “ideals of the global community” (Hair 1987: 560). However, as Hair doubts, were these ideals on the practical communication in and study of African languages geared towards cementing the linguistic differences in Freetown, in particular, or Sierra Leone as a whole; or was Freetown used to reach other places religiously and culturally? And were these ideals “ideals of missionary ‘conversion’, of colonial ‘civilization’ or of latter day secular development” (Hair 1987: 560)? Put differently, who was interested in these languages and for what purposes?

According to Hair (1987: 560-61), the study of African languages in Freetown was aimed at discovering what languages were spoken in Africa and the areas of use of each in order to be able to give precedence to the study of these languages and their various dialects with regard to their immediate necessity. Equally important was the study of the grammar, syntax and vocabulary of these languages so that alphabets could be created that “would represent speech adequately”. With such an objective, out of the 1000 African languages studied, 400 “had more or less competent written forms” and thus Colonial Freetown contributed immensely to the global study of African languages (see Koelle 1963 [1854]). In line with this linguistic compassionate attitude towards African indigenous languages in general (as against Athens’ dismissive linguistic attitude towards non-Greek or “barbaric” languages), Colonial Freetown, through Fourah Bay College, pioneered the painstaking efforts of studying Sierra Leonean languages such as Temne, Susu and Bullom, the closest linguistic neighbours of

Freetown, though superficially. Among the linguists who studied these African languages we have Hannah Kilham, who studied the vocabularies of 30 African languages out of the polyglot community of Colonial Freetown, published in 1828; the missionaries Shön and Crowther, who made an accurate assessment of the languages in the lower Niger (Hausa, Yoruba and Ibo), published in 1841; Koelle, who studied the vocabularies of 100 languages spoken in Freetown and published them in *Polyglotta Africana* in 1854; Nyländer, who studied Bullom; and Schelenker, who studied Temne and Bullom (after Nyländer). With *Polyglotta Africana* alone, Colonial Freetown helped to shed light on the linguistic landscape of Africa, and with the work of Crowther with an African language, Yoruba, and the English language, we submit following Hair (1987) that the study of African languages gives credence to the fact that

each language group in the world has its own way of tying words together so that they add up to make sense. In Freetown the early linguists had to learn that the templates of grammar used in European languages were not necessarily those of the African languages. ... By such explorations Freetown lay the way for the modern understanding of African languages, and hence *pari passu* of world languages (Hair 1987: 561-62).

However, we need to note that the interest of most of these linguistic works were directed towards the translation of the Bible and of converting Africans to Christianity, through education in their own languages, and, as non-linguists, they were equally “incompetent”, linguistically speaking, and “incomprehensible”, especially so since most of them were based on spelling and their respective alphabets (Hair 1987: 562). The only linguistically outstanding work among them, according to Hair (1987: 562), was Crowther’s work on Yoruba which was, and still is, very influential in the study of the language. On the same note, it was impossible to divorce education from religion: “[i]t was, of course, impossible to dissociate religious instruction from general literacy and from education”, in the modern sense of formal schooling (Hair 1987: 562).

Given Hannah Kilham’s call for the use of African languages in the education of Africans, that is, the integration of “the language of the home with the official language of the school and the state”, the study of African languages at Fourah Bay College from the 1830s onwards for religious and general educational

purposes and Kilham's use of these languages in teaching was a positive move. On the contrary, if "[L]iteracy in black Africa has meant, not unreasonably, the acquisition of the capacity to read and write in a European language, especially English" (Hair 1987: 563), then Western education in Sierra Leone up to the mid-nineteenth century in the real sense of the word was not universal and was equally not achieved. In mid nineteenth-century Freetown, almost half the languages of West Africa were spoken and studied, a fact vividly evident in Krio, a creole language with many words from the diverse African languages spoken in Freetown in the eighteenth and nineteenth-centuries. One of the reasons was that Fourah Bay College with its pro-African languages and education policy was strictly dominated by the religious missionaries who were propagating their religion through African languages.

4.4. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Freetown English

After this account of pre-colonial and colonial Freetown from a sociohistorical and sociolinguistic perspectives, this section reviews the peculiarities of the English language brought by one of the Settler groups the Nova-Scotians.

As far as published material on the English of the settlers in Freetown is concerned, the settler group from Nova Scotia has been given prominent attention due mainly to the fact that their variety of English has been linked and compared to African American English (AAE) and to Gullah and Krio (see Spencer 1971; Jones 1971; Holm 1988/89; Fyfe ed. 1991; Montgomery 1999; Huber 1999, 2004; Hackert and Huber 2007). Among these researchers, the letters compiled in Fyfe (ed. 1991), and the articles by Montgomery (1999) and Huber (2004) about the linguistic similarities between the English of the Nova Scotians and AAE, Krio and Gullah are reviewed below. Before dealing with the English of the settlers from Nova Scotia, it seems convenient to recapitulate some basic facts about the composition of the Freetown settlement –people and languages. Among the people settled in Freetown between 1787 and 1863, we have the following in their respective order of settlement (Spencer 1971; Jones 1971; Holm 1988/89; Alie 1990; Fyfe ed. 1991; Montgomery 1999; Huber 1999, 2004):

1. the Original settlers/The Black Poor from England (resettled in Freetown

- in 1787);
2. the Nova Scotians, African slaves who helped the British during the American War of Independence (resettled in Freetown between February and March, 1792);
 3. the Maroons from Jamaica (resettled in Freetown in September 1800);
 4. the Recaptives/Liberated Africans (settled in Freetown between 1808 and 1863) with their diverse African languages;
 5. 1% of Europeans (mostly British) by 1811; 34 freed slaves from the United States in 1816; 1100 soldiers of the 4th West India Regiment discharged and settled in nearby villages in April 1819; 85 Barbadian convicts who bought their freedom in Freetown, and,
 6. an insignificant number of Krus from Liberia.

4.4.1. Demographic and sociolinguistic background of the Nova Scotians

Health and life may it please your Honrs is very uncertain and we have not the Education which White men have yet we have feeling the same as other Human Beings and would wish to do every thing we can for to make our Children free and happy (Fyfe ed. 1991: 36-7).

This section reviews three important works on the Sierra Leone Settlers' English: Fyfe's collection of letters and petitions written by the Nova Scotian settlers in Freetown (ed. 1991), and Montgomery's (1999) and Huber's (2004) works on the relationship the linguistic features of these letters have with earlier stages of African American English (AAE) and Gullah, a restructured variety of English spoken in the southern states of Virginia, North and South Carolina and Georgia. Huber takes the connection a length further from his initial study of the Freetown settlement (Huber 1999); he links Gullah to Krio and other restructured varieties of English (Huber 2004).

The documents (Fyfe ed.1991) on which this research is based are a product of a series of complaints, disagreements and frustrations over broken promises such as freedom and free land by the Sierra Leone Company to the Nova Scotians before their being taken to Freetown from Canada where they were initially settled by Britain. Since the weather and social conditions in Nova Scotia

were hostile and their economic conditions were deteriorating, “approximately two thousand of these refugees left for Sierra Leone in search of a warmer climate and opportunities to improve their circumstances, especially for land ownership” (Montgomery 1999:3; see also Alie 1990: 55ff). While the protagonist, Isaac Anderson, lost his life in the process, the Freetown settlement itself not only becomes “the first attempt to establish representative self-government in Africa” (Montgomery 1999: 2) but also ensures the birth of Pan-Africanism: “Their decision to settle in Sierra Leone in 1787, and the subsequent choice made by the Nova Scotian settlers to make their homes, may be taken as the first practical manifestation of Pan-Africanism” (Fyfe ed.1991: 2).

In the introduction to *Our Children Free and Happy: Letters from Black Settlers in Africa in the 1790s*, Fyfe introduces the reader to the fact that the documents put together in the volume are a manifestation of “black people who had liberated themselves from slavery” (Fyfe ed. 1991: 1), a liberation whose very essence is under threat (see document 19 in Fyfe ed. 1991: 35-40). Hence, “freedom for them meant living their own lives in economic independence on their own land”. It is this freedom that brought them to Freetown, Sierra Leone, “the home of their ancestors”. However, while some saw coming to Africa as a “return to the continent of their birth”, and others considered coming to Freetown “a return to the very country, Sierra Leone, whence they had been shipped across the Atlantic as slaves”, they also expressed a feeling they had had in Nova Scotia: “disillusionment in their new home” (Fyfe ed. 1991: 2). After heeding the call of freedom and opportunities by Britain and the Sierra Leone Company, these people who had escaped slavery by joining the British are protesting against promises that were not satisfied by the Sierra Leone Company. Even though some of the directors of the Sierra Leone Company saw the whole settlement as “‘the Blessings of Industry and Civilization’ into Africa” (Fyfe ed. 1991: 2), for others the complaints of the settlers were perceived as a threat to the very essence of the settlement irrespective of the circumstances that the settlers were facing then (Montgomery 1999: 2). Unfortunately, the rebellion that the Sierra Leone Company feared finally happened in 1800 (see Alie 1990: 61ff; Fyfe ed. 1991: 2).

The title of Montgomery's (1999) seminal article on African Nova Scotian English –“Eighteenth-Century Sierra Leone English: Another Exported Variety of African American English”– explicitly demonstrates that eighteenth-century Sierra Leonean variety of English forms part of the exported African American English (AAE henceforth). For Poplack and Tagliamonte (1991) “[African Nova Scotian English] is the ideal candidate to provide the comparative information necessary to clarify the status of early (and contemporary) BE [Black English]” (Poplack and Tagliamonte 1991: 306 cited in Montgomery 1999: 4). Based on their sociohistorical cultural and linguistic background, Montgomery (1999) refers to the Nova Scotian Settlers in Sierra Leone as African Americans from the then colonies of Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia:

The black Sierra Leoneans who formed the rank and file of this late eighteenth-century enterprise were not natives of Africa. Though living in Freetown, to which they had come from Nova Scotia in 1792, they were African Americans – some freeborn, others born into slavery and able to liberate themselves during the American War of Independence a decade earlier (Montgomery 1999: 2).

Whereas this cannot be disputed, like other researchers (for example Holm 1988/89; Huber 1999, 2004) the author also acknowledges the fact that some of these immigrants in Freetown “were born in Africa before being taken to North America” (Montgomery 1999: 2). As for their variety of English, he considers it as “the earliest first-hand evidence of African American English” (Montgomery 1999: 1).

As other linguists have conducted research outside the United States in a bid to trace the history of African American English, Montgomery (1999) focuses on enlarging and enriching the data on the diaspora of AAE and hence “raised new issues pertaining to the earlier development of African American English and broadened the discussion by bringing to bear new and intriguing sources of data” (Montgomery 1999:3). On this note, Montgomery cautions researchers that

Even if we know the types and degrees of language contact that expatriate African Americans and their descendants have had with speakers of other languages and varieties of English and we take proper account of these, exported varieties of AAE could have undergone considerable internal

evolution after leaving the mainland United States over a century and half ago, however “isolated” their communities have been (Montgomery 1999: 4)

Implicitly, the Nova Scotian Settlers’ colloquial letters in English in Freetown “provide the best, and probably the only, basis for seeking support for the hypothesis that modern-day data from diaspora communities reflect African American English of two centuries ago” (Montgomery 1999: 5).

For Huber (2004), the linguistic importance of the Nova Scotians’ settlement in Freetown is two-fold: first, their variety of English sheds light on an early variety of African American English, and, second, it also reveals the similar linguistic roots shared by Krio and Gullah (Huber 2004: 67). With reference to Krio and Gullah, Huber claims that Krio is a direct descendant of Gullah (Huber 2004: 68). To sustain both claims, Huber identified historical ties of the Nova Scotians with the southern states of Virginia, North and South Carolina and Georgia in the United States of America and he backs up these claims with linguistic and historical evidence in the letters written by the Nova Scotian Settlers in Freetown compiled in Fyfe (ed.1991). However, Huber notes:

the linguistic analysis of these letters is hampered by the small number of tokens, they nevertheless provide useful insights into the nature of the Nova Scotians speech. It is concluded that the emigration of ex-slaves to Sierra Leone may explain the similarities between Gullah and Krio (Huber 2004: 67).

Since the central thesis in Huber’s article is investigating not only historical links but also linguistic elements to prove that an earlier variety of African American English and Gullah influenced Krio, he looks into the entries of John Clarkson’s diary and notes a particular conversation between Clarkson and a particular man (Huber 2004: 68, 77). While it is not difficult to identify the man’s English as a restructured variety, one must equally note the statement in the introductory part of the entry, “he came originally from the coast of Africa” (Huber 2004: 68). This is a statement that deserves attention and may possibly throw some light in the Gullah–Krio connection especially as he further maintains that “of the individuals listed in Clarkson’s Birchtown list ... 28.7% were born in Africa, and these can be assumed to have spoken pidginized English of the kind that Clarkson recorded in his diary” (Huber 2004: 77). Does this mean that Krio started in the West Coast

of Africa, transported to America and then brought back to Freetown by the Nova Scotians (Holm 1989: 413)?

In explaining the Gullah–Krio relationship, Huber makes use of a diagram that shows the (inter)connectedness of other restructured Englishes (Jamaican Creole, St. Kitts Creole, Bajan, Surinam, Krio, and West African Pidgin Englishes) with Gullah based on phonological, morphological and lexical features. Does the linguistic affinity between Gullah and Krio, Gullah and West African Pidgin Englishes and then Krio and West African Pidgin Englishes as shown in Huber (2004: 68-69) based solely on the Nova Scotians transshipment to Freetown? Does it mean a total disregard of Holm’s mention of restructured varieties of English spoken in Freetown before it was settled or is it an implicit reaffirmation of Holm’s wisdom (Holm 1989: 413)?

Sociolinguistically speaking, Huber (2004: 69) makes it clear that apart from the documents in Fyfe (ed. 1991), it is not an easy task to discern the Nova Scotians as a distinct linguistic group in the Krio Society that was formed in Freetown taking into consideration the fact that all the settler groups were assimilated to form the Krio ethnolinguistic group. While we may agree that all the different settler groups help to form the Krio community and language, it is also important to mention the fact that there were social and linguistic tensions among the settler groups: the Nova Scotians considering themselves to be linguistically superior to the others and the Krus with their exclusive way of life (see Porter 1963: 34 cited in Huber 1999: 86; Rankin 1836: 162-3 cited in Huber 1999: 82; see also Wyse 1989).

Historically, Huber explains the circumstances that led to the repatriation of the settler group popularly known as the Nova Scotians in Freetown from New York in 1783 to Canada and finally (re)settled in Freetown in 1792. He equally catalogues in chronological order the settlement of all the groups that were brought to Freetown from 1792 to 1863 including the number of each group (Huber 2004: 70).

In proving his thesis that Krio is an offshoot of Gullah, Huber disputes the fact that present-day Krio is a “descendant of a hypothesized Upper Guinea Coast Creole English (the purported ancestor of all Atlantic Creoles)” because the

population of the Nova Scotians “were the first major contingent of settlers” in Freetown “and they are therefore a more likely historical link that could account for the similarities between Krio and restructured varieties in the New World” (Huber 2004: 70ff; see also Huber 1999: 75ff). In sustaining this line of argument Huber (2004) presents data sources of those black people at Birch Town who gave their names and who were listed by Clarkson; Clarkson’s diaries (“Mission to America” and “Mission to Africa”) were also consulted; the letters compiled in Fyfe (ed.1991) and some other sources form part of the documents consulted. These data (names of people) have a direct connection to names in the *Book of Negroes* notwithstanding the difficulty in identifying the names of these people due mainly to the variation of spelling and the irregular historical records (Huber 2004: 71-72). These variances are due to “mishearing or phonological spellings on the part of the scribes” (Huber 2004: 72). With regard to phonological spellings, this can also be attributed to the phonological attributes of the speaker. Nicknames and abbreviations, he says, contribute to the difficulty in identifying the people who gave their names.

As far as the origins and sociolinguistic background of the Nova Scotian settlers is concerned, Huber (2004) mentions “the computerized version of the *Book of Negroes*” as his source of reference where a good number of these emigrants were listed: some with complete information –state, county and town of origin– while for some others “only the state of origin is known” (Huber 2004: 73). A representative table (followed by a map) of the origin of the settlers shows more than half of the 1,196 people that left for Sierra Leone to have come from the southern states: Virginia, South and North Carolina and Georgia (Huber 2004: 73, 75). Another table shows that 90% of those evacuated from New York were taken to Canada (Huber 2004: 74). However, Huber notes that comparing the proportions of people taken from the southern states with those of the northern states, we can see that those from the south far outnumbered those from the north and this he blames on the plantation conditions:

This may be due to the fact that conditions in the South with its plantation economy were harsher on the whole. The memory of the hardships suffered in captivity would still have been present among the exiles in Nova Scotia,

and presumably provided a stronger motivation to emigrate to Sierra Leone for Southern than the Northern slaves (Huber 2004: 74).

Consulting other historical documents in search of the NS sociolinguistic background such as the *Atlas of Early American History*, Huber (2004) considers the fact that most of those NS Settlers that accepted the Sierra Leone emigration option were from the coastal areas since, naturally,

conditions on the large coastal plantations were harder for the individual slave than in the hinterland with its (presumably more humane) homestead economy. Thus, the urge to join the British would have been greater in the Tidewater areas than in the interior (Huber 2004: 74).

Hence, the Gullah–Krio connection is based significantly on the fact that

although Gullah is today spoken in a very restricted geographical area, it is generally accepted that this creole was more widespread in the second half of the eighteenth century ... Gullah was present exactly on that 50 km wide coastal strip from which many of the NS Settlers from SC and GA originated (Huber 2004: 74-75).

In essence, therefore, the NS Settlers in Sierra Leone according to Huber (2004: 76) can be seen to have completed their language acquisition some 30 or more years before going to Freetown. But with respect to their variety of English, Huber (2004: 77) mentions the following two situations:

1. considering the close contacts between African Americans and Whites, those from VA linguistic performance are closer to English than those from SC and GA irrespective of the fact that some Virginians' English "may have been of a more restructured type" as some of those who came to VA with "high proportion of the Black population" demonstrate "heavier restructuring of English" (Huber 2004: 77);
2. citing Winford (1997: 320-1) Huber (2004: 77) mentions the fact that there was the possibility of pidginisation and creolisation bearing in mind that "a third of the slaves imported to VA in 1769-1772 came directly from Africa" and as such would have brought with them "L2 varieties at best, and more probably pidginized versions of English on the Tidewater country plantations that many of the NS Settlers came from".

Given the above facts, it becomes clear that the NS Settler's English in Freetown was a restructured variety whether looking at it from its linguistic relatedness to Gullah or from the demographic factor of the Black population that was sent directly to Africa. None of these groups spoke Standard English.

4.4.2. Linguistic features of the Nova Scotians' English

September Sunday Mr Ludlow Sir we we de sire to now wether you will let our Mends out if not turn out the womans and Chill Dren (Isaac Anderson, unsigned, undated in Fyfe (ed. 1991: 65).

In this section we include a cursory look at eighteenth-century Sierra Leone English in the form of letters compiled by Fyfe (ed. 1991) and Montgomery's (1999) and Huber's (2004a) articles on the phonological and structural features that these letters show. This variety of English is very important not only for the debate over the diaspora of early African American English (AAE) and Gullah (see Holm 1983; Montgomery 1999; Huber 2004; Hackert & Huber 2007, among others) regarding the structural features that AAE and Gullah share with Caribbean creoles and Krio for instance, but also for the debate over whether present-day Krio began in West Africa, was taken to the Americas and brought back by the settlers; or whether it was the establishment of the Freetown Settlement that actually brought about the birth and development of Krio (Holm 1988/89; Huber 1999). The other debate has to do with whether these settlers were actually born and taken from Sierra Leone (Freetown), where they were brought back in 1792 or whether they were born in America as slaves and then brought to Freetown after the American War of Independence (Holm 1988/89; Fyfe ed. 1991; Montgomery 1999; Huber 1999, 2004). These debates notwithstanding, it becomes even more pertinent at this stage to state that an analysis of the historical linguistic documents of the Freetown Settlement in the form of letters, diaries, memoirs and travel documents (for example Fyfe ed. 1991) can be the subject of another thesis and/or a long term research endeavour. At this moment, our interest is to elucidate the importance of this variety with regard to any study around Sierra Leone English (SLE) and Krio. Hence, Montgomery's (1999) and Huber's (2004a) studies about the connection between this eighteenth-century Sierra

Leone English (or the Nova Scotian language) and earlier forms of AAE, and between Gullah and Krio, are useful insights on the roadmap to present-day Sierra Leone English (as the settlers' restructured varieties of English seem to be the English linguistic link to, or superstrate of, Krio rather than Standard English). The letters which Fyfe compiled (ed. 1991) and which Montgomery (1999) and Huber (2004) analyse came about as a result of disillusionment and misunderstandings over the unfulfilled promises of the settlement's authorities to the plight of the settlers in Freetown as the opening excerpt to this section shows.¹²

Retrospectively, the Freetown settlement should be seen in light of:

- a) The Philanthropist move of people like Granville Sharp, Thomas Peters, John Clarkson and the Sierra Leone Company to alleviate the sufferings of people and to improve their living conditions (Alie 1990; Fyfe ed. 1991: Montgomery 1999; Huber 2004);
- b) Pan-Africanism: Fyfe believes the decision of the early settlers and the Nova Scotians to settle in Freetown from 1787 onwards "may be taken as the first practical manifestation of Pan-Africanism" (Fyfe ed.: 1991: 2; see also Montgomery 1999: 2). Fyfe also mentions that 'The Province of Freedom' which alludes to the Settlement and the Constitution which Sharp drew up "was to be a self-governing community whose members would choose their own government" in eighteenth-century Sierra Leone (Fyfe ed.: 1991: 2);
- c) The Sierra Leone Company's lack of funds to run the settlement and the British Government's search for a naval base "for the protection of her shipping in West Africa" considering Freetown's well-placed natural harbour: "on 1 January 1808, the Colony was transformed into a Crown Colony" (Alie 1990: 63).

The forty-one letters and petitions were written by semi-literate people whose professions ranged from artisans, community leaders, clergymen, to those who attended white churches or who were "familiar with British institutions and

¹² This letter is the very last letter that Anderson wrote and which caused him his life.

administrative processes”, as may be judged from the content and style of the documents (Montgomery 1999: 3). We review below Montgomery’s (1999) and Huber’s (2004) analyses of the phonological and structural features of “the Sierra Leone Settler English” as Montgomery calls it, or “the Nova Scotians language” as named by Huber, and (one of the many varieties of) “Gullah in the diaspora” for Hackert and Huber (2007), among others.

4.4.2.1. Phonological features

We present here those relevant phonological features of the Nova Scotians’ English extracted from the documents edited in Fyfe (ed. 1991), and identified by Montgomery (1999: 8) and Huber (2004: 80-81). We must be aware of the colloquial quality and aberrant spellings in the letters which show the phonetic nature of the texts written by these letter writers (Montgomery 1999: 8; Huber 2004: 80-81). It is precisely this phonetic spelling nature of the letters and petitions which reveals the following features:

1. front lax vowel neutralization before a nasal consonant *sence* (since) and *senceer* (sincere), *blessen* (blessing), *endependence* (independence), *entention* (intention), *sining* (sending);
2. The non-use of the central vowels /ə, ɜ, ʌ/ as in *marcy* (mercy), *sarvant* (servant), *consarned* (concerned), *considaration* (consideration), *porpose* (purpose), *yong* (young);
3. Absence of aspiration before /w/ or the omission of /h/ in wh-words as in *wane* (when), *wich* (which), *wether* (whether);
4. English velar nasal realised as /n/ as in *shillen* (shilling), *a Coarden* (according), *being* (been), *blessen* (blessing);
5. Avoidance of final consonant cluster as in *greates* (greatest), *cappin* (captain), *nourishmen* (nourishment);
6. Rhoticity or the non-rhotic nature of the documents as seen in the “r-lessness” of their spellings as in *honnah* (honor), *yea* (year), *they* (there).

Besides we have also found the use of the article *an* instead of *a* in “We have to lament that such ***an*** union as is very desireable” (Luke Jordan and

Nathaniel Snowball, 29 July 1796 in Fyfe (ed. 1991: 53).

Of what relevance are these phonetic spellings of eighteenth-century Sierra Leone English to present-day SLE? Considering Jones' (1971) characterisation of Krio's phonological features and the consequent influence these have on English in Sierra Leone, there is every need to connect the origins of some of present-day Sierra Leone English phonological features to those of eighteenth-century Sierra Leone English as shown in some of the phonological features above (see chapter six, subsection 6.2). Jones, who provides a grammatical analysis of the Sierra Leone letters (see Fyfe ed. 1991: 79ff), refers to the structural features of the letters as

the language of the Sierra Leone letters, far from representing some kind of pidgin or even advanced pidgin (creolised) version of 'real' English, manifests many of the features of late eighteenth-century American and, indeed, British English. We shall conclude that the English of these letters is a fairly typical example of North American English from the period, although probably that of the lower social classes, both white and black (Jones' 1991: 82).

Jones further maintains that "the phonological characteristics of the writers of the settlers' letters can be shown to have existed in contemporary or near contemporary North American lower class white speech as well as in the language of their British counterparts" (Jones 1991: 82). Considering Jones's analysis, we would like to highlight two main questions here: (1) the reference to "the lower social classes, both white and black", and (2) the reference to "contemporary North American lower class white speech" and its British counterpart. The former should be seen as a pointer to the semi-literate writers of the letters taking Montgomery's (1999: 3) position mentioned above into consideration and the latter we juxtapose with Simo Simo Bobda's observation (2003 cited in Schneider 2007: 101) that

nonstandard dialect may have played a larger part than is traditionally assumed in Africa as well, suggesting that a wide range of African pronunciation features may well have been derived from colonial dialect input rather than mother-tongue interference, as has mostly been assumed.

It seems reasonable to observe that some of these colonial phonological features are an ancestor to (and are still prevalent in) present-day SLE and evidently Krio as well. We can correlate, for example, the above phonological features of eighteenth-century Sierra Leone English with Krio's seven vowel system (Jones 1971) which corresponds to Wells's (1982) vowel system for African L2 varieties of English and our findings in chapter six of this study (subsection 6.2).

4.4.2.2. Structural features

As for the structural features evident in the letters of the Nova Scotian Settlers compiled by Fyfe (ed.1991), Montgomery (1999: 9-17) as well as Huber (2004: 81-84) analyse the morphological features of these documents. Montgomery's (1999) and Huber's (2004) quantitative studies show that eighteenth-century Sierra Leone English have the following structural features: zero copula, zero marking for past tense verbs, lack of verbal –s for third person singular, verbal –s as a concord marker in third person plural contexts, and pluralisation of regular and irregular nouns. We also provide other structural features such as inaccurate past marking for irregular verbs. We provide examples below from Fyfe (ed.:1991; for detailed discussions see Montgomery 1999: 9-17; Huber 2004: 81–84).

For lack of adequate data and sources, we refrain from commenting on the mismatch with respect to dates and other aspects as reported in Montgomery (1999) and Fyfe (1991) for these examples. We draw all our examples from Fyfe (1991) with the relevant page reference, irrespective of the fact that some of them are in Montgomery (1999: 9-17). All the features of the particular aspect we look at are in bold and italics.

a) Zero copula

According to Montgomery (1999: 9) “the Sierra Leone Settler letters have only one instance of zero copula” which is a strange occurrence given the many colloquial features which are reported of their counterpart variety, the African Nova Scotian English as reported by Poplack and Tagliamonte

(1991). Montgomery (1999: 10) also notes that there is only one occurrence of the finite use of *be*.

- (1) we could wish that he could have the satisfaction of gaining his place again as we *ø* assured he is worthy of it (Beverhout Company, 17 December 1792, in Fyfe ed. 1991: 32-33).
- (2) ... these Mens we ordain to lay in all of our complaints – that the Governor and Council not *be* interrupted by every person – which *be* thay names Nathanl. Snowball Luke Jordan & Jonathan Glasgow (Sundry Settlers, 16 April 1795, in Fyfe ed. 1991: 45-47).

b) Zero marking for past tense

Montgomery (1999: 10-11) provides examples from letters 3, 38, 17 from Fyfe (1991). We provide other examples given the high frequency of zero marking for past tense:

- (3) we was Examining them and She *say* what i have mention (Peter Richardson, 12 January 1792, in Fyfe ed. 1991: 23)
- (4) both turned against me & *plead* for the man (Nathaniel Wansey, 13 February 1800, in Fyfe ed. 1991: 62)
- (5) since he *come* back from London (Miles Dixon, 14 October 1793, in Fyfe (ed. 1991: 34)).
- (6) and the people *send* us home (Cato Perkins and Isaac Anderson, 26 October 1793, in Fyfe ed. 1991: 35).

c) Inaccurate past marking for irregular verbs

We also found examples of regularisation of past forms of irregular verbs:

- (7) may it please your honour that you ever *leaved* this Colony, for the day that you *leaved* it we was very much Oppress by Government (James Liaster, 30 March 1796 in Fyfe (ed. 1991: 49).

d) Lack of verbal-s for third person singular

This is the most pervasive feature of restructured Englishes in the literature:

- (8) She Says that she **do** not Care for You and I (Peter Richardson, 12 January 1792, in Fyfe ed. 1991: 24).
- (9) She **have** no peace with her husband (Rose Morral, 5 November 1792, in Fyfe ed. 1991: 27)
- (10) the Company **have** intend to send us (Isaac Anderson and Cato Perkins, 9 November 1793, in Fyfe ed. 1991: 41)
- (11) But God **have** spared till now in marcy (Isaac Anderson, 11 February 1794, in Fyfe ed. 1991: 42)
- (12) for every lot that he **get** clair (Resolutions of the Hundredors and Tythingmen, August -September 1799, in Fyfe ed. 1991: 59)

e) –s suffix for non-third person singular and –s for plural

We also find examples of the opposite situation: the use of –s for persons other than the third singular and for plural.

- (13) I & my family **is** all well (Miles Dixon, 14 October 1793, in Fyfe ed. 1991: 34).
- (14) goods **is** scarce in the Colony (Miles Dixon, 14 October 1793, in Fyfe ed. 1991: 34).
- (15) These **comes** with my sincere love to you (Luke Jordan and Isaac Anderson, 28 June 179, in Fyfe ed. 1991: 42).
- (16) Your honours very well **knows** that we had a law (Sundry settlers, 16 April 1795, in Fyfe ed. 1991: 45).
- (17) these people **is** your Well Wishers (Nathaniel Snowball and James Hutcherson, 24 may 1796, in Fyfe ed. 1991: 52).
- (18) all the people in my town **begs** to be kindly remembered (Nathaniel Snowball and James Hutcherson, 24 may 1796, in Fyfe ed. 1991: 52).
- (19) If you **pleases** to peruse it (Petition John Duncome and others, 19 November 1792, in Fyfe ed. 1991: 29).

f) Pluralisation of regular and irregular nouns

- (20) let our **Mends** out if not turn out the **womans** and Chill Dren (Isaac Anderson, unsigned, undated, in Fyfe ed. 1991: 65).

- (21) may it please your Honours **Gentlemans** of the Council (Sundry Settlers 16 April 1795 in Fyfe ed. 1991: 45).
- (22) *Gentlemens* we are about to mention to you (Sundry Settlers 16 April 1795, in Fyfe ed. 1991: 45).

Whereas Jones's (1991: 82) analysis of eighteenth-century Sierra Leone English points to "the lower social classes, both white and black", and to contemporary North American lower class white speech and its British counterpart, Montgomery (1999: 27) maintains that the Settlers' English, as African American English, can be traced "to the British Isles". For Huber (2004: 84), "the letters do not in themselves offer firm proof that the language of the NS Settlers was Gullah-like", but given the fact that "over 28% of the Settlers were born in Africa and therefore probably spoke pidginized or African L2 varieties of English, make it quite likely that some of them were creole speakers".

Given the above features and conclusions of the authors cited, can we refute the fact that present-day SLE can be traced to eighteenth-century Sierra Leone English? The seeming discrepancy vis-à-vis the conclusions submitted by the three mentioned language enthusiasts notwithstanding, we submit that both the phonological and structural features evident in the letters in Fyfe (ed. 1991) are precursors not only to Krio but to present-day Sierra Leone English. Juxtapose the above phonological and structural features to some of the features in chapter six of the present study (see sections 6.2 and 6.3).

4.5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has been able to lay the foundation that language and society cannot be divorced: in order to understand language better one has to study the society in which that language is used, and, vice versa. Noting the diverse sociolinguistic reality of colonial Freetown with all its cultural, social and linguistic undertones, the linguistic inequality between the children in the villages and those in Freetown in terms of competence in the English language proves the fact that language can only be adequately acquired through the integrative and

cultural context and not through the instrumental medium. And even with the children in Freetown, considering that none of the Settler groups spoke English as competently well as native speakers, those children's English will definitely reflect some amount of linguistic accommodation and cross socio-cultural influences. Equally important is the fact that education in Sierra Leone began through the child's first language, apart from the study and use of African languages in missionary activities. The linguistic analysis of the restructured varieties of the English brought and spoken in pre-colonial and colonial Freetown, coupled with the lack of a close social and linguistic relationship between and among the different groups in colonial Freetown, serves as a basis to maintain that the crystallization of English in Sierra Leone into a new variety or a new language is very much possible. As teaching and schooling has been instrumental in this history of English in Sierra Leone, the following chapter seeks to find out the place of language in education in this country.

Chapter 5

Language and education in Sierra Leone

Knowledge of a language is undeniably part of one's cultural heritage. A good portion of one's identity as a member of a cultural group comes from being able to speak the group's language. Much of our cultural knowledge is expressed to us in that language (Baker 2001: 201).

5.0. Introduction

In this chapter, we consider, firstly, the global perspective of the educational system during the colonial period with emphasis on the role and place of the English language as a minority language in Sierra Leone. Secondly, we look at the language(s) of instruction during this same period juxtaposing it/them with the current language-in-education situation in the country with particular attention to Freetown. The central part of this chapter is the discussion of the indigenous languages in education and the place of the English language in the educational system.

5.1. Early Western education in Sierra Leone

While access to education is a central concern in the sociology of education, language becomes the instrument of the transmission, or obstruction, of knowledge (Bledsoe 1992: 185). The introduction of Western Education in Sierra Leone “provides an exemplary case for examining the confluence of Western and West African theories of knowledge transmission and power” (Bledsoe 1992: 185). Fourah Bay College, as we pointed out above, was known as ‘the Athens of West Africa’ not only because it was the first Western institution of higher learning in the region but because of its “high-quality formal schooling” (Bledsoe 1992: 185) and its instrumental role in studying indigenous languages, thus paving the way to the study of African languages. Following Bledsoe (1992: 186), the question “Why did the British place such strong emphasis on education in West

Africa?” becomes a very current issue. Whereas, paradoxically, the maintenance of economic exploitation and political subjugation could be seen as the most significant reasons, enlightenment should also be considered:

[A]n educated populace could take more assertive steps toward improving its social and economic problems, a need most relevant to the poor masses who suffered appalling conditions as England began to industrialise (Bledsoe 1992: 186).

In this sense, Granville Sharp’s humanitarian and social plan of establishing an ideal Western society in West Africa for the black poor in England worked in favour of the promotion of education. Freetown, in particular, and Sierra Leone, as a whole, became the place where not only “natural man could be civilized through reason alone” (Sharp cited in Peterson 1969: 21 cited in Bledsoe 1992: 186) but also “a potential utopian frontier of the mind and soul: a new beginning, in which humanity could rectify its past sins” (Bledsoe 1992: 186). This civilizing mission, on the one hand, and a new beginning (hence spiritual cleansing), on the other, can only be achieved through education, both Western and religious. But, taking into account the contents taught, the relevance of these contents for the Sierra Leonean society, and the methods used, one may wonder whether these civilizing intentions were really genuine.

The civilizing mission of the colonial authorities and the Missionaries’ conversion of an “unbelieving” people (in the sense of Christendom) to embrace both a Western and a new religious culture, and, consequently a new spiritual and moral beginning were strictly enshrined in the school system. The central focus was on children who both the colonial authorities and the missionaries considered as the group on whose hands the future of the country depended. They “saw the content of knowledge itself as central to shaping children as future citizens” (Bledsoe 1992: 187). To achieve this, the colonial authorities established two types of schools: the elite schools, whose goal was to produce both “cultured ladies and gentlemen”, and trade (technical) schools, where boys were taught “practical skills like agriculture and crafts” and ladies learnt “handwork and homemaking” (Bledsoe 1992: 186-7). Most of the educational institutions, including Fourah Bay College were established and administered by Missionaries (Alie 1990: 200). For

the mission schools, the moral and spiritual enlightenment of the children was very important. The mission schools thus used “education and literacy less as an end in themselves than as a means of religious conversion” (Bledsoe 1992: 187). Therefore, literacy was extended to the most remote areas so that people could learn the Gospel. The spread of Western education to the provincial areas was through the missionaries who saw that with the expansion of literacy in these distant parts of Sierra Leone, the local people would take the place of missionaries and, consequently, the Christian faith would be accepted and there would be a reduction of financial and other risks:

[B]ooks may supply, in a measure, the place of missionaries, and, where nothing more is practicable, may often answer the grand purpose, and thus spare the expenses of equipment, the fatigue of long journeys, the perils of an inhospitable country, the hardships of a precarious subsistence and the risk of an unhealthy climate (Sumner 1963: 13 cited in Bledsoe 1992: 187).

In other words, the spread of Western education through the missionaries to the hinterland of Sierra Leone was more to the missionaries’ benefit than to that of the new converts and their respective communities. As the above quote shows, religious and Western education, “books”, served as surrogates of the European missionaries in achieving “the grand purpose” of converting both the liberated Africans and Sierra Leoneans to Christianity which consequently meant ignoring their traditional forms of worship and approach to life. One of the first secondary schools to be established by the colonial government was the Bo School in 1906 “for the sons and nominees of chiefs” (Alie 1990: 200-201). But the most plausible reason why the school was established “was to be the cornerstone of Western education in that region” and to “uphold the indirect rule system” (Alie 1990: 201). Interestingly, it was not until after the Second World War that the colonial government expanded secondary education to other parts of the country and improved its quality with grants to establish schools and training centres, especially in the north (Alie 1990: 201). Before this period, the onus of education was taken by the Missionaries.

The end of slavery did not only make Freetown “the receiving point for shiploads of recaptured slaves” but equally ensured that these “hundreds of

liberated Africans” be incorporated and rehabilitated into normal society (Bledsoe 1992: 187). The task of ensuring such an integration and settlement was not an easy one. The group which appealed the attention of both the Colonial administration and the Missionaries was children because they were seen as the future embodiment of a civilized society and as such were encouraged, or coaxed, to embrace Christianity and, consequently, “renounce ‘heathen’ practices of polygamy and worshipping false gods” (Bledsoe 1992: 187). Following Bledsoe (1992: 187ff), the moulding of children “as future citizens” and the ideology of preserving “the purity of ‘civilized’ knowledge” targeted two main groups: the unaccompanied children who came along with the liberated Africans, and the indigenous Sierra Leonean children in the interior of the country.

The children that were not accompanied by their parents or relatives among the liberated Africans were put in the care of other (elder) settlers who preceded these children. The children were apprenticed to already settled ‘Freetown immigrants’ but since “settlers welcomed cheap domestic labour, few tried to improve the children’s lives, and the apprenticeship system rapidly degenerated to *de facto* slavery” (Sumner 1963: 21 cited in Bledsoe 1992: 187). This situation, however, led the Church Missionary Society (CMS henceforth), founded in 1799, to join forces with the colonial administration in creating separate settlements for the recaptives and the consequent establishment of technical schools to train these children in trades such as farming and “for the most promising, teaching or mission work” (Bledsoe 1992: 187; see also Alie 1990: 68-69). Both the CMS and the colonial administration considered these children as the most appropriate group in achieving the “utopian vision of the country’s founders” (Bledsoe 1992: 187), that is, the creation of a perfect society of the mind and soul, a new place where mankind could correct his past wrongdoings (Bledsoe 1992: 186). Therefore, uncivilized and pagan beliefs could be hidden from these children and with them “formal education could present civilized knowledge and morals as unchallengeable truth” (Bledsoe 1992: 187). This idea of separating the children from the older Africans for the sake of shaping and organizing them “into orderly Christian communities” (Bledsoe 1992: 188) which “grouped around its church tower, instructed and cared for by benevolent European guidance” (Fyfe 1962:

128 cited in Bledsoe 1992: 188) was further strengthened by Governor Charles MacCarthy, who began his term as governor in Freetown in 1816 (see Alie 1990: 68-69).

After the Freetown settlement and its environs had gained a strong footing in educational and religious matters, focus was then directed to the interior of Sierra Leone where the Mendes and other Southern and Eastern ethnic groups, far from the Northern influences of Islam, benefited from the benevolent European missionaries. The objective of civilizing and purifying the minds and souls of children was continued. Thus, the colonial administrators and missionaries continued working hand in hand as

[P]hysically removing children and placing them in boarding schools on mission grounds became a key strategy for missionaries trying to solve not only the problem of geographical access to schools but also that of contaminating influences from elders. As the new cohorts matured, missionaries believed, the old guard and its heathen ideas could quietly die out (Bledsoe 1992: 188).

With this, the targets of Western education and religion were expanded to incorporate both the recaptives and the indigenous Sierra Leonean children. The expansion of education did not only mean paying more attention to *which* knowledge these children were to be exposed to but also to *what* was to be taught. Hence,

promoters of schooling in early Sierra Leone placed considerable emphasis on the content of the knowledge taught, assuming that knowledge could affect behaviour by virtue of the logic and persuasiveness of its content alone, regardless of the social context into which it was placed (Bledsoe 1992: 189).

Teachers, therefore, saw themselves not only as sheer mediators of knowledge but as bearers of moral and divine values responsible for shaping the minds of these children so that they could not lose their souls.

In essence, we believe that the educational system that was introduced in Sierra Leone was more directed to an obligation rather than to a necessity. Just as teachers considered themselves serving both God and Britain, and were expected to be “good Christians and humanitarians” with an “unselfish interest in the future

welfare of the children”, children were equally expected to assimilate these principles in their minds and souls; principles that permit the elevation of humanity in order to achieve “technological and social development” (Bledsoe 1992: 189).

As this study is about the English language in Sierra Leone, in general, and Freetown, in particular, and not strictly about education and what was taught, though somehow related, the next sections deal with the English language in Sierra Leone, as a minority language, and as a language of instruction.

5.2. English as a minority language

As we noted in the preceding sections, education in West Africa, in general, and in Sierra Leone, in particular, was introduced to economically, politically and socially keep the populace under strict control. These subjugations apart, Western and religious enlightenment were also some of the pillars considered necessary for the people to be regarded “civilised” and/or to be morally and religiously upright (see Spencer ed.: 1971; Hair 1987; Bledsoe 1992). Given the diversity of the languages spoken in Freetown in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, education was initially in the child’s first language, particularly in the suburbs of Freetown and the interior of Sierra Leone, and then continued in the English language (Spencer ed.: 1971; Sengova 1987; Hair 1987; Kamanda 2002). This was the general practice rather than the exception since language is instrumental in both the access to education and the general comprehension of educational materials. As such, English, as in other ex-British colonies, was used not to introduce British and American cultures or ways of life, but as a supplement in teaching and maintaining “the indigenous patterns of life and culture”, in order “to provide a link in culturally and linguistically pluralistic societies” and “to maintain a continuity and uniformity in the educational, administrative and legal systems” (Kachru 1976: 225). In other words, while the language of instruction was the child’s first language especially in the first three years of schooling, this practice was discontinued and English was later introduced in the latter part of primary school up to secondary and tertiary levels thus supporting Bamgbose’s claim that “a child’s education is best begun in a language the child already has

some competence in, preferably the mother tongue” (Bamgbose 1999: 3; Kamanda 2002; UNESCO 2003).

During the colonial period, African or Sierra Leonean languages were seriously used and studied (Hair 1987) so much so that the current claim that “African languages are not yet well developed to be used in certain domains or that the standard of education is likely to fall, if the imported European languages cease to be used as media of instruction at certain levels of education” (Bamgbose 1999: 2) could be considered a misdemeanour then. It is likely that these languages were given prominence in the educational and religious domains due to their importance in the propagation of the Christian faith and Western civilization. Nevertheless, their use helped to shed light on the fact that linguistic exclusion is one of the greatest problems in Africa today which was inexistent to some extent during the colonial period in Sierra Leone. To say the least, they were recognised as important media of communication for the transmission of knowledge and culture. Hence, Bamgbose warns that

[E]xclusion arising from a lack of familiarity with an official language constitutes one of the greatest impediments in a country, affecting, as it does, access to education, public services, jobs, political positions and effective functioning in the society (Bamgbose 1999: 2)

This type of linguistic exclusion implies a disadvantaged situation for those citizens who are unable to fulfil the linguistic requirements in the official European language(s) and cannot operate competently within particular important sectors or domains in their countries. As such, indigenous people of a particular country automatically become second class citizens “either because they cannot participate in most public services or because they can only do so imperfectly through intermediaries” (Bamgbose 1999: 2).

Contrary to what was usual in Sub-Saharan Africa, we now have a high rate of illiteracy and school dropouts in most African countries due to the existing linguistic exclusion and linguistic human rights abuse. For Bamgbose, apart from other factors, the linguistic factor is very significant since “the language medium in schools continues to be an area of exclusion” (Bamgbose 1999: 3). Given the fact that most African countries are theoretically willing to experiment with using

indigenous languages in education, there is a kind of lackadaisical attitude or emotional reaction in implementing such proposals after having witnessed that “attitudes have hardened over the years about perceived lack of value in African languages as teaching media”. Put differently, these African languages have suffered the pejorative stigma of the sub-standard and as such were felt incapable of expressing all the senses and nuances of European languages, and, therefore, imperfect for serious academic and administrative matters. Hence, ordinary citizens are linguistically excluded from fully participating in the day-to-day affairs of their countries because of illiteracy, lack of command of the official language (which is mostly the colonial language with all its foreign characteristics), and absence of a common indigenous language of wider communication.

While we may agree with Jenkin’s (2003: 5) second diaspora of the English language as a consequence of the colonisation of Asia and Africa, we disagree with Alberto’s (1997: 4) statement that the English monarch had an interest in propagating their linguistic heritage to other peoples: “... the Queen’s zeal for expansion flung Englishmen far and wide to share their linguistic and cultural heritage with the other peoples of the earth”. The expansion of the English monarch (through colonisation, settlement and consequent domination) may have been interested in dominating the world linguistically and culturally instead of sharing their linguistic and cultural traditions. The only relationship the language shared (or shares) with the ex-colonial system was one of a restrained and powerful bond:

[W]ith the formalization of British rule ... there emerged a pattern of increasing governmental interest in English education for Africans. Through the English language, the values of British civilization colonized the minds of the natives, creating subtle but sturdy bonds with the imperial country. English education was thus the projected means of transferring British power to a native elite who would act as a surrogate for British rule once independence flung the colonizers back home (Alberto 1997: 4).

Since the British left the language, “the independent African peoples set out to rid English of its British overtones and to appropriate the language for themselves” (Alberto 1997: 4). However, the appropriation of the English language seems a

consequence of the sociolinguistic situation evident in the typical African country rather than a deliberate appropriation process.

In all the African countries colonised by European nations, apart from the administrative, legal and other legacies left, the linguistic factor is the strongest tie between independent African nations and Europe. The impact, or rather, the use of the English language, like other European languages in West Africa is unquestionable. Within the complex network of indigenous African languages, the English language has a prominent place. It is used mainly in certain important circles outside the home: it is the language of formal education, government administration, business and trade, and diplomacy. Although the English language is the mother tongue of only a small minority of Africans, it is the second language of millions, and the language with which the premium of education, civilization and social status is placed. It compensates, then, for the lack of a common ethnic language, lingua franca or vehicular language in most countries. How was the English language introduced in West Africa in general and in Sierra Leone in particular?

According to Alberto (1997) the British colonial government was initially reluctant and indecisive about introducing education and their language to its colonies in (West) Africa. However, we may find as early as 1801, the British philologist William P. Russel declaring that

the English language...is already the most general in America. Its progress in the East is considerable; and if many schools were established in different parts of Asia and Africa to instruct the natives, free of all expense, with various premiums of British manufacture to the most meritorious pupils, this would be the best preparatory step that Englishmen could adopt for the general admission of their commerce, their opinions, their religion. This would tend to conquer the heart and its affections; which is a far more effectual conquest than that obtained by swords and cannons: and a thousand pounds expended for tutors, books, and premiums, would do more to subdue a nation of savages than forty thousand expended for artillery-men, bullets, and gunpowder (Russel cited in Alberto 1997: 5).

Around 1554, some Africans were taken to England to learn English so that they could become interpreters for British traders in West Africa. On their return, some of these Africans taught English to some of their countrymen so that

they would be able to communicate to sailors and British traders, and eventually become interpreters (Alberto 1997: 15).

From the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, Britain had trade relations with Africa, along the Guinea Coast, but it was not until the 1900s that Protestant missionaries laid the foundation of West Africa's present educational system. Christian missionaries were pro-vernacular and so to win the hearts of indigenous people, they first translated the Bible to the indigenous languages and made Africans literate in their own languages (see section 5.1 above). They also produced grammars and bilingual dictionaries (Hair 1987).

In order for these missionaries to be successful in their religious and cultural battles against 'the social evils of poverty, ignorance, tribal wars, disease, and slavery', they emphasized education through the local languages. In effect, both the colonial government and the missionaries made use of indigenous multilingual specialists who would mediate between colonisers and colonised, and between the missionaries and the new converts (Alberto 1997).

When British education was finally introduced in Sierra Leone in the nineteenth century, early primary education was in the child's mother-tongue. English was introduced later in the final part of the primary education and early in the secondary level (Hair 1987; Sengova 1987; Kamanda 2002), as mentioned at the beginning of this section.

There was a general transference of the curriculum of British education to West Africa –the textbooks were exactly the same as in England and the teachers were British, and thus the superiority of the English language and way of life became prominent. The moment a child/a person started expressing a few things in English, his attitude toward his first language dramatically changed. He relinquished his attachment to the traditional way of life and occupations and looked down on his fellow tribe's men (Alberto 1997; Spencer 1971).

When Britain established a firm grip over her colonies, the colonial administrators were no longer forced to learn the local languages. Rather, the indigenous people were encouraged to learn the English language in order to create pro-imperial African multilingual servants to act as mediators between the rulers and the ruled in bureaucratic and administrative contexts (Alberto 1997).

Because of the positions held by the few Africans who could speak English, parents opted for the introduction of the English language as early as possible so that their children could also benefit from the system (Alberto 1997).

The English language was also, and it is still, seen as a neutral language which could conceal or eradicate the problem of favouring one African tongue and its people over another. When the British colonial government finally decided to play a role in education in the colonies, the English educational system was transported to West Africa where English literature was presented by teachers as the highest form of literary achievement, and the English language was used as the language of instruction. Thus Africans turned their backs on their traditional oral, literary and linguistic forms. With this cultural and linguistic domination, the prominence of the African languages was replaced by the English language. Yet, the British were not willing to accept Africans as linguistic equals nor were they ready to tolerate corruptions of and in their language. They preferred speaking indigenous languages to the Africans even if they knew that the Africans could speak English “well”, thus, the birth of “King’s English” and “Standard English” “as the traditionally most correct and acceptable form whose purity was fit to represent the noblest of British traditions”(Alberto 1997: 12).

The year 1966 marked the practical end of British colonialism in West Africa (Ghana gained independence in 1957, Nigeria in 1960, Sierra Leone in 1961 and the Gambia in 1965). However, it also marked the beginning of the expansion of the English language: English became the official language at independence in West Africa (Spencer ed. 1971; Alberto 1997).

Taking into account the sociolinguistic situation of West Africa: the multicultural and multilingual background of West Africa and its people, the pro-vernacular methodology of the Protestant missionaries, the colonial educational system, and the linguistic attitudes of the British in West Africa, it could not have been possible for Africans to speak or use English as the English do. The West African variety of English should not be regarded as a product of imperfect learning and cannot be attributed to West Africans not being able to learn and use languages perfectly. Rather, the impossibility of the cultural integration of the Africans into the British culture in Africa, or the lack of a

British culture in Africa altogether, account for a variety of the English Language localised in West Africa. This assertion would follow Baker's (2001: 201) opinion cited in the opening excerpt to this chapter, Thomason's and Kaufman's (1988) position(s) cited above as well as Lyons' (1996) assumption that for one to be linguistically competent in a language one has to be competently active in the culture in which that language operates (Lyons 1996: 25). In other words, English was brought to West Africa by few British people and since there were/are more West African languages, the English language was dominated culturally and linguistically. Therefore, the English spoken in West Africa should be seen as another variety of the EL as it exists in some other parts of the world including the UK, still capable of performing all its linguistic functions, and still intelligible to the other varieties and not a completely new language. Its new lexical, syntactic, morphological, and phonological embellishments should not be considered negative but rather as West Africans' way of beautifying and amplifying languages. Put differently, West African varieties of English should be viewed as a manifestation of West Africans' linguistic and cultural attitudes towards languages and should also be seen as a consequence of the linguistic evolution of languages over time, with words varying or shifting in form, sense, meaning, and combination in sentences.

5.3. The language(s) of instruction in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions: a historical overview

Does the handing over of the political and administrative responsibilities to Africans mean that ex-colonies of European powers in Africa are totally independent? While the answer is YES in some respects, the ties that bind the ex-colony to the former colonial power are linguistically stronger than any other ties that may still bind the two; hence, the creation of the Commonwealth of Nations, or the Instituto Camões, to name but two.

As mentioned in chapters two and three, at independence, independent African nations retained the language of the former colonial country as the official language of administration, diplomacy and language of instruction. In the case of Sierra Leone, as in most ex-British colonies "the official language policy in Sierra

Leone had been to retain ‘the use of English in all official domains as far as possible’” (Ministry of Education, 1970 cited in Kamanda 2002: 199). As if this were not enough, the 1991 constitution that proposes Sierra Leonean languages as media of instruction and as disciplines (see the next section for a detailed discussion), gives this description of how to qualify for a seat in Parliament:

Subject to the provisions of Section 76, any person who ... is able to speak and read the English language with a degree of proficiency sufficient to enable him to take part in the proceedings of parliament, shall be qualified for election as a Member of Parliament... The Business of parliament shall be conducted in the English language (Government of Sierra Leone 1991: 54, 63 cited in Kamanda 2002: 199).

Such a legal document clearly disqualifies Sierra Leoneans who are literate in languages other than the English language, be they indigenous Sierra Leonean languages or not.

But let’s move back to the 1970s, the decade immediately after the end of colonial rule in Sierra Leone, to draw a picture of the language policy in education. For Sengova, the birth of a seeming national language policy occurred in 1978, though documented later in a UNESCO working paper in 1981: “There exists in practice if not in theory a formal mother-tongue education programme at primary level in especially selected pilot schools of all four regions of Sierra Leone” (Sengova 1987: 519). However, Kamanda maintains that “the 1970 *White Paper* on Education ... is the first official publication that declares the intention of government to use Sierra Leonean languages in schools” (Ministry of Education 1970: 9 cited in Kamanda 2002: 200). Even though such a proposal was geared towards both adolescent and adult literacy, they did not materialise into tangible programmes until the 1978/79 school year (Kamanda 2002: 200).

It is evident that most speakers of other Sierra Leonean languages could speak either Krio (most common in the Western Area, Freetown, and the most widely used language nationwide, thus the *lingua franca*), Mende (most common in the Southern and Eastern regions (very much questionable indeed in two districts in the Eastern region: Kono district with Kono as one of the dominant local languages, and Kailahun district with Kissi as the dominant ethnic

language¹³), Limba or Temne (the two most common in the Northern region) as the four most widely spoken national languages. Because of their sociolinguistic distribution and importance (for Mende, Limba and Temne as regional languages; for Krio, because of its nationwide use), these four languages are extensively used in the mass media, especially on radio and television, and were consequently given the linguistic privilege and recognition in “literacy and formal education” (Sengova 1987: 521). Thus,

[T]he four major national languages have over the last decade been infused into the school system on an experimental basis at lower primary level as instructional media. This experiment is part of the implementation of certain recommendations of the 1981 UNESCO report ... (Sengova 1987: 521).

Even though this UNESCO report, *National Languages in Education* (Dalby 1981; see also Sengova 1987: 525), was experimental in nature, it points out, among other things, “the infusion of the four main national languages as instructional media, first, into lower primary classes I to III then as school subjects at the secondary and tertiary levels of the formal educational system” with the blessings of the Head of State and a national commitment from government departments, agencies, and institutions for the success of the policy (Sengova 1987: 525). As the policy was to be implemented, the Ministry of Education went ahead with a series of mother-tongue education programmes through the *Indigenous Language Pilot Project* by promoting education in the four major languages of Sierra Leone in their different regions of dominance (Sengova 1987: 525-26). The above-mentioned pilot project targeted primary schools from classes I to III and was carried out by primary school teachers who taught in the dominant language of the region where the school was located. These instructors were supervised by regional officers of the Ministry of Education (Sengova 1987: 525-26).

Apart from the formal school setting, the UNESCO paper also made mention of adult literacy and a “mass mobilisation of the population towards universal literacy, first in the mother tongue and then in as many African

¹³See Kamanda 2002: 196-200 for a detailed discussion.

languages as can be mastered” (Sengova 1987: 527). In order to achieve this, the proposal urged private companies and institutions to give unflinching financial and material support “by introducing African languages in advertising” (Sengova 1987: 527). A good number of non-governmental agencies, namely Plan International, the Integrated Agricultural Development Projects, the German Adult Literacy Programme, among others, helped to promote and to finance the implementation of adult literacy for rural people in Sierra Leone, teaching these people in an adult learner-centred way

how to read and write in their own mother tongue and to utilise the skill in a functional way in self-help community development projects. Community activities range from farming, improving health and sanitation facilities, small-scale commerce and industry, to digging safe wells for drinking water. Literature produced for these adult learners is usually built around topics dealing with these activities (Sengova 1987: 527).

Besides this adult literacy programme, some religious organizations embarked on translating the Bible with the primary aim of “evangelising the people through the culturally relevant medium –their own mother tongue” (Sengova 1987: 527), a process not very uncommon in the religious and linguistic history of Sierra Leone as highlighted in the previous chapter.

It is interesting to note that, in all of these adult literacy programmes, children were not left behind. Since the adults’ classes were in the evenings, school-going children also participated, thus ensuring a favourable environment “in the general drive toward African language education, where a primary target of education, the child, may simultaneously receive formal training in school as well as non-formal education during literacy classes” (Sengova 1987: 527), besides, some of these children in the rural areas equally may have had their formal instruction in school through their mother tongue or the regionally dominant language, particularly those in the first three years of primary education.

Despite the logistic problem and the limited success in the adult literacy programme proposed by the UNESCO working paper (1981) on Sierra Leone, the fact that some Sierra Leoneans in the rural areas were able to learn how to write their names in their own languages and could learn some basic skills through their mother tongue was a right step in the right direction: “the drive towards mother-

tongue education and literacy felt elsewhere is alive in this country” (Sengova 1987: 528). Giving importance to African languages, thus, cannot be limited to the formal education of the child, but must also imply the promotion of universal literacy formally and informally.

5.4. The current language-in-education situation

The importance of Sengova’s (1987) and Kamanda’s (2002) papers cannot be underestimated. Besides giving us a retrospective view of mother-tongue education in Sierra Leone, they equally brought to light the fact that there existed several educational recommendations with regard to mother-tongue education, even though most, if not all, were not given recognition:

[T]he difficulty in implementing so many earlier educational recommendations for Sierra Leone needs to be frankly recognised, together with the fact that Sierra Leone, if adequate action is not taken now, will fall further behind many other African countries in the promotion of universal education and mass literacy, and in the respect for its national languages and culture (Dalby 1981: 2; also cited in Sengova 1987: 528).

Although there was a lack of official pronouncement over mother-tongue education in Sierra Leone from independence up to 1990, the 1991 National Constitution and the New Education Policy pay heed to the clarion call of the 1981 UNESCO report and “emphasise basic education and the teaching of Sierra Leonean languages, both as media of instruction during the first three years of primary schooling and as subjects of study from Junior Secondary School (JSS) upwards” (Kamanda 2002: 195). Such a proposal is in favour of UNESCO’s objectives of mother-tongue education in which “the child’s mother tongue works automatically for expression and understanding, unlike instruction in a foreign language in which the learner has to grapple with understanding both the language and the lesson contents” (Kamanda 2002: 195). The National Constitution of 1991 is also very committed in the eradication of illiteracy by promoting the learning of indigenous languages (Government of Sierra Leone 1991: 4-5 cited in Kamanda 2002: 201).

While the UNESCO (1953, 2003) papers have been criticised especially in ex-European colonies in Africa for a lack of a single national language (Kamanda

2002: 195), the UNESCO report (1981) on Sierra Leone also received criticisms when it observes “that Mende and Temne be declared official languages alongside English and be introduced progressively into national administration, government and parliament ... (UNESCO 1981: 6 cited in Sengova 1987: 528). Critics maintain that the need for other official languages is uncalled for and that English “is a neutral language of world renown, international status and prestige with no ethnic base” (Sengova 1987: 528). Whether or not the critics were right in their thinking that the two aforementioned languages were unnecessary as co-official and administrative languages and that they were not neutral in cementing the ethnic and linguistic differences in Sierra Leone, English still “remains the official language; Mende, Limba, Temne and Krio are designated big-community languages which serve as *lingua franca* under certain circumstances, as well as African languages of education” (Sengova 1987: 528).

The New Education Policy backed up by the National Constitution of 1991, which placed emphasis on mother tongue education (Kamanda 2002: 195), fostered the introduction of Mende, Limba, Temne and Krio into the educational system in the 1996/97 academic year (Bangura 1998); the period which marked the official beginning of formal instruction through the four main languages in the first three years of primary school, and which equally marked the genesis of studying Sierra Leonean languages as subjects in secondary education, though at the same time, English continued unchallenged “as the only instructional medium for advanced primary, secondary and tertiary education” (Kamanda 2002: 196). Whereas the introduction of these four Sierra Leonean languages into the educational system both as languages of instruction in lower primary and as disciplines in lower secondary was a commendable move in a country fighting a civil war and battling with a battered economy, we are left with the fact that such a drive is doomed to failure due partly to the fact that in Sierra Leone “literacy and good education are equated only to communicative skills in English, and where this language keeps the gates to all forms of access” (Kamanda 2002: 196; see Spencer ed.: 1971; Alberto 1997). Why is this so?

Western education, championed by Protestant missionaries like the Church Missionary Society, predates the colonial period (Kamanda 2002: 197) with the

aim of educating the people through their indigenous languages through Bible translations and evangelisation (Hair 1987). However, the activities of the missionaries and their education were geared towards dominating the Africans culturally and religiously. With the advent of colonial authorities, the linguistic situation did not remain the same. The Protectorate Literature Bureau established to promote indigenous literacy was used by the colonial administration as a platform to launch negative campaigns against the Mende writing system for which it was established (Kamanda 2002: 197). This points to the fact that there has been a long history of negative attitudes to the teaching of and use of Sierra Leonean languages in favour of English. Ironically, while “literacy in an African language was a prerequisite for jobs in the colonial civil service, employees were expected to use literacy skills in English and not the mother tongues” (Kamanda 2002: 197-98). Consequently

[T]he perception of Sierra Leoneans that literacies other than in English are not literacy in their own right is neither a natural phenomenon, nor a chance occurrence. Rather, it is part of a psychological make-up which is integral to the indoctrination that has been effectively executed, first by the missionaries and colonisers during the colonial period, and later by their successors. Negative attitudes to MTE continue to be reinforced by its marginal position as a transit to more ‘prestigious literacy’ in English, so that literacies in Sierra Leonean languages have struggled to develop, and have been important only for personal communicative uses (Kamanda 2002: 199).

These demeaning and condescending attitudes towards African languages in education and administration are still alive today in many Sub-Saharan African countries even with the introduction of some of these languages into the educational system, Sierra Leone not exempted. According to some researchers, mother-tongue education has still not been able to curb the ‘illiteracy’ and underdevelopment gap in present day Sierra Leone (Kamanda 2002: 202). For Kamanda (2002), sociolinguistic, socio-political, economic, educational and attitudinal factors are all responsible for the failure of mother-tongue education to reduce illiteracy and poverty rate in present-day Sierra Leone (Kamanda 2002: 202).

Sociolinguistically speaking, as members of a multilingual and multidialectal country, for the average Sierra Leonean the question of nationality is hard to pin down since their strongest ties are normally attached to the family, including distant relatives, language group and ethnic membership: “For many people, the choice of languages they speak in a given space and time, constitute part of their social identity, which they often display with relative unconsciousness” (Kamanda 2002: 202-3). The language one speaks reflects his social identity, regional attachment, and, these are usually displayed in national politics. On this note, implementing a national language policy that will promote a sustainable mother tongue educational system without igniting linguistic tensions among the ‘big four’ (Krio, Limba, Mende and Temne) and between the supposed minority languages and the regional languages, the ‘big four’, is very difficult to realise. Take the case of Mende in the Eastern Province. Why should Kono and Kissi not be promoted as languages of instruction and subjects of study in Kono and Kailahun districts respectively? Is Mende the most widely spoken language in these two districts? Consider children whose parents migrated to a different region or community or town where the community language is different from the home language. Should these children be forced to be taught in a language that they do not understand or dominate or should they study a language which is different from their L1? The issue of mother tongue education is misunderstood to a certain extent (Kamanda 2002: 203). In essence, therefore, one of the failures of the introduction of the ‘big four’ languages into the educational system is both a sociological problem and a violation of the linguistic human rights of certain children because not all of these ‘big four’ languages can be totally regarded as regional or community languages in the real sense of the word.

From a socio-political perspective, besides the social, economic and political effects of the civil war (1990/91–2002) on Sierra Leone, the educational sector was far more affected. The lack of a socio-political consensus in the implementation of mother tongue education (or wider community language education) can be seen primarily in the two major political parties: SLPP (Sierra Leone People’s Party) and APC (All People’s Congress). While SLPP is considered a Mende dominated political party and Southern and Eastern based,

the APC is regarded as a Temne and Limba dominated and Northern Province and Western Area (Freetown) based. Since “political ethnicity feeds off all spheres of Sierra Leonean life”, one’s ethnic affiliation and regional background are important with regard to appointment into public offices, development projects and educational awards (Kamanda 2002: 204). There are also tensions between the ‘literate’ (those who can read and write fluent English) and the ‘illiterate’ (those who cannot read and write English). Considering the political factor of language and region and that of literacy in English, the concept of the ‘big four’ languages in education is undermined by the supposed minority languages and the all-important factor of English as the language that opens the doors to success. Equally, “the promotion of Krio to the status of national lingua franca” is considered a linguistic human right assault on other languages (Kamanda 2002: 205). Thus, although community language education was introduced at the height of the civil war, both the demographic and socio-political considerations of the ‘big four’ did not consider the apparent linguistic divisiveness of Sierra Leone.

Economically, the introduction of the ‘big four’ languages into the educational system came at a time when the civil war had virtually made all investors close down their activities and consequently, the government did not have sufficient revenue to meet its responsibilities. Parents also did not have the means to cater for all the needs of their school-going children. Some other communities were under the total control of the rebels or even if they were not, the fear of a rebel incursion was always looming. All of these factors coupled with decades of corruption and mismanagement contributed immensely to the high rate of school dropouts, infrastructural underdevelopment, lack of better educational facilities and consequently a lack of a sustainable “language-in-education planning” (Kamanda 2002: 205). Sierra Leone depended, then, immensely on foreign aid both for its security and for its day-to-day affairs. By then, Sierra Leone was unable to undertake any development project that was not directly related to rehabilitation, social reintegration and resettlement of war victims. Thus, while the issue of language in education was as important as all other issues, the timing was not right then and so community language in education could not, up to 2002, eradicate illiteracy and consequently bring about economic

development (Kamanda 2002: 205-206) as foreseen by the 1991 National Constitution (Government of Sierra Leone 1991: 4-5).

The ineffaceable educational (infrastructural, material and human resources) and language education impact of the civil war on Sierra Leone coupled with the fact that a good number of children were recruited by the fighting forces as child soldiers: “even before the war, for every 100,000 children starting school, only 10,000 reached the fifth form, and 2,000 went on to tertiary education. Up to 1999, 40% of children of school age did not receive formal education” (*West African Magazine* 1999: 11 cited in Kamanda 2002: 206). Furthermore, different factors undermined the sustainability of the community language-in-education programme. Not only the important premium put on English language literacy by the educational system, but the lack of qualified teachers to teach Sierra Leonean languages, the lack of adequate teaching and learning materials, the ineffective teaching methodologies, and lack of INSET (In-Service-Training) opportunities all undervalued the community language-in-education programme (Kamanda 2002: 206-207). There is also a neglect of these languages in the print media and public administration. Most significant is the fact that many Sierra Leoneans, like other sub-Saharan Africans, have “negative attitudes to indigenous literacies, probably as a result of the supremacy and instrumentality of former colonial languages and their literacies” since indigenous languages are considered irrelevant, if considered at all, in the “upward social mobility” trend (Kamanda 2002: 207; Spencer 1971).

Nevertheless, the fact that the four indigenous Sierra Leonean languages introduced into the educational system in 1996 transitionally as a way to reduce the illiteracy and poverty rates have survived all these years means that, if a well-calculated and sustainable language-in-education programme is developed, the country will be able to meet with the objectives of the 1953 and 2003 UNESCO working papers on mother tongue education. Even though a good number of Sierra Leoneans still consider the English language as the medium that guarantees them social, economic and political benefits, studying in one’s language and knowing other languages, no matter the number of speakers of these languages or where they are spoken, is always an added advantage in a child’s linguistic

development. Still, if a child is educated in his L1, especially in the first years of school, he will have no difficulty in grasping the content taught and this will equally empower him to make meaningful contributions in the learning environment (see UNESCO Positions papers 1953, 2003; see also Baptista, Brito and Bangura 2010).

5.5. Conclusion

In this chapter, we have been able to see that education in Sierra Leone has always given importance to language in the transmission of knowledge. In essence, the introduction of Western education in Sierra Leone allowed for the linguistic and cultural co-existence of Western values and traditional African values of knowledge. The Protestant missionaries encouraged the use of African languages as media of instruction and this tradition was continued in the post independent era of Sierra Leone, though without any official pronouncement to the effect.

While knowledge was put forward as the most important human achievement in the missionaries' drive to educate Sierra Leoneans, exploitation and subjugation were the rule rather than the exception. The 'civilising mission' of both the missionaries and the founders of the Freetown Settlement, and hence, Sierra Leone as whole, sought to subdue the people culturally and religiously. To achieve this, African values were condemned and alien values were introduced as the correct modes of behaviour. Children were consequently used as the reservoir of the new culture and religion since they were seen as those who can accept and maintain such values –the group that will best safeguard the utopian vision of the founders of Freetown.

We also learnt that in the Northern Province Islam dominated and as such missionaries directed their attention to the Southern and Eastern Provinces.

The introduction of the English language into the educational system was not a way to introduce the colonial culture but a way to control and make the people discontinue with their indigenous linguistic habits and take up another thought to be the door to literary and economic success. Consequently, if Sierra Leoneans still consider their languages unsuitable for better social and economic opportunities, it is because they have been made to believe that their languages are

only meant to be used within particular unofficial domains (at least, section 76 of the 1991 Constitution and the 1970 *White Paper* on Education make the unquestionable position of English clear).

Despite this enviable position of the English language in relation to other languages in Sierra Leone, we have also seen that the indigenous languages were allocated a place in the educational system throughout the educational history of Sierra Leone, though unofficially till 1991 when four Sierra Leonean languages were pronounced suitable for use as media of instruction and as subjects of study. This and the previous use of these languages enabled children as well as adults to be literate in their own mother tongues.

In all, therefore, even though the ‘big four’ community languages are also languages used in education in Sierra Leone, the place of the English language is politically, socially, economically and academically unquestionable either as the linguistic means that guarantees one’s progress or as the linguistic umbilical cord that keeps the relationship between the ex-colonial power, Britain, and Sierra Leone intact in the instance all other links are discontinued.

Chapter 6

A General outline of current tendencies in SLE: A sociolinguistic analysis of a selection of phonological and structural features

... it is generally known that in a language contact situation, particularly a close one where an exoglossic language becomes a second language with an official role in a country, the second language is bound to be influenced by its linguistic and cultural environment (Bamgbose 1992: 148).

6.0. Introduction

Whereas it seems difficult to ascertain categorical differences between one variety of English and another within the context of World Englishes (WEs) and Postcolonial Englishes (PCE), the phonological, morphological and syntactical patterns shown in one variety can be used to pinpoint characteristics that are peculiar to that particular variety (Wells 1982; Ebot 1999; Schneider *et al* (eds.) 2004; Huber 2008; Huber & Dako 2004; Schneider 2007; Mesthrie and Bhatt 2008, among others). Such peculiarities, also known as ‘characteristic features of structural nativization’ (Schneider 2007: 72ff), especially in countries that use English as a Second/Official Language (this does not mean ignoring countries that use English as L1), can be obtained, and are more evident, in the spoken rather than the written mode. This is in line with Schneider’s (2007: 72) position that, “it usually takes only a few utterances by a speaker for listeners to make educated guesses about his or her regional, and to some extent also social, origins –our accents betray where we are from”. While this is not limited to L2 speakers of English, since the so-called “‘standard Englishes’ from anywhere are phonetically marked” (Schneider 2007: 72).

Given this as a backdrop, the linguistic particularities of nativised Englishes are mostly due to certain factors, viz.: the educational level of its speakers/users (considering the fact that English is acquired through the scholastic rather than naturalistic means in L2 societies), the linguistic experience of the speakers/users of these Englishes, the typology of the other language(s) the

speakers/users of English speak/use, the contexts in which English is acquired, the degree of formality of the conversation, the frequency of the use of English, among others. These linguistic ecological factors, together with sociohistorical and evolutionary patterns of the language, and the degree of the contact history of English with the local languages in any country, can go a long way to determine the types of English spoken around the world. In the case of Sierra Leone, the indigenous languages including Krio, the English-lexified creole language (with a seeming linguistic carry-over effect) and the desire to sound Sierra Leonean can be considered as additional factors that directly or indirectly influence the English of Sierra Leoneans resident in the country.

In this chapter, we focus on the spoken mode of educated SLE speakers and hence analyse the corpus obtained through interviews made by the author in 2011 in Freetown and published interviews and speeches (Youtube and BBC) of home grown English from Sierra Leonean stakeholders and politicians as we seek to provide features that are peculiar to SLE. We have adopted in this analysis of Sierra Leone English phonological and structural features a contact-induced perspective. The evidences are derived from phonological descriptions of vowels and a selection of consonant sounds, and the theoretical and methodological approach for this analysis is based on Wells (1982), Schneider (2007), and, Mesthrie & Bhatt (2008). We compare our findings with those of Ebot (1999), Huber (2008) on Cameroon English and Ghanaian English respectively. A morphosyntactic appraisal is also made with a focus on the Noun Phrase (NP) and Verb Phrase (VP) of Sierra Leone English. For the theoretical and methodological orientation in this section we have followed Schneider (2007), Mesthrie & Bhatt (2008). We juxtapose our findings with studies on other varieties of English in West Africa (Huber & Dako 2004, for example).

We eschew labelling the linguistic peculiarities of the English spoken by Sierra Leoneans resident in the country as deviances of any other English, say British or American. Obviously, educated Sierra Leoneans do or tend to aim at a British type of English given the fact that Sierra Leone was a British colony (1808/1896 to 1961) and educational standards are somehow based on a British model, although the linguistic reality falls far from anything British, particularly

with regards the use of English. But, the English of Sierra Leoneans resident in the country is a product of sociohistorical and linguistic ecological factors both at the individual and at societal levels. However, the characteristics that SLE displays are not unique to Sierra Leone; these same features are found in other places where English is used as a Second Language in (West) Africa and elsewhere (see Wells 1982; Ebot 1999; Huber & Dako 2004; Schneider 2007; Huber 2008; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008, among others).

6.1. Some preliminary questions: SLE as an indigenised language

Before delving into the phonological tendencies (section 6.2) and morphosyntactic features (section 6.3) of SLE, we attempt to provide answers to the following questions: what causes such structural features in these new English varieties? How do these features become nativised or indigenised?

Providing straightforward answers to the above questions is as complex and multifaceted as the causes and processes of indigenisation themselves. However, an understanding of the dynamics of the exportation of a language from its original home to another through population movement, colonisation, language contact, language evolution, the principles of language change and variation, the interaction between language and the culture it expresses, language in/and society, language policy and planning, and, a plethora of other linguistic issues, will go a long way in answering the first question (see Weinreich [1953] 1968; Thomason & Kaufman 1988; Holm 1988/89; Romaine 2000; Mufwene 2001, 2009, 2015; Schneider 2007, among others). Some of these issues have been discussed in chapters three, four and five of this study. However, while some scholars maintain that the use of language is culture-bound and hence profiles the individual, others say simplification and overgeneralisation are the causes; and some others point out that “PCEs can be explained to some extent by universal laws of ontogenetic second-language acquisition and phylogenetic language shift” (Schneider 2007: 88-89; see also Mufwene 2015). Controversially, though, the history of the language in exploitation colonies is not as clear as some would want to see it. The language liberated some, oppressed others and was “full of strange paradoxes” since the policy of British administrators in the colonies was “to withhold English

language competence from the masses, with access to learning of the language only granted to an elite of prospective co-administrators” (Schneider 2007: 95). Others had to find their own way in the language. Hence, the starting point of the roadmap to the birth of home-grown varieties. Today, the reality is a direct contradiction of the erstwhile situation as English in the former colonies is now seen as the gateway to opportunities at national and international levels (Schneider 2007: 95).

Regarding nativisation or indigenisation processes, language-internal and language-external factors have been seen as the main causes (Thomason and Kaufman 1988; Mufwene 2001, 2009, 2015; Schneider 2007: 97ff). Language-internal explanations have pinpointed the interaction between subsystems of language, say in the articulation of certain marked sounds in English rare in world languages (L1 languages of L2 speakers of English), which may trigger phonological change through the replacement of marked sounds in the L2 for those of the L1 or for sounds the speaker is more convenient with (Schneider 2007: 97-98). This may also affect the morphology of the language and consequently its “syntactic arrangement principles” (Schneider 2007: 98). Since PCE are considered as “branches of the English language”, innovative structural features of these varieties can be seen as products of ongoing internal changes (Schneider 2007: 98).

On the other hand, language contact, the interaction of different linguistic systems in a speech community wherein “one system adopts elements from the other”, is one of the main factors in language-external factors (Schneider 2007: 98; see also chapter three of this study). Features adopted from other languages are remodelled in the adopting language system. Considering the fact that Krio is another branch of English, irrespective of the fact that creoles are considered nonstandard languages of their lexifiers (see Mufwene 2001: 106ff; 2015), its influence on the English of Sierra Leoneans is part of this process of language contact since both can be considered as varieties of the same language. Hence, “in dialect contact the subsystems which get in touch with each other and influence each other mutually are historically related and more or less similar” (Schneider 2007: 100; see also Mufwene 2001, 2009). Given the fact that it is doubtful

whether real bilingualism which keeps linguistic systems separate exists, “speakers are central to bringing idiolects, dialects and languages into contact while communicating with each other” (Mufwene 2001: 14). For Mufwene (2001: 106), “language contact has been a relevant ecological factor in the evolution of English since its inception”. Mufwene (2001: 106) takes this issue a bit further:

where indigenized Englishes are spoken, it is second-language speakers who develop the norms, while the children enculturated to their varieties perpetuate these norms, subject to imperfect replication. It seems that the same argument can in fact apply to communities where “native Englishes” are spoken. Children who acquire them perpetuate the norms developed by earlier speakers, although they contribute to the evolution of their varieties by the principle of imperfect replication.

Essentially, just as the creators of creoles developed norms based on the community rather than accepted norms imposed by speakers of the lexifier, so also it is for speakers of these indigenised Englishes. Those who acquire these indigenised Englishes initially developed the norms from and for their communities which were later propagated by subsequent generations. This dissemination process continues to the next and succeeding generations. Following Mufwene (2015: 6), such processes of language contact are fundamental to the development of not only contact languages (pidgins, creoles and WEs), “but to all languages” considering ecological factors. Hence, from an ecological perspective, both creoles and indigenised Englishes share similar processes of emergence and evolution (Mufwene 2015: 6).

To understand how ecological factors are significant in the emergence and evolution of indigenised Englishes, we argue, following Mufwene (2015), that the adaptation of English to its new ecology is greatly responsible for the evolution of the language “into so many different varieties that are not even structurally identical within their respective categories, namely, ‘native Englishes’, ‘indigenized Englishes’, ‘English creoles,’ and ‘English pidgins’” (Mufwene 2015: 6). Since the current study falls under indigenised Englishes’ category, we provide the factors below following Mufwene (2015: 7ff). For Mufwene, colonisation, indigenisation and differential evolution should be seen as key

factors in the emergence and evolution of these varieties of English as we explain and adapt Mufwene's wisdom in the context of Sierra Leone English below:

- Colonisation made possible the relocation of a few British colonial administrators to exploitation colonies in Africa and other settings. In the case of Sierra Leone, the British administrators including missionaries and teachers came after the resettlement of former slaves with their restructured varieties of English in Freetown, the relocation of the recaptives to Freetown with many and typologically different African languages and the consequent birth of the creole community and Krio (see Holm 1989; Huber 1999; Montgomery 1999; see also chapter four of this study). All of these people, languages and even cultures did not by any way threaten the existence of the indigenous population and their languages. On the contrary, they enriched the Sierra Leonean linguistic and cultural landscape. This co-existence of different people and languages should be seen as one of the factors responsible for the emergence and evolution of not only Krio, but of SLE as well. The linguistic co-existence between English and the other languages in Sierra Leone can also be seen as a pointer towards the indigenisation of English into SLE.
- The indigenisation of English in former British colonies and other settings simply means that the language has become part of the linguistic indigenous repertoire of the territory where it is used and that its users are aware of the "structural and pragmatic features" that are peculiar to their variety (Mufwene 2015: 8). This does not mean that these same features should be shared by other varieties in other territories, Mufwene (2015: 8) admonishes. SLE, like other Englishes in former British colonies, has indigenised, and, like these varieties "reflect[s] adaptations to the specific contact ecologies in which English was appropriated by populations that did not have it as a heritage language and is likewise used to express concepts that were not part of the cultural heritage it had been shaped to express before it [*sic*] exportation to the new settings" (Mufwene 2015: 8; see also Mufwene 2009a). However, depending on the linguistic landscape of the former colony, "the vast majority of the population, especially in rural areas,

continue to speak various heritage languages as their vernaculars and may even speak another one of them as their primary lingua franca” (Mufwene 2015: 10). This is the case with Sierra Leone as many other African countries colonised by Britain. Most Sierra Leoneans acquire, first, one ethnolinguistic language as their L1 before acquiring Krio, the lingua franca, as L2/L3, and only afterwards learn English in school (see Fyle 2003: 116). As such, speakers of English in Sierra Leone are either bi- or multilingual. This is the ecological peculiarity of SLE in light of which it should be analysed.

- The evolution of English is different from ecology to ecology. Considering colonisation and indigenisation as bases for the birth and development of the different varieties of indigenised Englishes, one should not expect the L1 varieties to have come about the same way. The latter were developed from dialect contact whereas the former varieties are the outcomes of the contact between English and the different languages in the exploitation colonies (Mufwene 2015: 9). Another differential factor is related to the mode of transmission. Whereas L1 varieties of English are transmitted through naturalistic means, the L2 varieties are transmitted through guided learning, that is, learning at school (Mufwene 2015: 9). This is why they have been characterised as “bookish”, a reflection of the books which were used as models of learning (Mufwene 2015: 9).

Colonial nonstandard forms are another linguistic factor in the nativisation process, especially “scholastic transmission of English through the educational system” (Schneider 2007: 101; see also Mufwene 2015: 9). Schneider (2007) further maintains that many of these “nonstandard forms have been passed on and constituted the basic input for the formation of new varieties” (2007: 101). As we outline in chapter four regarding the settler variety of English exported to the Freetown Settlement, Schneider (2007: 101) citing Simo Bobda (2003) suggests that

nonstandard dialect may have played a larger part than is traditionally assumed in Africa as well, suggesting that a wide range of African pronunciation features may well have been derived from colonial dialect input rather than mother-tongue interference, as has mostly been assumed.

Considering the above position and that of Mufwene (2001: 106ff), a case can be made here for the influence of the restructured varieties of English that the settlers brought to Freetown not only on Krio but on present-day SLE. Conversely, given the fact that linguistic change can happen where no language contact has taken place, Mufwene observes that “non-native speakers of a language are not the only ones that acquire it imperfectly”, especially as it is a fact that “idiolects of a language are not identical” (Mufwene 2001: 11-12; 106ff).

Creativity or linguistic innovation is another process on the road to language nativisation or indigenisation. There are three main types: *simplification*, *restructuring* and *exaptation* (Schneider 2007: 102ff; Mufwene 2001: 12ff).

Linguistic *simplification* is not as simple as it may seem. Take, for example, the case of vowel articulation in WE or PCE. Some of the L1 spoken by speakers of WE/PCE have about five or seven vowel systems while English has fourteen vowel systems (Upton 2004 cited by Schneider 2007: 102). The simplification of these fourteen vowel system to match the articulatory system and the corresponding vowel possibilities of the new speakers of English “may result in misunderstandings and thus make communication and the language as a whole, less efficient” (Schneider 2007: 102). The simplification of grammatical elements is another case in point. Some of the indigenous languages in countries where WE/PCE are spoken have a way of expressing certain things which are completely different from English. Hence, expressing these same contexts in English will result either in the loss of key grammatical elements in the TL; the regularization of irregular elements; the use of analogy for concepts which seem similar but are not identical structurally speaking, or the unmarking of marked elements in the TL, English in this case (see Schneider 2007: 102-104).

Restructuring involves the realignments and repositioning of a grammatical system which will bring about “the emergence of new patterns and relationships” in a language (Schneider 2007: 105). For Mufwene, this process simply means the “loss of some units or rules, addition of new ones, and certainly modifications in the direction of simplification, generalization, or complexification by the addition of conditions to the application of a rule” (Mufwene 2001: 13; see also Schneider 2007: 105). We can deduce that speakers

of WE/PCE have been able to recreate or reorganise the mechanical system of English and the pragmatic principles that regulate its use within the context of their linguistic experience to suit their communicative needs, socio-cultural, socio-economic and socio-political milieus of the language (see Mufwene 2001: 12).

Exaptation, which is a creole restructuring process, is the recycling of a linguistic element to have a new function in a language (Mufwene 2001: 5; Schneider 2007: 106-7). WE/PCE have also reassigned or modified certain elements to adopt new functions in the new linguistic system as used in the new language community.

Therefore, the British colonial language policy and related linguistic attitudes, the new socio-cultural and other social milieus that the language is made to express in its new environment, structural simplification and restructuring on the part of its new language users and L2 generational modes of language acquisition and transmission are all determining factors in the new structural features that the language shows.

6.2. Corpus and methodology

Our corpus is drawn from both casual and very formal speech forms (audio recorded interviews by the author and published material on Youtube and BBC) from different educated speakers ranging from those still acquiring the language (students pursuing degree and non-degree courses at tertiary institutions) and those who are considered competent and fluent speakers of English (professionals and public and political officers) in Sierra Leone. We opt for the spoken data in analysing SLE features because we believe that we can gather valuable information about the speakers' phonological tendencies as well as the structural features of this variety through spoken data. This does not imply that written data are insignificant. However, as it is a well-established fact in current literature, "spoken data are a *sine qua non*" in contemporary World Englishes studies (Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 42), especially those that take a variationist sociolinguistic perspective.

In the above definition of the corpus we referred to "educated speakers",

but, who is an educated speaker of English in Sierra Leone? Conteh-Morgan (1997) divided the speakers of English in Sierra Leone into the following categories: Basilectal, Mesolectal, Acrolectal and Quasi-British English speakers. However, in this study, we follow Mesthrie & Bhatt's (2008) categorisations of those who speak English as L2. This categorisation is based on developing competences in English as an L2 and not on L1 competences, therefore terminologies such as "basilect", "mesolect" and "acrolect" have been adapted (see Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 40). According to this classification, an educated speaker of English in Sierra Leone should fall into one of the following groups:

1. *Basilang*: a person who has successfully concluded early secondary education (six years of primary, three years of lower secondary) and uses the language with people that are fluent speakers of the language; he/she has limited comprehension level of the spoken and written forms of the language; his/her use of English in both the spoken and written forms are greatly influenced by the linguistic thought process and features of the (other) language(s) that he/she greatly masters.
2. Lower *Mesolang*: a person who has successfully concluded upper secondary education (six years of primary, three years of lower secondary and four years of upper secondary education) and is in contact with the language either at work or at a tertiary institution where he/she is enrolled as a student; this person understands spoken and written forms of the language and is in constant contact with the language and those that use it with varying degrees of command; his/her spoken form of the language has influences from the other languages that he/she speaks;
3. Upper *Mesolang*: university students and those with a post-secondary diploma (in some cases some degree holders without much exposure to advanced spoken English) and in the country's workforce; this person is in constant contact with the language and hence can hold fruitful discussions in the language; depending on his/her exposure to L1 forms of the language, his/her production skills, both oral and written, are satisfactory; this person can comprehend international radio and television English with some ease.

4. Lower *Acrolang*: degree holders with a solid and advanced knowledge of the dynamics of English structure and are well-exposed to international radio and television English. This person is highly competent in the language and uses English as one of his/her language on a daily basis.
5. Upper *Acrolang*: these are highly trained English language or linguistics degree holders or others trained in other fields in Sierra Leone, the UK, the US and other L1 English speaking countries with a solid background in the dynamics of English sounds and structure; they are well exposed to several varieties of English and their performance in all skills are exceptional. They are considered near-native speakers of English. (For obvious reasons we do not consider this group in our study).

However, for our study, we have discarded both extreme groups for their minimal and extremely high competence in English respectively and have focused on Lower Mesolang, Upper Mesolang and Lower Acrolang users of English in Freetown from ages ranging from seventeen to sixty, from different ethnolinguistic groups and professional backgrounds. Hence, a plethora of linguistic competences and language fluency levels are observed and analysed, sufficient enough to give us a solid data for our study.

Our main corpus comprises a group of nine men and eight women interviewed by the author in 2011 in Freetown. Each interview lasted for about fifteen to twenty minutes. The interviews were conducted on university campus and at the hotel where the author resided during the field trip. All informants were completely unknown to the author before the interviews and were selected randomly. The conversations were casual and guided so that natural speech samples could be captured. Our second corpus comprises a group of highly placed Sierra Leonean public figures, three men and two women whose interviews posted on *Youtube* were listened to and analysed to back up our findings from the interviews done in Freetown. Although the scope of this study focuses on the identification of some of the phonological and structural features of SLE, we provide a table below summarising basic sociolinguistic information about all our main informants including those that form the second corpus. Some of these sociolinguistic variables have been mentioned in the comments following the

features analysed, however a full use of them as well as the correlation of social variables and linguistic choices may constitute the aim of future research. In order to conceal the identity of our informants we use codes: three letters and numbers for those interviewed by the author and four letters for the corpus derived from Youtube. The numbers for the interviewees coincide with the tracks in the CD. In section 6.3 we use only the numbers for the interviewees so that the reader can easily access the sentence in the CD using that track number. The features presented are a combination of the analysis made in both corpuses.

INFORMANT	GENDER		AGE GROUP				HOME LANGUAGE	SLE TYPE			PROFESSION
CODE & INITIALS	FEMALE	MALE	17-25	26-35	36-46	47-60	ETHNOLIN- GUISTIC GROUP	LOWER MESOLANG	UPPER MESOLANG	LOWER ACROLANG	
001 YAK		X	X				KORANKO		X		STU.WORKER
002 FAK	X		X				MENDE		X		STU.WORKER
003 AHM		X		X			TEMNE			X	NGO TRAINER
004 JAB		X		X			MENDE		X		STU.WORKER
005 PSL		X		X			MENDE			X	LIBRARIAN
006 OLH		X				X	KRIO			X	LIBRARIAN
007 JUK		X			X		TEMNE-LIMBA		X		CIVIL ACTIVIST
008 ALJ		X	X				KRIO	X			STU.WORKER
009 GIK		X	X				SUSU	X			STUDENT
010 ERL		X	X				KRIO	X			STU./MUSICIAN
011 PAT	X		X				KRIO	X			STUDENT
012 MAK	X		X				MENDE	X			STUDENT
013 TEC	X		X				KRIO	X			STUDENT
014 ELG	X		X				KRIO	X			STUDENT
015 KAS	X		X				MANDINGO	X			STUDENT
016 MAB	X		X				FULA		X		STUDENT
017 MAF	X		X				KRIO		X		STUDENT

Table 1. Main corpus: informants' details.

INFORMANT	GENDER		AGE GROUP				HOME LANGUAGE	SLE TYPE			PROFESSION
INITIALS	FEMALE	MALE	17-25	26-35	36-46	47-60	ETHNOLINGU - ISTIC GROUP	LOWER MESOLANG	UPPER MESOLANG	LOWER ACROLANG	
ZABB	X					X	TEMNE			X	SOCIAL ACTIVIST
BERL	X					X	MENDE			X	POLITICIAN
PEEK		X				X	LIMBA			X	PRIEST
JOSS		X				X	LIMBA			X	POLITICIAN
STEG		X				X	MENDE			X	POLITICIAN

Table 2. Secondary corpus: informants' details.

The two main research questions that have guided our study on SLE phonological realisations are formulated as follows: do SLE phonological tendencies differ from those present in other (West) African varieties of English? Are SLE phonological tendencies determined by language background, social and other variables?

6.3. Phonological tendencies of Sierra Leone English

In this study we provide a general outline of the features that are peculiar to SLE, characteristics which set SLE apart from RP and General American, for example, and tendencies which equally make this variety similar to other varieties within the context of WE/PCE in Africa and the world at large. We refer to RP and General American not for the sake of comparison with SLE, but for international norms of acceptability and for the prestige attached to them. Considering our corpus (interviews of lower and upper mesolang, and, lower acrolang speakers of SLE), not all features treated in this chapter are characteristic of all SLE speakers, which is an indication of the range of phonological variation and possibilities. Hence, the principles of variationist sociolinguistics apply.

As elsewhere, countries where English is acquired through the scholastic

means and consequently used as a Second Language and Official language of administration and of education, a description of the phonological features of Sierra Leone English should aim at phonological tendencies rather than categorical differences with, say, British Standard English, Received Pronunciation (RP) or General American for example (see Wells 1982: 632ff; Ebot 1999; Huber 2008: 848ff; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 118ff). As we observe in the introduction to this chapter, a series of factors –prominent among them the speakers’ L1, the educational level and the desire to sound Sierra Leonean (consciously or not)– may be considered responsible for the display of SLE tendencies (Sierra Leoneans’ linguistic competence in English). These phonological tendencies may be traced to the speakers’ L1 considering the fact that not all phonological features of English are found present in most African languages. A direct influence of the phonological system of Krio (which is spoken by all educated Sierra Leoneans, including our informants), as the lingua franca in Sierra Leone, on the phonological system of English may, to a large extent, be considered a major factor for SLE phonological tendencies as both languages co-exist in all sectors of the country (see Wells 1982: 636). However, it is important to note at this stage that this chapter seeks to describe the phonological features of SLE and not to trace the origin of these phonological tendencies to all the indigenous languages of Sierra Leone, which may well constitute the topic for another thesis. Some of the phonological simplifications that have taken place are seen to have a correlation more with Krio than with the other major languages (Limba, Mende and Temne) in Sierra Leone due mainly to the complex multilingual context in which English is acquired, especially with its linguistic relatedness to Krio. As in other African countries, the educated Sierra Leonean first acquires his/her indigenous language at home, and then one of the major community languages and/or Krio (if none of these are not his/her L1 which depends on where this person grew up) before formally coming into contact with English at school (Fyle 2003: 116; see also Ebot 1999: 168 for a similar situation in Cameroon). In this context, the transfer of phonological features from other languages cannot be said to be categorically obvious, but the learning and/or acquisition of English can be seen to have many *Trojan horses*, especially with

respect to phonology.

Given the linguistic situation in the country, just as in other West African countries, there is both intra- and interindividual variation in SLE due mainly to the multilingual tendencies that the average Sierra Leonean is exposed to; the fact that there are eighteen languages existing side by side, especially the co-existence of Krio and English in urban areas and major cities and towns. Speakers of English in Sierra Leone from any of these language groups consciously or unconsciously betray their linguistic background while they speak English since it is a false assumption to expect educated Sierra Leoneans to speak English as native speakers do (see Schneider 2007: 72). The best we expect from Sierra Leoneans is an approximation of their speech as they substitute the original sound system of their L1 to the L2, English in this case, (or additional language for many) to be internationally intelligible to other speakers of English (see Ebot 1999: 169).

This section, therefore, describes the most prominent SLE phonological tendencies or approximations as obtained from the corpus of the study. In order to do so, and given the World Englishes' and Postcolonial Englishes' contexts within which we analyse our corpus, we have resorted to Wells's (1982: xix, 637) standard lexical sets for the description of vowel sounds evident in SLE. As for the consonant sounds, we use capital letters for some sounds and the usual phonetic symbols for others, following Mesthrie & Bhatt (2008: 126ff). Where necessary, we make use of Standard English (RP) phonological features for the sake of comparison only (and not as yardstick) in our description of SLE phonological tendencies. These standard lexical sets for the description of vowel sounds, as proposed by Wells (1982), refer to "groups of words which tend to share the same vowel, and to the vowel which they share" (Wells 1982: xix; see also Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 119ff). Thus, when we refer to the DRESS vowel, for example, we mean the vowel in "dress", /e/ in RP and /ɛ/ in General American, which is shared by a large group of words. On a similar note, the DRESS words are those keywords that share the same vowel and which are "unmistakable no matter what accent one says them in" (Wells 1982: xix; see also Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 119ff). On this note, we provide Wells (1982: xix)

standard lexical sets below with slight adaptations:

RP	GenAm	Lexical set	As in
ɪ	ɪ	1. KIT	ship, sick, bridge, milk, myth, busy ...
e	ɛ	2. DRESS	step, neck, edge, shelf, friend, ready ...
æ	æ	3. TRAP	tap, back, badge, scalp, hand, cancel ...
ɒ	ɑ	4. LOT	stop, sock, dodge, romp, possible, quality ...
ʌ	ʌ	5. STRUT	cup, suck, budge, pulse, trunk, blood ...
ʊ	ʊ	6. FOOT	put, bush, full, good, look, wolf ...
ɑ:	æ	7. BATH	staff, brass, ask, dance, sample, calf ...
ɒ	ɔ	8. CLOTH	cough, broth, cross, long, Boston ...
ɜ	ɜr	9. NURSE	hurt, hurk, urge, burst, jerk, term ...
i:	i	10. FLEECE	creep, speak, leave, feel, key, people ...
eɪ	eɪ	11. FACE	tape, cake, raid, veil, steak, day ...
ɑ:	ɑ	12. PALM	psalm, father, bra, spa, lager ...
ɔ:	ɔ	13. THOUGHT	taught, sauce, hawk, jaw, broad ...
əʊ	o	14. GOAT	soap, joke, home, know, so, roll ...
u:	u	15. GOOSE	loop, shoot, tomb, mute, huge, view ...
aɪ	aɪ	16. PRICE	ripe, write, arrive, high, try, buy ...
ɔɪ	ɔɪ	17. CHOICE	adroit, noise, join, toy, royal ...
aʊ	aʊ	18. MOUTH	out, house, loud, count, crowd, cow ...
ɪə	ɪ(r	19. NEAR	beer, sincere, fear, beard, serum ...
ɛə	ɛ(r	20. SQUARE	care, fair, pear, where, scarce, vary ...
ɑ:	ɑ(r	21. START	far, sharp, bark, carve, farm, heart ...
ɔ:	ɔ(r	22. NORTH	for, war, short, scorch, born, warm ...
ɔ:	o(r	23. FORCE	four, wore, sport, porch, borne, story ...
ʊə	ʊ(r	24. CURE	poor, tourist, pure, plural, jury ...

Figure 1. Wells's Standard Lexical Sets.

While the above table shows the standard pronunciation of vowel sounds of British and American Englishes, especially those referring to RP and General American, the table below represents the phonological tendencies of vowel sounds of Yoruba speakers of English which can “apply equally to other kinds of African English”, SLE included (Wells 1982: 639). However, a summary of SLE vowels will be provided in subsection 6.3.1 following Wells (1982) (see also Schneider 2007: 72ff; Huber 2008: 849; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 118ff).

KIT	i	FLEECE	i	NEAR	ia
DRESS	ε	FACE	e	SQUARE	ia, εa
TRAP	a	PALM	a	START	a
LOT	ɔ	THOUGHT	ɔ	NORTH	ɔ
STRUT	ɔ	GOAT	o	FORCE	ɔ
FOOT	u	GOOSE	u	CURE	ua, ɔ
BATH	a	PRICE	ai	happy	i
CLOTH	ɔ	CHOICE	ɔi	Letter	a ¹⁴
NURSE	ɔ, a	MOUTH	au	comma	a

Figure 2. Well's Lexical Sets for African Varieties of English.

We do not maintain categorically that we expect to have a similar situation in Sierra Leone from any of the linguistic groups whose members use English like the Yorubas in Nigeria, but we expect Krio's seven vowel system (i, e, ε, a, ɔ, o, u) to have a considerable influence on the vowel system of SLE. The Krio seven vowel system has been referred to earlier to have a major influence on English in Sierra Leone (Jones 1971: 72; Wells 1982: 636). For Jones, the Krio vowel system has more linguistic relationship to African languages than to English:

Because the Krio vowel system is so close to those of many West African languages, there is hardly any vowel change in African borrowings; but the large number of English words have to be adapted to this much more limited vowel system. A single Krio vowel sound thus has to do duty not only for the long and short forms of its counterpart in English but also for a number of other vowel and diphthongal sounds as well (Jones 1971: 72).

Given the above linguistic influence of Krio (as a lingua franca) on the use of English in Sierra Leone and considering the fact that there is enough evidence in current literature to prove that a speaker of an L2 is forced to use the phonological reality of his/her L1 while speaking the L2, a situation referred to as phonological interference (Wells 1982: 638-9; Ebot 1999: 168; Schneider 2007; Huber 2008:

¹⁴ Or other vowels depending often on the spelling (Wells 1982: 637)

848ff; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008, among others), we envisage that SLE vowel system displays some of the features present in other African varieties of English as shown above, especially as it co-exists with Krio, the lingua franca of the country.

Regarding the consonant sounds, although African languages are said “to have a relatively large consonant system” (Wells 1982: 639-40), these consonant sounds do not seem to have a lot of interference, although they show variation in their realisation (Huber 2008: 858ff). Given the difference between English and most African languages with respect to the inventory of speech sounds, even with the English-lexified creoles, Krio in our case, some English sounds are either neutralised, devoiced or replaced as they are articulated by speakers who have other languages (Ebot 1999: 171). We know, for example, that the dental and the postalveolar fricatives (/θ/ /ð/ /ʃ/ /ʒ/ which correspond to TH, SH, and words ending in –SURE) do pose some problems for people acquiring and speaking English as an L2 or as an additional language as these sounds are not evident in many African languages. The scenario in SLE does not seem to be different. Since our corpus is taken from lower and upper mesolang and lower acrolang speakers, what is regarded as initial errors in learning English are avoided and hence what we have in our corpus are educated adult speakers who are confident in the kind of English they speak.

We now give a brief description of the phonological tendencies of SLE beginning with vowel sounds in sub-section 6.3.1 and consonant sounds in sub-section 6.3.2 as proven in the corpus of this study following Wells (1982), Ebot (1999), Huber (2008), Schneider (2007), and Mesthrie & Bhatt (2008).

6.3.1. Description of SLE vowel sounds

As we maintained above, this sub-section provides a general outline for the description of SLE phonological tendencies, a framework on which future studies of the peculiarities of this variety will be based. As such, it is not an in-depth description of the individual vowel system of SLE, but rather one that seeks to give a sketch of the phonological approximations of speakers of English in Sierra Leone.

Considering Mesthrie & Bhatt's (2008: 120) position that most L2 Englishes in Africa and Asia "retain the six-vowel system for short monophthongs or transform it into a five-vowel system" and go as far as to state that the five-vowel system is the main vowel system in all African varieties of English, Krio's seven-vowel system (i, e, ε, a, ɔ, o, u) (see Jones 1971: 72; see also Wells 1982: 636) seems to have a considerable influence on the seven-vowel system of SLE (see Ebot 1999 on Cameroon English phonology; Huber 2008 on Ghanaian English phonology). The coincidence between Krio and SLE regarding the seven-vowel system is a result of either the phonological influence of the former based on analogy or the monophthongization of the FACE and GOAT vowels realised as /e/ and /o/ respectively in West African Englishes (Wells 1982: xix, 637; see also Huber 2008: 849). Essentially, therefore, SLE, like other L2 varieties in West Africa, neutralises and simplifies RP length distinctions, and the vowel system results in homophonous vowel sounds of minimal pairs (see Huber 2008: 849). That notwithstanding, we agree with Mesthrie & Bhatt (2008: 120) that the schwa, /ə/, is marginal and that length distinction is not a characteristic of L2 varieties of English. SLE is not an exception to the fact that long vowels are realised as short vowels (Ebot 1999; Huber 2008; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008). The results from our findings from both corpuses, as far as the vowel system is concerned, confirm the hypothesis that (West) African Englishes, including SLE, has a reduced vowel system as we show below. Almost all our informants, 99%, both male and female participants produce the vowel sounds based on Wells's (1982) and Jones's (1971: 72) initial findings. We, therefore, provide a summary of SLE conversational phonological tendencies of vowel sounds observed from our informants in the main corpus as well as those from the secondary corpus:

KIT	i	FLEECE	i	NEAR	ia
DRESS	ε	FACE	e	SQUARE	ia
TRAP	a	PALM	a	START	a
LOT	ɔ	THOUGHT	ɔ	NORTH	ɔ
STRUT	ɔ	GOAT	o	FORCE	ɔ
FOOT	u	GOOSE	u	CURE	ɔ
BATH	a	PRICE	ai	HappY	i
CLOTH	ɔ	CHOICE	ɔi	LettER	a
NURSE	ɔ	MOUTH	au	CommA	a

Figure 3. SLE phonological tendencies of vowel sounds

6.3.1.1. Short monophthongs

Based on the summary of SLE phonological tendencies of vowel sounds above, following Wells' (1982) lexical sets, the short monophthongs become:

KIT = i

DRESS = ε

TRAP = a

LOT = ɔ

STRUT = ɔ

FOOT = u

There is a merger between the LOT and STRUT vowels.

Here again, almost all our informants, 99%, produce these vowels as shown above. This is equally confirmed from the secondary corpus.

6.3.1.2. Long monophthongs

Given the fact that vowel length is not a characteristic feature in most L2 varieties of English (Huber 2008: 849; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 122), SLE, like other L2 varieties in Africa, does not show contrary features. Hence, the long monophthongs become short for most of our informants:

FLEECE = i

GOOSE = u

THOUGHT = ɔ

NURSE = ɔ

BATH = a

Apart from the merger in THOUGHT and NURSE, as elsewhere in Africa and Asia, there is no distinction between KIT and FLEECE, FOOT and GOOSE and LOT and THOUGHT vowels.

6.3.1.3. Diphthongs

Given the phonological tendencies of our informants, the diphthongs in BrE and GenAm are realised in SLE as follows. We observe this in almost all our informants, both male and female:

FACE = e

PRICE = ai

MOUTH = au

CHOICE = ɔi

GOAT = o

SQUARE = ia

NEAR = ia

CURE = ʊ

Essentially, the vowels in FACE and GOAT realised as diphthongs in BrE and General American become short vowels in SLE just as in other L2 varieties as shown above (see Ebot 1999; Huber 2008; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008). The CURE vowel is equally shortened. We also see the SQUARE and NEAR vowels being merged.

6.3.1.4. *Unstressed vowels*

The unstressed vowels in happY, lettER and commA are realised as

happY = i

lettER = a

commA = a

Without exception, all our informants, both male and female, produce the unstressed vowels as shown above.

6.3.2. **Description of SLE consonant sounds**

Whereas the vowel sounds show variation and diversification in their realisation in Africa in general, and, as shown above, in SLE, the consonant sounds do not pose a major difficulty as regards mutual intelligibility. However, some of these consonant sounds tend to prove as linguistic *Trojan horses* although they do not cause major discrepancies vis-à-vis intelligibility with the standard norms in the UK and the USA. We take a look at those consonant sounds which we find peculiar in SLE from our corpus.

6.3.2.1. Fricatives

As in other L2 varieties of English in Africa, the interdental fricatives, /θ, ð/, are replaced by the alveolar stops in SLE in initial position (in words like *think*, *that*, *thanks*), intermediate positions (in words like *nothing*, *something*) and final position (in words like *mouth*, *with*, *bath*, *birth*) (see also Ebot 1999: 171; Huber 2008: 858-9; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 126). This consonantal replacement is due either to Krio's lack of interdental fricatives or to the lack of the same in the other indigenous languages of Sierra Leone. Examples given by Ebot (1999: 171-2) on Cameroon English phonology regarding this type of consonantal replacement also hold true for SLE. There seems to be no difference in the production of the interdental fricatives and the alveolar stops which become homophonous in the following words:

three and *tree*

think and *tink*

things and *tings*

this and *dis*

though and *dough*

bath and *bat*

birth and *bat*

something and *sometin*

with and *wit*

faith and *fate*

We present a chart with information about the informants who pronounce like this:

GENDER		AGE GROUP				SLE TYPE		
F	M	17-25	26-35	36-46	47-60	LOWER MESOLANG	UPPER MESOLANG	LOWER ACROLANG
70%	67%	67%	67%	100%	50%	75%	67%	63%

Out of a universe of ten female, from both corpuses, seven replace the interdental fricatives with alveolar stops in almost all positions –initial, medial and final. We

equally observe that eight out of the twelve male from both corpuses do the same. Regarding this social factor, we have more than 60% of the observed SLE users/speakers replacing these consonant sounds. As for the age variable, 67% of both the seventeen to twenty-five and twenty-six to thirty-five age groups do this as well, two out of three and eight out of twelve informants respectively; 100% for the thirty-six to forty-six age group and 50% percent for the forty-seven to sixty age group, one informant and three out of six respectively, replace these consonant sounds as well. It is equally interesting to note that regarding language type, it is observed that 75% of the lower mesolang, 67% of the upper mesolang and 63% of the lower acrolang speakers replace these sounds. In sum, the results shown for these sounds demonstrate not only the influence of Krio on English (see Jones 1971), but also confirm the findings of other researchers on the different African varieties of English (see Ebot 1999; Huber 2008; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008). Besides, as Mufwene (2001: 106) observes, the propagation of these features goes from generation to generation. All this confirms the relevance of language contact as an ecological factor in language evolution and indigenisation as important social and linguistic variables.

6.3.2.2. *Nasals*

The progressive suffix *-ing* becomes /n/ in SLE just as in other L2 varieties in Africa (see Huber 2008: 858; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 128). All of our informants as well as those observed in the secondary corpus realise the *-ing* suffix as /n/.

6.3.2.3. *Liquids*

With regard to this group of consonants, our corpus does not give sufficient information on /r – l/ alternation, for example, which is evident in some African varieties of English and which may be found in some basilang speakers of English in Sierra Leone (see Huber 2008: 860-1; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 128 for examples from other varieties). However, linking /r/ is rare or absent in connected speech just as in other L2 varieties of English in Africa (Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 128).

6.3.3. Conclusions

The phonological tendencies or features of SLE presented above confirm our two research questions. As for the first research question, whether SLE phonological features are similar to other (West) African varieties, the differences between our findings and those of other researchers on (West) African is not great. SLE shares most of the characteristic features on phonology evident in other L2 varieties of English in (West) Africa and elsewhere. Considering the question we asked about the relevance of the NS phonetic spellings to present-day SLE in 4.4.2.1, our findings about the current SLE phonological tendencies have confirmed that there is indeed a correlation. Current SLE, just as eighteenth-century SLE, shows: (a) the lack of mid-vowels /ə, ɜ, ʌ/, (b) the realisation of the velar nasal as /ŋ/ in words that end in *-ing*, and (c) a non-rhotic nature. An in-depth descriptive study on the phonological tendencies of the ethno-linguistic groups of speakers of English in Sierra Leone (individual indigenous languages like Fula, Limba, Mende, Krio, Temne, etc.) would probably reveal more interesting results.

Regarding the second research question, it should be noted that language background is not a very strong variable for the case of Sierra Leone English at this stage. Home language and ethnolinguistic background do not seem to profile our informants' English as every user or speaker of English in Sierra Leone speaks Krio as either his/her L1 or as L2 and it is the lingua franca in Sierra Leone. Inasmuch as other Sierra Leonean indigenous languages may be influencing SLE (a fact which cannot be disputed especially as the author is native of Sierra Leone), the greater influence comes from Krio as Jones (1971) has shown. Based on our findings, the educational level of the user/speaker of SLE does not seem to condition the phonological tendencies described, even though the higher the level of education and exposure to use of English, the higher the level of proficiency. This factor correlates with the Krio features that are transferred to English. Mufwene's position (2001: 106 cited in the introduction to this chapter) seems to hold sway in Sierra Leone. The younger generation are perpetuating the norms that have been established by earlier generations of SLE.

6.4. The morphosyntax of SLE

This section provides an overview of the structural features of SLE. Our approach is descriptive rather than prescriptive since we offer insights into the particularities of SLE morphosyntax at the Noun Phrase (NP) and Verb Phrase (VP) levels. Given the gamut of features which characterise L2 Englishes, SLE structural properties follow WE/PCE theoretical framework (Huber & Dako 2004; Schneider 2007; Huber 2008; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008) which we cannot outrightly label as “non-standard” considering the sociohistorical and linguistic ecological factors which explain their emergence and evolution, conditioned by psycholinguistic realities different from their L1 counterparts (Schneider 2007: 82ff; Mufwene 2001, 2015).

Traditional prescriptive analysis would be tempted to view such L2 features as “unsystematic and evidence of a failure to master the TL system” (Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 47). However, when we consider the fact that L2 varieties were exported to exploitation colonies in nonstandard forms and transmitted through the educational system with evolutionary patterns different from L1 varieties, prescriptivists’ views become untenable (Schneider 2007: 84ff; Mufwene 2001, 2002, 2009, 2015). Therefore, it is important to make certain issues clear at this stage. We avoid the use of the terms “mistake” and “deviation” in our description of SLE peculiarities. While the former is seen as “a slip of the tongue or out of ignorance of a rule in the dialect concerned” (Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 46), the latter, “counts as a mistake from the viewpoint of Std Eng, but which is a regular feature of the New English, used by all, or at least a majority of speakers” (Kachru 1983 cited by Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 46). Taking these viewpoints into consideration coupled with the fact that a whole new cognitive subsystem is involved in speaking English in Sierra Leone and other L2 settings, we opt for the term ‘features’ in this section just as we have used tendencies in our phonological description of SLE above. This new cognitive subsystem is due to the fact that users/speakers of English in Sierra Leone have (an)other language(s) and this(these) language(s) is(are) not switched off while the individual speaks English. Hence, the structural features which SLE show “constitute elements of the feature pool from which emerging PCEs select their distinctive grammatical

patterns” (Schneider 2007: 85; see also Mufwene 2001, 2015). Sociohistorical diffusion and evolutionary pattern determine whether or not these structural features are “inherited or coined afresh” (Schneider 2007: 85). Regarding structural nativisation, Schneider’s view seems tenable: “innovations are more interesting, as they represent the immediate outcomes of contact situations and dynamic processes of language emergence” (Schneider 2007: 85). English, through its speakers, is in constant contact with indigenous languages in Sierra Leone. Therefore, we expect both the linguistic and social context in which English is used to be reflected in the speech community through the spread of these new structural features from one speaker to another as Schneider (2007) puts it clearly: “through increased frequency of usage such patterns then become continuously more deeply “entrenched” and get established in the minds of an increasingly large number of speakers” (Schneider 2007: 85-6). What begins as a preference or “error” becomes strongly established with time, then turns into regular usage and, eventually, a stable grammatical pattern for the speech community. It normally takes a long time for individual innovations to spread and get firmly established as group habit and then become entrenched in the speech community (Schneider 2007: 86).

Following Schneider (2007), and, Mesthrie & Bhatt (2008), we now give a description of some of the morphosyntactic features of SLE at the NP and VP levels. These features will be juxtaposed with the description of the structural features of other varieties in the sub-region (for example, Huber & Dako 2004). Most of the examples given in the different sub-sections are samples taken from the main corpus and a few from the secondary one.

6.4.1. The noun phrase (NP)

6.4.1.1. Articles

The use of the definite (the) and indefinite (a, an) articles has been regarded as one of the most significant features that characterises WE/PCE (Huber & Dako 2004: 859; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 47). SLE use of articles, like other WE/PCE, provides interesting examples.

a. Singular non-specific expressions need no article

- (1) At times, I go to \emptyset beach (007)
- (2) (I have to laundry) ... go to \emptyset beach (015)

(1) and (2) above demonstrate a special type of article omission. It shows that in WE/PCE, singular non-specific expressions, *beach* in our case, need no article. Some of our informants and those observed in the secondary corpus show this as well. This is also reported in Mesthrie & Bhatt (2008: 50).

b. Indefinite articles used in a plural form

In (3) and (4), it is shown that the indefinite article, *a*, is followed by plural nouns, *kids* and *circumstances*. These examples are found in both lower mesolang and lower acrolang SLE speakers. However, (4) can also be read as an unnecessary insertion of the indefinite article.

- (3) When I was **a** little **kids** or now? (001)
- (4) I went to school through the support of my mother at **a** very difficult **circumstances** (ZABB II)

c. Article omission

A series of article omissions are noted from (5) to (10) and these come from various levels of SLE speakers. They cut across the lower-mesolang to the acrolang speakers of SLE. (5), (6), (7), and (10) show the omission of the definite article before specific or known nouns. In (8) and (9), the indefinite article, *a*, is omitted by analogy with Krio. Both sentences can be rendered in Krio as: Na mi klos frɛn/padi (He is \emptyset close friend to me); (Las wik) wi ɔganaiz lig na eria ((The last weekend) we organise \emptyset league in the area).

- (5) When I was approached by \emptyset organisers of this organisation (BERL I)
- (6) I entered \emptyset university \emptyset 2008 (001)
- (7) After few days, \emptyset monkey too, his own food has already finished (005)
- (8) He is \emptyset close friend to me (009)
- (9) (The last weekend) we organise \emptyset league in the area (009)
- (10) There are lots and lots of things that \emptyset university need to put in place (010)

d. Article insertion

(11) through (21) show the insertion of article both definite and indefinite, where they are not required, a phenomenon we can also find in other WE/PCE. (9) above is also an example to note.

- (11) ... a big shop where I will be selling in **a** bulk quantity to my customer (002)
- (12) I have **a** breakfast (003)
- (13) IT is **an** Information Technology (004)
- (14) Probably if not in this country, in **the** Europe world (004)
- (15) ... he had **a** food (005)
- (16) (Me myself) I don't have **a** food (005)
- (17) I have **a** food there (005)
- (28) My mother came from **the** Port Loko District (007)
- (19) My profession is **a** student. I am also a tailor. (008)
- (20) My profession is **a** student (009)
- (21) I go to my shop and do **a** work (008)

e. Interchangeability of articles

(22) to (25) below show how the indefinite articles, *a* and *an*, can be used interchangeably in WE/PCE. Given the fact that speaker 008 is narrating a story to people that he is well conversant with, one would expect that *a son* would have been *his son*. The interesting point that can be made here is that an indefinite article can be used as a possessive pronoun (*a = his*).

- (22) I saw **a** old man coming towards my house with a son shot in the belly (007)
- (23) I decided to take **a** son to hospital (007)
- (24) I live in **an** house (011)
- (25) I have **a** NGO (015)

6.4.1.2 Number

Number has been seen as one of the categories of the features of WEs/PCE which indicates a great level of variability, especially in the marking of plurals in nouns (Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 52). SLE shows the following tendencies:

a. Non-use of plural -s

(26) to (31) show the non-use of plural –s where expected in SLE.

- (26) I will commend **Sierra Leonean** for accepting peace (007)
- (27) Upon completion will you come back to support **Sierra Leonean** that are interested in studying English? (007)
- (28) I did so many **thing** (011)
- (29) The people who are **victim** of this crime are innocent **civilian**, women and children (ZABB I)
- (30) These are the 12 **country** (ZABB II)
- (31) I am not good at telling **story** (002)

b. Regularisation of zero plurals and other exceptions of English

Just as in other WE/PCE, SLE demonstrates the regularisation of zero plurals in English.

- (32) The **mens** have failed us (011)

6.4.1.3. Gender

While gender in English has a minor role and does not seem to have the structural complication that other languages have, there seems to be an indiscriminate way of using gender in WE/PCE. This is the case in (33), (34) and (35) below. An animate subject, *spider*, is given a male gender in (33). A male speaker in (34) confuses the co-reference object pronoun for *my sister* with *him*. *It* is used indiscriminately in (35) instead of *her*.

- (33) **Spider** ... **he** gave out **its** webs so that **he** will be able to **ø** access to the room (005)
- (34) (**my sister**) ... go and fetch water for **him** (008)
- (35) (They came inside and they meet **her** and my mother) ... And they

catch **it** and they go with **it** (015)

6.4.1.4. *Pronouns*

WE/PCE are reported to show interesting cases of the use of pronouns. Spoken SLE shows instances of pronominal apposition of the *me I* type, although in (36) we have *Me myself I* whose source and the entire sentence can be traced to Krio (**Mi sɛf sɛf** a nɔ gɛ it).

(36) **Me myself I** don't have **a** food (005)

6.4.2. The verb phrase (VP)

Considering our corpus and other sources (see, for example, Huber & Dako 2004; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 58ff), New & World Englishes encode and use the basic tenses differently from their L1 counterparts. Thus, for instance, there is a lot of variation in the past and present as the examples show zero marking where marking is necessary.

6.4.2.1. *Tense*

WE/PCE encode the tenses, especially the basic three tenses (past, present and future) differently from other English varieties (Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 58). However, the past and present tenses show more variability than say the future. SLE is not an exception to this fact. The following are the features that SLE show:

a. Zero marking for past tense

(37) through (47) show zero marking for past tense. The contexts in which the statements below were produced were through narratives. Informants were asked to narrate events that happened in the past some of which left unforgettable impression in their lives. These examples follow the same pattern found in most WE/PCE where the conversational historic present show zero marking for the past tense. It should be noted that these examples come mostly from the lower and upper mesolang language groups. We have only one example from the lower acrolang group for this structural feature. Regarding gender, there is almost a balance here: six of the cited examples come from women and five from men.

This ratio, though, does not mean that this structural feature is more common in women than in men.

- (37) I **attend** the Boxton Primary School (002)
- (38) I **do** my SS1 there (002)
- (39) Later on I **switch** over to Bo (002)
- (40) When I **wake** up I ate some rice (002)
- (41) I **find** it so difficult (004)
- (42) I **live** there for up to five years (005)
- (43) I **live** there for two years (008)
- (44) He **is** close friend to me. (009)
- (45) The second goal **is** a penalty (009)
- (46) They **rape** the women (012)
- (47) The time they **catch** my sister (015)

b. Adverbials make past tense marking redundant

In (48) to (53), SLE, like other WE/PCE, follows the same pattern for not marking past tense where an adverbial has already announced past tense reference (see Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 59).

- (48) **By that time**, I **don't know** people in Freetown (004)
- (49) **The last weekend**, we **organise** league in the area where we **play** football and we **become** the victor (009)
- (50) **During the war**, there **is** no transportation. (011)
- (51) **Yesterday**, I **take** my shower, **eat**, **sleep** ... (014)
- (52) **During the war** they **catch** my sister (015)
- (53) On my return, the night **we are sleeping** my father **decide to ask us to wake**. And **we all sit** down. (008)

c. Sequence of tenses

When several clauses combine in one sentence, SLE, like some other varieties around the world, shows a diversity of tense combinations. We may find cases where the subordinate clause is marked in the past tense, and the main clause

remains unmarked as in (54), (55), (62) and (63) (see Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 59), or vice versa, as in (58) or (59). When the clauses are coordinated, if the first clause is in the past, the next one is unmarked (56) and (57).

- (54) When I **heard** the message that my mother **is** dead (001)
- (55) When I **went** home I **take** a rest (002)
- (56) From there I **went** back home and **sleep** (002)
- (57) From there I **came** and I **have** a bath (008)
- (58) There **was** a ball (that was passed to me) which I **don't** even **consider** it a successful ball (009)
- (59) I just **made** an attempt when I **make** a shot, I got a goal (009)
- (60) I **believed** if we all **come** together (011)
- (61) He **started** one project, they **don't finish** it and **go** to another (012)
- (62) When I **asked** that I **want** to visit they **refuse** (ZABB II)
- (63) When I **lost** him I **feel** the pain (009)
- (64) The place **was dark** and **we are having** a red light (008)
- (65) My aunty **who is sleeping**, she just **fell** because a stray bullet **go and pick** him (008)

6.4.2.2. Aspect

As in tense, aspect is another area that shows variability in WE/PCE. SLE shows evidences of variability in aspect.

a. Perfective have + EN semantically misplaced

Although the semantics of perfective *have* + EN in our corpus does not seem to be similar with other WE/PCE, aspect is slightly different since it is not always marked with *have* + EN. In (66) there is a lack of subject – auxiliary agreement. The main verb is zero marked (67), (68) and (69). In (70), *three years now* seems to signal the perfective aspect of the whole sentence since we cannot deduce that from the zero marked verb.

- (66) Our village **have** already been burnt by the rebel (001)
- (67) Nothing has **shock** me (003)
- (68) We have **develop** the global legal framework (ZABB II)

(69) 1700 women had been **rape** the previous year (ZABB II)

(70) I **live** there three years now (015)

b. Variation on past habitual

Past habitual *used to* in SLE, like in other WE/PCE, is non-completive as “*use(d) to* signifies past habitual extending into the present” (Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 63). Thus, (71) and (72) express non-completive past habitual that continues to the present.

(71) I **use to come** to college. (008)

(72) On a normal day, when I wake up in the morning I **use to go** to my gyming school (008)

6.4.2.3. Modality: semantic differences in the use of modals

The semantics of modals as used in WE/PCE expresses a mood that does not clearly denote “the speaker’s orientation and attitude towards the action of the verb” (Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 63). *Would* replaces present tense in (73). The traditional function of *would* appearing in hypothetical contexts is not what the speaker intends here considering the use of *sometimes* as a present habitual marker. There is a reduplicated modal in (74) (see Schneider 2007: 83). (79) gives another interesting modal semantics: the present progressive replaces *will* +inf.

(73) Sometimes the lectures **would be** so frustrating (004)

(74) I **can able to take** care of myself (004)

(75) I **should wanted** to ask you a question (004)

(76) Spider ... he gave out its webs so that he **will be able to** access to the room (005)

(77) Whenever my wife **will be** pregnant, we **leave** Sierra Leone (006)

(78) If you commit this crime, this is what **is happening** (ZABB I)

6.4.2.4. Number

Given the impoverished nature of number in English, it shows a lot of variation in many varieties around the world, especially WE/PCE (Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 65-66). Discussions of this category are centred on the present tense as the –s ending

marks only 3rd person sg and present tense (Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 66).

a. Present tense 3rd person singular with zero forms

SLE, like other WEs/PCE, alternates 3rd person singular with zero forms as shown from (79) to (81). However, (80) may have happened due to consonant cluster reduction in connected speech.

(79) Someone **come** for a business (001)

(80) It **make** sure that they know that what is being happening is a crime
(ZABB I)

(81) It also **help** to connect women from one part of the country to another
(ZABB I)

b. –s suffix for non-third person singular for singular and –s for plural

In this category, SLE likewise adds –s to verbs with plural subjects as we see in (82) to (86). In (86) 1st person singular takes –s on verb.

(82) Some people **comes** and do not even know how to talk English (001)

(83) We don't **wants** anyone to bring us down (011)

(84) The people who **gives** us the information are targeted (ZABB I)

(85) To help my colleagues who **does not have** knowledge (008)

(86) (Well, I am doing that because) in future I **wants** to be a lawyer. I
wants to do law (011)

6.4.2.5. Passive be

While some varieties including SLE delete passive *be* (Mesthrie and Bhatt 2008: 69), as in (87), *be* in passive structures in SLE can also be followed by an unmarked verb as we see in (88) below:

(87) We \emptyset made to understand that the rebel are in control of the entire city
(007)

(88) Drugs cannot **be steal** (014)

6.4.2.6. *Novel forms: change of part of speech*

SLE introduces an innovation which like other WEs/PCE seems to “suggest the difficulties that first or subsequent generations of learners of English in colonial settings have had in mastering” the language (Mesthrie and Bhatt 2008: 71). (89), (90) and (92) marked verbs in the past while the speakers express habitual present. In (91), the first form of the verb in the first clause is not only marked in the past, but the same verb in the second clause which is preceded by *to* is also marked. The preposition in (92) is used in a novel form and (93) equally exhibits a novel form in the use of *from* followed by a verb.

(89) I **worked** here during the day (004)

(90) I **played** for different churches, but my church that I **played** for is WAMC (010)

(91) And **achieved** what I **want to achieved** (011)

(92) **In** the weekend, I **practised** my music (010)

(93) I got a lot of inspiration and support **from listen** to BBC, **listen to** VOA, **listen to** the French radio (ZABB I)

6.5. Conclusion

Our focus in this chapter has been to identify and describe peculiar phonological and structural features of SLE. Identifying and describing features of any particular variety of WE/PCE means highlighting the processes of indigenisation which involve looking at sociohistorical facts of the relocation of the English language to that particular ecology. On this note, we correlate some of the structural features of the NS variety to current SLE. These include: (a) zero-marking for past tense; (b) zero forms of third person singular, and (c) the use of *-s* suffix for non-third person singular and for plural (see subsection 4.4.2.1.). These NS – SLE correlations apart, SLE features which we have discussed in this chapter equally follow the trend in the literature of WE/PCE.

This chapter has been able to give a general outline of the current tendencies of SLE considering some of the phonological and structural features of the variety. From a theoretical perspective, the chapter answered two basic questions: the causes of WE/PCE features and the indigenisation processes of the

features. We have identified some of the phonological tendencies, the vowels and some consonant sounds, as produced by users/speakers of SLE in Freetown. We correlate the existence of some of these features to some social variables. One of our findings in this chapter is that Krio's phonological features, the vowels and some consonant sounds, are a major influence to SLE. However, some of these phonological renditions of SLE are also evident in other varieties in (West) Africa and other parts of the world. With regard to the structural features, most aspects that are evident in the NP and VP structures point to an already entrenched language variety. Some of our findings cut across language and educational levels.

In sum, therefore, the phonological and structural features which we have discussed in this chapter should not be labelled as 'wrong' or 'substandard'. In our description of SLE, an L2 variety of English, we have outlined structural nativisation processes and the causes of the structural features and how they have become indigenised or entrenched in the Sierra Leonean linguistic landscape. The phonological tendencies of SLE are a pointer to where the variety is used and who its speakers are. These are ecologically authentic characteristic features which identify Sierra Leoneans as capable of moulding a variety of English within the context of World Englishes and Postcolonial Englishes. These features should also be seen as the evolutionary trajectories of the existence and emergence of English in Sierra Leone. Hence, the features tell how long, historically speaking, English has been in Sierra Leone and with Sierra Leoneans.

Chapter 7

Final conclusions: findings and prospects for the future

7.0. Introduction

This study has provided an insight into the social and linguistic effects of the English language in West Africa in general and in Sierra Leone in particular, through the Freetown Settlement. Some of the literature we have examined on the English language in the five English speaking West African countries (Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, the Gambia and Sierra Leone) and Cameroon indicate that the exportation of a language to another country means not only the adaptation of that language to the linguistic repertoire of its new users, but also to the sociocultural realities of the new environment. Therefore, an account of sociohistorical factors should precede any linguistic study of Postcolonial or World Englishes. This thesis adopts such a sociohistorical and ecological theoretical framework.

We have devised this study as a kind of roadmap that has helped us to find our way to present-day Krio and SLE. Our sociohistorical and ecological journey (Mufwene 2001; Schneider 2007) has taken us to the field of the restructured varieties of English that the settlers, especially the Nova Scotians, brought to the Freetown Settlement (see Jones 1971; Fyfe (ed.) 1991; Holm 1989; Huber 1999, 2008; Montgomery 1999; see also chapter four of this study) and, obviously, to the development of these varieties into Krio. A revisiting of precolonial and colonial Freetown has been determinant in the understanding of current SLE features. But, what scholarly contributions has this study provided?

7.1. Findings

1. First and foremost, this study is a contribution to current research going on in different countries on WE/PCE. Our journey through the five English speaking (West) African countries and Cameroon has provided us with facts about the linguistic effects of the exportation of a language to a new territory, its existence, evolution and consequent indigenisation.

Research on their linguistic features has equipped us with solid orientation on how to pursue similar studies of and on SLE. Considering the fact that Sierra Leone is a white spot in this academic field of study, this thesis has put together and analysed the few scattered articles on English in Sierra Leone or SLE. We have also proven that the nomenclatures of L2 varieties of English as “World English(es)”, “New English(es)” and “Postcolonial English(es)” are fitting: the names simply imply the historical developments of these varieties which correspond to the ecological settings where they are used. Rather than look at them solely from a current linguistic perspective, we should correlate their histories with their present state. The phonological and structural descriptions in chapter six and the correlations which we make from the analyses of Montgomery (1999) and Huber (2004) of the NS letters is another pointer to the fact that our interpretation of Schneider’s (2007) “Dynamic Model” to explain the sociohistorical development of SLE is in place. SLE, like other PCE, should be studied from a historical and ecological perspective.

2. Within the (West) African context, our findings have provided answers to our initial questions in the introduction to the study: the varieties brought to the Freetown Settlement were non-standard or restructured English varieties; the settlement provided the basis for the development of West African English and the exportation of some of the Pidgin and Creole languages spoken today in (West) Africa (Nigeria, Cameroon, The Gambia and Guinea Equatorial). The Freetown Settlement did not only help in the study of African languages, the spread of Christianity and Western civilization to other (West) African countries through Fourah Bay College, but equally helped shape and spread West African English and some of the Pidgin and Creole languages that we have today in the region (Mazrui 1975; Holm 1989). Looking at the fact that over one thousand African languages existed and were equally studied in Freetown both for religious propagation and linguistic studies (Hair 1987), and that some of these languages have left some remarkable impressions on Krio, this study also shows that there is a SLE which has long been in existence on all language levels.

3. Considering the main focus of the study, to provide a sociohistorical and ecological perspective that may explain the development of SLE, we have compiled scattered information on and about SLE in a single study, some of which can only be consulted on spot due to their limited accessibility. Besides, scholars of WE/PCE interested in correlating the historical developments of different varieties now have an opportunity of referring to SLE evolution thanks to this thesis. Out of the lack of linguistic and socio-cultural harmony in Freetown, this ecological setting has provided not only Krio, but also its sister languages in The Gambia, Cameroon and Guinea Equatorial.
4. Our findings confirm and identify features that can be traced to the NS variety; besides the same features can also be identified in other PCE varieties in (West) Africa. As this study has shown, we cannot divorce a language from the society that uses it (Romaine 2000; Meyerhoff and Nagy (eds. 2008), especially when this society is the one settled in Freetown, a place which received a diverse group of people from different linguistic backgrounds that eventually became the Krio ethnolinguistic group, the lingua franca of the country. Hence, the claim that social factors must precede linguistic factors in any survey of the linguistic outcome of a language contact situation has been proven in the study (Thomason and Kaufman's 1988; Hickey (ed.) 2010). Through the study of Freetown's sociohistorical and sociolinguistic situation, particularly that dealing with the NS variety, we have been able to come across literature and findings that can be juxtaposed with the current SLE features, especially in phonology and morphosyntax. On this note, this study also proves that the English used in Sierra Leone reflects cultural and linguistic peculiarities not only because it is in contact with Sierra Leonean languages and culture, but because English was exported to Sierra Leone and it is used as an optional or additional language to express typical socio-cultural, -political and -economic realities of the country (Jenkins 2003; Holm 1989; Huber 1999, 2004; Fyfe (ed.) 1991; Montgomery 1999; Mufwene 2001, 2009, 2015; Schneider 2007).

5. The view that the Settlers in Freetown spoke Standard English and that the English language used in present day Sierra Leone is a British variety are contradictory in themselves. The NS letters in Fyfe (ed. 1991) and the analyses of Montgomery (1999) and Huber (2004) and the other studies connecting Gullah to Krio (Hackert and Huber 2007, for example) all attest to the fact that a diachronic study should precede a synchronic study. Evidently, while the people who were settled in Freetown were not native speakers of English but people who spoke some restructured varieties of English (Holm 1989; Huber 1999, 2004; Fyfe ed. 1991; Montgomery 1999), the successive generations of these settlers cannot be said to speak a native variety of English. Equally so, considering the influence which an L1 may have over the acquisition of an L2, particularly if acquired at a later date, or learnt imperfectly due either to the lack of the culture that complements that language or through inappropriate learning and teaching methodology presupposes the fact that the English spoken by other Sierra Leoneans can be influenced from both their socio-cultural and linguistic backgrounds coupled with the absence of an English culture in Sierra Leone. Therefore, other Sierra Leoneans with ethnolinguistic L1 languages other than Krio who acquired English in Sierra Leone should also not be expected to speak English as the British, Americans or Canadians do.

7.2. Further research

Since the findings obtained in this study are socially and geographically restricted, a future line of research could include a full sociohistorical and ecological analyses of SLE in Sierra Leone, in general, and Freetown, in particular. A linguistic description of SLE in the country as a whole could determine the peculiar features that may set the English spoken/used in Freetown apart from other varieties used in the country. Such a study may also show similarities that SLE shares with other L2 varieties of English. This may take one of two forms: (a) a study based on the educated speakers of the individual ethnolinguistic groups in the country, and/or (b) a comparative study of SLE based on regions. These studies should precede codification and standardisation efforts.

Researchers interested in sociolinguistics, creole studies and contact linguistics might also do a comparative study of (a) SLE and Krio, and/or (b) SLE, Krio and any one of the other indigenous languages of Sierra Leone in order to pinpoint cross-linguistic influences on all language levels.

Other lines of research might equally include the problems of teaching English in an English-based creole environment like Sierra Leone (for the applied linguists) and the issue of language policy in a society with multilingual tendencies (for language policy planners).

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7. Introducción General

1.0. Información básica

La República de Sierra Leona es un pequeño estado de África Occidental que cuenta aproximadamente con seis millones doscientos mil habitantes. Tiene fronteras con la República de Guinea, en el noroeste y en el noreste, y con la República de Liberia en el este y en el sudeste. La costa atlántica constituye su frontera occidental. De forma casi redonda, su división administrativa cuenta con doce distritos y cuatro regiones con sus respectivas capitales: la Región Norte (Makeni), la Oriental (Kenema), la Sur (Bo), y la Región Oeste (Freetown). Esta última ciudad es asimismo la capital nacional. El 27 de abril de 1961 el país proclamó su Independencia de la Corona Británica.



Mapa 1. Mapa de Sierra Leona (extraído el 24/10/2015)
(<http://www.ezilon.com/maps/africa/sierra-leone-road-maps.html>)

7.0. Historia de Freetown

Por desgracia, no disponemos de muchos datos sobre la historia de África Occidental antes de la llegada de los colonizadores. El topónimo "Sierra Leona" aparece por primera vez en 1462, en las crónicas del navegador portugués Pedro da Cintra. Así, la fundación real de la ciudad de Freetown puede haber sido anterior a 1787, cuando se produjo el asentamiento de esclavos emancipados procedentes de América y del Caribe en la península. No obstante, el paso definitivo para su consolidación como núcleo de importancia fue la decisión de la Compañía de Sierra Leona, empresa monopolista, de crear un lugar destinado a "reubicar" a los esclavos libres. Con esta idea, adquirieron el terreno perteneciente a la tribu Temné, ya asentada en esta zona. El primer nombre de la localidad en la lengua temné fue "*Romarong*"¹⁵

¹⁵ "*Romarong*" significa en temné 'a place where people cry' ('lugar donde la gente llora'), 'the place of the wailers' ('el lugar de los llorones') (*Guardian Weekly*, Septiembre 16-22, 2005: 15). Nuestra hipótesis apunta a que recibió este nombre por ser una zona de constantes

En 1787 los esclavos africanos emancipados llegaron desde Inglaterra para establecer la colonia que se convertiría después en Sierra Leona; a ellos se unieron más tarde otros hablantes criollos de América del Norte y Jamaica (Holm 1989: 411; trad.).

Los llamados "Black Poor" de Inglaterra constituyeron el primer contingente de pobladores, pero padecieron numerosas enfermedades y entraron directamente en conflicto con la población temné local. En 1792 llegó una segunda oleada de repatriados constituida por los "Nova Scotians", seguidos, a partir de 1800 por los Cimarrones ("Maroons", esclavos fugitivos) de Jamaica, que trajeron consigo una variedad reestructurada del inglés. Las migraciones mencionadas fueron el resultado de la abolición de la esclavitud en el Imperio Británico a través del "British Abolition Act", que eliminó la trata pero creó, al mismo tiempo, el problema de buscar un destino para millares de esclavos emancipados. Como consecuencia, más de 50000 esclavos fueron enviados a Freetown entre 1808 y 1864 (véase Wyse 1989: 1-2; Sengova 2006: 179 citado por Oyétádé y Luke 2007: 123; cf Huber 1999). La ciudad creció así como estirpe de la diversidad lingüística y cultural de estos nuevos pobladores y de los habitantes originarios, lo que dio pie a la creación de una comunidad nueva. También es posible señalar la importancia de la educación y la civilización occidentales, dado que Freetown fue la primera región de África occidental en adoptarlas, cuyo emblema más visible fue el *Fourah Bay College*, así como otras instituciones educativas creadas por la *Church Missionary Society* (véase Mazrui 1975). Por esa razón, se puede explicar la formación del criollo sierraleonés (el Krio) como fruto de la diversidad en las aportaciones lingüísticas y culturales de cada uno de los grupos que confluyeron en Freetown, hecho que con el tiempo contribuyó a la consolidación de una identidad nueva. En estas circunstancias, Freetown se convirtió en 1808 en la primera colonia de la Corona Británica en el oeste de África, mientras que el resto del país no pasaría a ser parte del Protectorado Británico hasta 1896, ochenta y ocho años más tarde.

Actualmente la República de Sierra Leona cuenta con más de seis millones doscientos mil habitantes. Durante la guerra civil que tuvo lugar entre 1991 y 2001 la capital creció de forma descontrolada a causa de los flujos de refugiados procedentes de otras regiones, y hoy alberga más de la cuarta parte de la población del país. Esta situación continuó siendo problemática, después del final de la guerra en 2002, pues la mayoría de refugiados no tenía ni posibilidades ni condiciones para volver a sus casas, generalmente en zonas rurales, o se mostraban reticentes a una nueva migración.

Como ciudad, Freetown fue siempre un punto de contacto entre lenguas, culturas y etnias. Gracias a esta cualidad multicultural y multilingüe de la misma, se produjo el nacimiento de nuestra lengua criolla principal, el Krio, propio de Sierra Leona, pero con "lenguas hermanas" en zonas como Gambia o Guinea Ecuatorial (véase a Yakpo 2009, para similitudes entre el Krio y el pichi). Es precisamente a través de esta diversidad lingüística y cultural de Freetown como precedemos a estudiar la lengua inglesa.



Mapa 2. Mapa de la región de Freetown (extraído el 24/10/2015 www.google.es)

7.1. Panorama sociolingüístico de Sierra Leona

Sierra Leona, como la mayoría de países de África Occidental (a excepción de Cabo Verde), es multilingüe: en ella conviven dieciocho lenguas indígenas, que son manifestaciones lingüísticas pertenecientes a cada uno de sus grupos étnicos. Sin embargo, cuatro de estos idiomas (el limba, el Krio, el mendé y el temné) funcionan también como lenguas de instrucción en el sistema educativo, siendo objeto de estudio tanto en las escuelas primarias como en instituciones secundarias y terciarias, debido a su uso regional dominante. De entre ellas, el limba y el temné son propias de las provincias del norte, mientras que el mendé pertenece al sur y al este. El Krio, más común en el área occidental (Freetown), desempeña el papel de idioma vehicular entre varias etnias. Lo que aún no se ha producido es la incorporación de otras lenguas consideradas "menores" al sistema educativo o de instrucción.

Aunque algunos investigadores como Bokamba (1992:125) han defendido que un país africano medio no posee una lengua indígena común que favorezca la comunicación a nivel nacional, la realidad lingüística de Sierra Leona presenta una situación muy diferente que refuta este argumento, en la que el Krio aglutina al resto de lenguas étnicas (véase Oyètádé y Luke 2003, 2007). A pesar de que sigue sin ser legalmente reconocido como lengua "(co)oficial" en el ámbito nacional (aun coexistiendo con el inglés en numerosos terrenos), el Krio se ha afianzado hasta cierto punto como una lengua indígena de carácter nacional que permite la comunicación entre habitantes de todo el país, y su efecto en la educación, así como su influencia en otras lenguas locales y en el inglés son inmensas.

7.2. Ámbito y objetivos de la investigación

La búsqueda de trabajos sociolingüísticos sobre los países anglófonos en África Occidental nos permite reparar en la escasez de publicaciones relacionadas con Sierra Leona (a excepción de Pemagbi (1989), Conteh-Morgan (1997) y, más recientemente, Turay (2010)), en especial si tenemos en cuenta el número de estudios sobre otros países africanos como, por ejemplo, Ghana o Nigeria. Esta dificultad a la hora de encontrar alusiones académicas a este tema, tanto fuera como dentro del país, se puede relacionar la actitud de los sierraleoneses cultos, que (a) normalmente ostentan pretensiones de utilizar el "inglés británico" (véase Conteh-Morgan 1977), y (b) en algunos casos llegan a calificar la variante local como "deficiente" (Pemagbi 1989). Además, (c) la mayoría de los trabajos existentes son

concebidos como repertorios de "errores" en lugar de aportar una visión descriptiva de los rasgos específicos de estas variedades (véase Turay 2010).

La expansión actual del inglés como lengua global y su posición lingüística en el mundo exceden el objeto de este estudio y resultan inabarcables. Esto hace que, incluso dentro de Sierra Leona, sea muy complicado adoptar un punto de vista nacional para analizar dicho idioma, por lo que esta investigación debe limitarse a un área particular de interés, en este caso Freetown. ¿Por qué Freetown?

El presente trabajo pretende ofrecer una aproximación al Inglés de Sierra Leona desde una perspectiva sociohistórica dentro del contexto de África Occidental, un trayecto que culmina en Freetown, dada su historia fuertemente vinculada no solo a la evolución y el desarrollo del Krio y del "Inglés Africano Occidental", sino también a la educación inglesa en el propio país y a sus características actuales.

Asimismo, conviene subrayar que Freetown fue la primera ciudad angloparlante en África Occidental donde se introdujeron la educación y civilización occidentales (nótese cómo la *Church Missionary Society* introdujo la educación y el cristianismo a través del *Fourah Bay College* en 1827, el *CMS Grammar School for Boys* en 1845, o el *Annie Walsh Memorial Secondary School* en 1849, entre otros), hecho que hace de ella el centro político, económico, social, académico y cultural del país. La capital emanaba nuevas formas de vida y nuevas variantes reestructuradas del inglés, ya que atraía varias iniciativas para alojar a personas de otras zonas del mundo, como el interés filantrópico de Granville Sharp por encontrar un lugar para los "Black Poor" de Londres, y como consecuencia para colonos similares de América en la época posterior a la trata de esclavos, hace doscientos veintiocho años. Esto no fue solo una misión para civilizar o de salvación, sino que también implicaba la idea de "una posible frontera utópica para la mente y el alma: un comienzo nuevo, en el que la humanidad pueda enmendar sus pecados del pasado" (Bledsoe 1992: 186; traducido). Por tanto, este nuevo comienzo tiene una conexión directa con la actual existencia del inglés, dividido en varios dialectos, dentro la ecología de Freetown, 'la Provincia de la Libertad'. Esta sociedad histórica y sus propiedades lingüísticas, en este caso el inglés, han llamado la atención de muchos expertos del lenguaje (Spencer (ed.) 1971; Jones 1971; Holm 1988/89; Fyfe (ed.) 1991; Huber 1999, 2004; Montgomery 1999). Del mismo modo, la coexistencia de hablantes ingleses procedentes de varias partes del mundo (Inglaterra, América del Norte, Caribe) y su interacción con las lenguas locales, deberían atraer a aquellos sociolingüistas interesados en el estado actual de la lengua, ya que es necesario estudiar el pasado para entender el presente. En este sentido, un estudio del inglés pre-colonial y colonial en Freetown puede servir como representación de la historia lingüística de Sierra Leona, no solo en torno al surgimiento del inglés y del Krio, sino también de otras lenguas empleadas en el país.

Si tenemos en cuenta el objeto de este estudio, el "Inglés de Sierra Leona", es posible darse cuenta de cómo la comunidad lingüística en cuestión, Freetown, es un ejemplo perfecto de la expansión de las lenguas europeas por el mundo y de la consiguiente "indigenización" a la que se han visto sometidas. Esto es consecuencia del hecho de que estos idiomas entraron en contacto con las lenguas indígenas de cada país y ciudad, y se vieron alterados por la experiencia lingüística de los hablantes que comenzaron a utilizarlas como segunda lengua o lengua oficial, basándose además en la ecología

lingüística de su entorno. Por este motivo, y al margen de los orígenes del Inglés de Sierra Leona, que se remontan a la Freetown del siglo XVIII o anterior, esta ciudad debe ser un centro de interés para el lingüista, ya que, como apunta Mufwene:

las ciudades han sido a menudo lugares de contacto, a donde individuos con diferentes trasfondos etno-lingüísticos han migrado desde zonas rurales o desde otras ciudades, tradicionalmente en busca de mejores oportunidades económicas. Probablemente se puede defender mejor en base a ellas la hipótesis de que, debido a las redes complejas de interconexión e interdependencia que se dan entre los residentes y entre las industrias en las que funcionan, la globalización entendida como glocalización está homogeneizando lugares a nivel cultural y, por tanto, a nivel lingüístico (Mufwene 2010: 34; trad.).

A la luz de todo lo que hemos expuesto y en base a la importancia tanto sociohistórica como ecológica de Freetown, esta tesis pretende responder a las siguientes preguntas:

- 1) ¿Qué variedades de la lengua inglesa llegaron a Freetown con los colonos?
- 2) ¿Qué papel desempeñó la ciudad de Freetown en el proceso de nacimiento del Inglés de África Occidental, y en la cristalización de un pidgin inglés lexicalizado y otras lenguas criollas en esta región y más allá?
- 3) ¿Qué políticas lingüísticas se han impuesto hasta el momento en relación con el lenguaje y la educación?
- 4) ¿Qué rasgos específicos presenta el Inglés de Sierra Leona y en qué medida lo asemejan o diferencian de otros tipos de inglés en el mundo y en territorios post-coloniales?

Para responder a estas cuestiones, este estudio presenta cinco objetivos en relación directa:

- a) Una revisión crítica de los grupos de inmigrantes que poblaron Freetown, siempre tomando en cuenta su relación entre ellos y con otros grupos indígenas;
- b) Una aproximación a la estructura social de Freetown en los siglos XVIII y XIX, prestando especial atención a los hablantes y a su uso de la lengua;
- c) Un análisis de las variedades de inglés traídas y empleadas por los nuevos grupos en Freetown, teniendo en cuenta otros idiomas hablados en la ciudad;
- d) El papel de Freetown y de los sierraleoneses en el nacimiento, desarrollo y posterior expansión no solo del Inglés de África Occidental, sino también de un pidgin inglés lexicalizado y otras lenguas criollas de África Occidental y más allá; y,
- e) Una visión de algunos rasgos fonológicos y estructurales del Inglés de Sierra Leona (SLE) actual y su comparación, por un lado, con la variedad de Nova Scotia, y por otro lado, con otras variantes del inglés existentes en África Occidental.

Mientras que los objetivos a) - d) buscan revelar los aspectos sociohistóricos relacionados con el inglés de Freetown, e) pretende encontrar respuestas vinculadas a las características lingüísticas propias del Inglés de Sierra Leona. Este último propósito está conectado con el estatus actual del inglés como lengua de la educación en el país. Para seguir los objetivos trazados, especialmente en los casos 4) y e), se han recopilado datos a partir de entrevistas grabadas en audio en la capital

de Sierra Leona. Esta tesis es, por consiguiente, una evaluación sociohistórica y sociolingüística del inglés de Freetown en los siglos XVIII y XIX, una observación de la historia de estos asentamientos en correlación directa con sus habitantes y su sociedad con el fin de determinar si algunos de los rasgos del Inglés de Sierra Leona actual se pueden a) vincular con la variedad de Nova Scotia y b) comparar con otras variedades africanas.

7.3. La estructura de la tesis

Teniendo todo esto en consideración, esta tesis está estructurada en cinco capítulos, sin incluir su introducción y sus conclusiones.

El primer capítulo analiza la lengua inglesa desde una perspectiva global, considerando las distintas nomenclaturas como una respuesta a la diversidad natural y ecológica de los países donde se habla el idioma. Así, este apartado explora las características del Inglés como Lengua Materna (ENL) frente al Inglés como Segunda Lengua (ESL). Tal y como indica el título del propio capítulo, *On English in West Africa: state of the art*, esta sección traslada al lector a un viaje por los diferentes estudios sobre el inglés en los cinco países angloparlantes de África Occidental y en Camerún. La inclusión de este último está asociada a la importancia lingüística de Freetown, que exportó el Krio a muchos otros países, entre los que se encuentra Camerún. Nuestros resultados sugieren que son necesarios más estudios sobre SLE (Inglés de Sierra Leona) y que aún es imprescindible una descripción detallada del idioma tanto fuera como dentro de Sierra Leona.

El segundo capítulo, *Framework for describing Sierra Leone English*, hace hincapié en la lengua inglesa desde un punto de vista global, repasando en detalle nuevos conceptos y teorías vanguardistas, tales como: sociolingüística, contacto entre lenguas, fenómenos de interferencia entre idiomas e interlingüísticos y aspectos relacionados con el inglés del mundo y otras fórmulas postcoloniales. En este apartado se procede también a desarrollar la "Ecología lingüística" de Mufwene (2001, 2013, 2014, 2015), ya introducida en el primer capítulo. Para concluir, se emplea el "Modelo dinámico" de Schneider (2007) para poner en perspectiva el desarrollo histórico del SLE.

A continuación, el tercer capítulo, *A Sociolinguistic history of Freetown*, inicia el plan de ruta metafórico de esta tesis. Primero, presenta una descripción de la lingüística histórica del SLE, a partir del panorama lingüístico de Sierra Leona; para después centrarse en la historia del inglés en Freetown, explorando los diversos procesos y eventos que trajeron este idioma a Sierra Leona. Más tarde, estudia el Asentamiento de Freetown con especial interés en la situación sociolingüística que este alcanzó, seguido por los procesos de colonización y evangelización con el *Fourah Bay College* como institución teológica. La sección 3.4 analiza el inglés de Freetown de los siglos XVIII y XIX, contemplando la realidad demográfica y social del asentamiento y, en especial, la de los hablantes de Nova Scotia. Su variedad de inglés reestructurada, que aparece reflejada en las cartas recopiladas por Fyfe (ed.1991), ha sido estudiada por numerosos expertos (Montgomery 1999; Huber 2004, entre otros). Las características de esta variedad se analizan en el apartado 3.4.2.

Tras esto, el capítulo cuatro investiga la problemática de las relaciones mutuas entre la lengua y la educación en Sierra Leona. Una visión histórica sobre la introducción de la educación occidental inicia el apartado, que continúa con el análisis del inglés como lengua minoritaria durante el

período colonial y sus consecuencias. También incluye una valoración histórica del papel de las lenguas en la educación y concluye con una reflexión sobre los idiomas educativos actuales en Sierra Leona.

El capítulo cinco examina una selección de rasgos fonológicos y estructurales del SLE moderno. Esta sección comienza con una visión de las causas y los procesos de "indigenización" de la lengua más patentes en el país africano, partiendo de las ideas de Mufwene (2001, 2015) y Schneider (2007). Del mismo modo, se define nuestra metodología de recopilación de datos, así como sus fundamentos. Para describir estas características, seguimos los estudios de Wells (1982), Ebot (2000), Huber y Dako (2004), Huber (2008) y Mesthrie y Bhatt (2008).

El último capítulo se centra en expresar nuestros hallazgos y perspectivas de futuro.

7.4. Fuentes y metodología de recopilación de datos

Teniendo en cuenta que el peso e importancia de este estudio reside en la explicación histórica, social y diacrónica de los procesos de formación y evolución del Inglés de Sierra Leona, el autor realiza en primer lugar una revisión detallada de la bibliografía y la documentación históricas sobre este tema, antes de proceder a su análisis meramente lingüístico. Además, puesto que una gran parte de la tesis se fundamenta en el trabajo bibliográfico, el autor ha decidido también dar prioridad al testimonio oral para el análisis de la parte gramatical sincrónica, tomando como fuente de rasgos fonológicos y estructurales a hablantes cultos del Inglés de Sierra Leona, especialmente locutores públicos y políticos (ministros, miembros del Parlamento o cargos religiosos, entre otros). Debido a la distancia y a otras dificultades, el autor analizó algunos ejemplos del inglés sierraleonés recogidos principalmente en grabaciones disponibles en YouTube, para interpretar así una muestra de dichas tendencias fonológicas y huellas estructurales. Dado su origen sierraleonés, la detección de dichas marcas no supuso en ningún momento un problema para el autor. Esa recopilación de vídeos de Youtube constituye el segundo corpus de la tesis.

En cuanto al corpus principal, el autor realizó una serie de veinticinco entrevistas a sierraleoneses seleccionados de forma aleatoria durante una estancia en Freetown en diciembre de 2011. Aunque empleó para ello una grabadora de audio digital, el ruido ambiental y la mala calidad de las grabaciones hace que se haya analizado un grupo de nueve hombres y ocho mujeres, diecisiete en total. Estas entrevistas tuvieron una duración aproximada de unos quince o veinte minutos, y fueron realizadas en el campus del *Fourah Bay College* y en el hotel de estancia del propio autor. Los sujetos procedían de varios estratos sociales y eran residentes de diferentes barrios de la capital. Su edad varía entre los diecisiete y los sesenta años, incluyendo a estudiantes de penúltimo curso en la Universidad de Sierra Leona, FCB e IPAM, graduados y empleados de la universidad.

En este sentido, el capítulo cinco de este trabajo incorpora dos tablas con la información sociolingüística de todos los sujetos, incluidos los pertenecientes al segundo corpus. Sin embargo no se hizo una correlación exacta entre los datos lingüísticos y sociales de los informantes, ya que estos se analizan solo en un capítulo y podrían, por tanto, constituir el objeto de estudio de otra tesis lingüística sobre el SLE. También cabe destacar que se han codificado las identidades de los participantes. Los hemos clasificado como usuarios de SLE *basilang*, *mesolang* bajo, *mesolang* alto, *acrolang* bajo y

acrolang alto puesto que son usuarios de Inglés como L2 y no hablantes nativos, entre los que una clasificación de basilecto, mesolecto y acrolecto podría tener más sentido.

8. Sobre la lengua inglesa en África Occidental: estado de la cuestión

2.0. Introducción

El crecimiento y desarrollo del inglés en los países angloparlantes de África Occidental debe ser concebido ante todo como el resultado de la complejidad lingüística y social de esta región. Es preciso, pues, que estos factores sociales y lingüísticos se aclaren, antes que nada, desde un punto de vista sociohistórico y ecológico (véase los trabajos de Jones 1971; Holm 1989; Huber 1999; Mufwene 2001; Schneider 2007). Tras esto, deben seguir una valoración y una clasificación de las peculiaridades lingüísticas de la lengua inglesa en cada comunidad de hablantes. Esto servirá para mostrar el "uso del inglés en el contexto educativo, administrativo y con otros muchos propósitos oficiales o no, siempre frente a un trasfondo de multilingüismo extremo" en lenguas indígenas, haciendo por tanto que la lengua inglesa se sienta "casi como en casa" en África Occidental (Spencer 1971: 1-2"; trad.).

Si bien es cierto que una gran parte de los habitantes anglófonos de África Occidental no tiene un dominio fluido y adecuado del inglés, sí se puede decir que hay un sector que se siente cómodo con esta lengua y, de hecho, su uso de la misma en publicaciones de diversos campos científicos y literarios ha provocado admiración en numerosos lectores en lengua inglesa de otras partes del mundo (Spencer 1971:2). Es más, por ello, el inglés ya no es un idioma que se toma "prestado", sino que se ha convertido en parte de la propiedad lingüística de los hablantes africanos de esta zona. Este acto de posesión de la lengua por parte de los africanos occidentales es más que evidente en el uso creativo que hacen de la misma (Spencer 1971: 2).

No obstante, es imprescindible tener en cuenta que el multilingüismo de esta zona es también conocido por incluir al hablante y al número de idiomas que este/a conoce ("lengua materna", "primera" y "segunda lengua"). Esta apropiación del inglés como propiedad lingüística por parte de los africanos occidentales (Spencer 1971:2 citado arriba), junto con la propuesta que realiza Achebe de un inglés que ha sido alterado ecológicamente y que carga con toda la experiencia africana pero aún es comprensible para sus hablantes originales (Achebe [1965] 1997: 349), es parte del argumento central que defiende que el inglés hablado y empleado en África Occidental no es solo un reflejo del entorno nuevo al que fue exportado, sino que es también la manifestación lingüística de la creatividad de sus nuevos hablantes. Por consiguiente, el inglés de los africanos occidentales explica cómo la ecología del lugar puede dar forma a una nueva variedad de la lengua.

Mufwene (2013: 302; trad.) observa que el concepto de ecología fue "originalmente desarrollado por biólogos para explicar la vida de los organismos y especies en su hábitat natural". En la actualidad este concepto se ha extendido gracias a lingüistas "para explicar los destinos de las lenguas dentro de su contexto social". Así, la ecología de la lengua es un concepto que entiende las lenguas como especies vivas, ya que es posible explicar su nacimiento, vida y muerte si las entendemos como algo parecido a una especie viral (Mufwene 2013: 303). En definitiva, al igual que la ecología se considera el motor impulsor de la evolución biológica, "las lenguas también evolucionan según la voluntad de las ecologías socioeconómicas en las que se ven incrustadas" y las ecologías geográficas

que las facilitan (Mufwene 2013: 310; trad.), situando al hablante individual en el centro de todo este proceso con su propio entorno sociocultural y lingüístico.

Por tanto, la competición y la selección se convierten en procedimientos a través de los cuales las diversas variedades compiten y son seleccionadas "bajo determinadas condiciones ecológicas", ya que el proceso entero "implica la competición entre las alternativas A y B, con A o B prevaleciendo porque fue favorecida por unos factores ecológicos concretos" (Mufwene 2014: 14; trad.).

Toda esta cuestión de la ecología de la lengua da un gran protagonismo al hablante individual y a la población de hablantes como factores ecológicos. Por eso, podemos decir que el hablante, dado su papel dentro de la comunidad lingüística, es responsable de la difusión o la eliminación de variedades, la creación de normas lingüísticas innovadoras y/o de nuevas variedades de la lengua. De este modo, solo podemos acercarnos a la estructura de la comunidad lingüística de hablantes a través del individuo. Sin él, será imposible entender "las dinámicas complejas de interacción inter-individuo e inter-grupo" (Mufwene 2013: 312; trad.).

Como tal, no se debería restar importancia al papel del hablante individual dentro del contexto de la ecología lingüística. En este sentido, el usuario individual del SLE debería ser considerado un reflejo de la historia de la lengua inglesa en Sierra Leona y de la historia lingüística de su propia variedad personal, pues está contribuyendo a darle forma a dicha variedad dentro de la ecología sierraleonesa. El inglés de los sierraleoneses nacidos y criados en Sierra Leona se debe entender, por ello, como una variedad local que es resultado de las condiciones ecológicas del país, tales como el clima, la tierra, su fauna y flora o sus hábitos lingüísticos, junto con las realidades socioeconómicas, socioculturales y sociopolíticas de sus hablantes, dada su peculiar estructura poblacional. Así, el SLE es sin duda parte del contexto de los "ingleses indigenizados" (véase Mufwene 2015).

Si ponemos en perspectiva las explicaciones sobre las variedades del inglés de Mufwene, en especial los conceptos de "colonización", "indigenización" y "evolución diferencial", el (re)asentamiento de los esclavos emancipados en Freetown con sus respectivas formas reestructuradas de inglés y el consiguiente traslado de algunos hombres ingleses a Sierra Leona, así como la posterior colonización del país; el inglés se ha convertido en parte del repertorio lingüístico de los sierraleoneses que lo usan y, de este modo, se ha convertido en uno de los idiomas indígenas del país. Por todo ello, el SLE manifiesta las exigencias de su nueva ecología y se puede explicar desde un punto de vista ecológico como cualquier otra variedad del inglés (véase Mufwene 2015: 17, 2001, 2009).

2.1. La lengua inglesa desde una perspectiva global

El Inglés es la lengua de comunicación más importante y utilizada de nuestro tiempo. Según Morrison (2002 citado en David Doms 2003: 2; trad.), "de la misma manera en que el latín arrasó por toda Europa hace 2000 años, acabando con docenas de lenguas a su paso, el inglés se ha convertido en la lengua franca de nuestro tiempo". Al igual que el latín se impuso en Europa y sustituyó a otros idiomas (y también dio pie al nacimiento de las lenguas romances y tuvo una gran influencia en muchas otras), el impacto del inglés se ha vivido de un modo similar en todo el mundo, desde Londres y Sydney hasta las aldeas más remotas de Asia, Europa, África y Latinoamérica; con sus diversas variedades y numerosos pidgin ingleses y lenguas criollas del Atlántico y del Pacífico, así como con su efecto actual en otros

idiomas. El inglés se usa en casi cada proyecto de carácter internacional y es muy influyente en la política, el deporte, el comercio y los negocios, los medios de comunicación o las redes de transporte marino y aéreo. Es el idioma de los principales centros académicos del mundo y de las publicaciones y conferencias que estos producen, la lengua más extendida en el dominio de la informática e internet, por nombrar tan solo una muestra de las numerosas áreas de supremacía global del inglés. Esta influencia tanto lingüística como cultural del mismo se ha evaluado desde diferentes puntos de vista.

Algunos investigadores tienen un gran recelo frente al uso del inglés y consideran que este es un instrumento del imperialismo. Para Phillipson, "lo que está en juego cuando el inglés se propaga no es simplemente la sustitución o el desplazamiento de una lengua por otra ... [es] el imperialismo lingüístico inglés" (Phillipson 1992 citado en Doms 2003: 1; trad.). Muchos otros, como Crystal (1997) y Wardhaugh (1998) (también citado en Doms 2003) creen que el inglés es democrático y neutral. Wardhaugh repara en que "ya que no hay requisitos culturales que estén conectados con el aprendizaje del inglés, [...] este pertenece a la vez a todo el mundo y a nadie, o al menos suele tener esta propiedad a menudo" (Doms 2003: 1; trad.).

Schneider (2003; 2007) se refiere tanto a lo esencial del inglés como al papel que este está desempeñando a la hora de desplazar a muchos otros idiomas del mundo con su expansión global actual y a sus "funciones transnacionales" y "papeles extralingüísticos" (Schneider 2003: 233; trad.). Dentro de su función en este momento, como una forma de comunicación internacional vital por una parte y como un "killer language" por otra, es conveniente tener en cuenta qué raíces nuevas está desarrollando al ser adoptado por nuevos usuarios (Schneider 2003: 233-234).

Es precisamente esta naturaleza dinámica del inglés: "el mar que recibe afluentes de cada región bajo los cielos" (Emerson citado en Delisle y Wordsworth (eds.) 1995: 26; trad.), su posesión por parte de otros hablantes y los dialectos nuevos que está desarrollando a partir de las aportaciones de otros idiomas y culturas, lo que constituye el centro principal de este estudio: cuánta influencia han ejercido las lenguas y culturas de Sierra Leona en el inglés utilizado por los sierraleoneses.

En relación con la diversificación y el nacimiento de dialectos nuevos, merece la pena mencionar las grandes diferencias que se dan entre la matriz o "Inglés Británico" y los ingleses coloniales en Estados Unidos, Canadá, Australia, Nueva Zelanda, Sudáfrica y algunas otras variedades. Aun así, debido a su naturaleza inconsistente como lengua internacional, Kachru desarrolló el modelo de los tres círculos concéntricos del inglés: el círculo interno (proveedor de la norma); el círculo externo (desarrollo de la norma) y el círculo de expansión (dependiente de la norma). Estos tres círculos demuestran cómo el inglés se extiende de un círculo a otro, cómo se adquiere y qué papeles juega en la vida de aquellos que lo emplean en sus entornos culturales (Lim 2009: 180). El inglés del círculo interno significa que no es solo la lengua dominante en esos territorios, sino que es también el legado lingüístico de la mayoría de su población (Mufwene 2015: 9). En el círculo exterior, al margen del hecho de que el inglés no parece tener una identidad de lengua extranjera, ya que es parte del panorama lingüístico de esos territorios y recibe además la importancia de ser lengua oficial del estado, la educación o el poder judicial, este no es "una lengua de herencia patrimonial para la población indígena" (Mufwene 2015: 10; trad.). En el círculo de expansión, el inglés funciona como una lengua extranjera y no se utiliza tanto a nivel interno con fines profesionales, científicos, diplomáticos o empresariales. Sierra Leona, como otras

ex-colonias de Gran Bretaña en África, según los círculos de Kachru, pertenece al círculo externo y, por tanto, el inglés se une a la diversidad lingüística del país.

2.2. El Inglés como Segunda Lengua (ESL) frente al Inglés como Lengua Materna (ENL)

La difusión global de la lengua inglesa ha dado lugar a la aparición de diversas nomenclaturas para describir sus usos y funciones en diferentes sociedades: Inglés como Lengua Materna (ENL), Inglés como Segunda Lengua (ESL), Inglés como Segundo Dialecto (ESD), Inglés como Lengua Extranjera (EFL), Inglés como Lengua Franca (ELF), Inglés como Lengua Internacional (EIL) e incluso Inglés Estándar Intra-Regional (RSE) (véase Berns *et al* 2009; Jenkins 2003; Görlach 1998). En definitiva, esta diversidad de clasificaciones coincide con las variaciones y cambios a las que se ha enfrentado el Inglés Británico en sus diferentes ecologías, en especial en entornos de ENL y ESL. Estas divergencias son tanto sociales como lingüísticas. Ambos factores ratifican las nociones de adaptabilidad y uso funcional y, por ello

El rango funcional y las normas de corrección son el criterio esencial para una clasificación de las sociedades que emplean el Inglés como Lengua Materna (ENL), como Segunda Lengua (ESL), como Segundo Dialecto (ESD) y como Lengua Extranjera (EFL), llamadas así según el uso que hacen de la lengua inglesa (Görlach 1998: 19; trad.).

Cada una de estas distinciones sociales y lingüísticas, incluyendo también Inglés como Lengua Franca (ELF), como Lengua Internacional (EIL) y el Inglés Estándar Intra-Regional (RSE) tiene sus propios rasgos lingüísticos prototípicos. No obstante, analizar cada una de las variedades individuales del inglés sería una tarea ardua. Por eso, en este estudio tendremos en cuenta tan solo las variedades ENL e ESL.

Es realmente imprescindible alcanzar una comprensión clara de las características peculiares de las variedades de los colonos (Americana, Australiana, Neozelandesa: países donde el inglés es lengua materna) y de las variedades del Inglés como Segunda Lengua en Asia y África (antiguas colonias británicas donde el inglés es el idioma oficial del estado y/o una de las lenguas (regionales) de instrucción). Desde una posición sociohistórica, las variedades ENL aparecieron a raíz de las "comunidades de colonos" implantadas en Estados Unidos, Australia y Nueva Zelanda; de ahí el aumento significativo de "cambios fonológicos", léxicos y otro tipo de ornamentación lingüística procedente del "contacto interdialectal" con otros hablantes nativos en los asentamientos nuevos (Görlach 1998: 21, 23; Spencer 1971: 3). Sus soluciones lingüísticas del inglés se caracterizan por la "innovación" y se heredan de miembros de la familia pertenecientes a generaciones anteriores.

Por el contrario, las variedades del Inglés como Segunda Lengua (por ejemplo, las de África Occidental) surgieron a partir de un entendimiento cultural y lingüístico y funcionaron como auxiliares de las numerosas lenguas maternas de carácter indígena (Spencer 1971: 3). Como tales, las variedades ESL

pueden ser caracterizadas por fenómenos de interferencia y generalización en exceso y, por tanto, pueden mostrar innovación (de diferentes tipos), a menos que esos rasgos locales sean criticados como incorrecciones al ser comparados con un estándar externo, como por ejemplo el habla culta del sur de Inglaterra (Görlach 1998: 21; trad.).

Estas interferencias pueden derivar del hecho de que "la mezcla social entre ingleses y africanos no era

muy común durante el período colonial" (Spencer 1971: 5-6; trad.) y de que el inglés no pudo arrebatárle el lugar a las lenguas nativas y de la comunidad, puesto que este era y aún es "solo parte de la actividad lingüística total de un africano occidental medio educado en la urbe" (Spencer 1971: 6; trad.).

Mientras que los cambios lingüísticos en las sociedades con ENL, en particular los fonológicos, se deben al contacto interdialectal, y por tanto son causados por factores externos, los cambios fonológicos en países con ESL se pueden considerar como internos:

La pronunciación de los hablantes de ESL o pidgin/criollo estaba normalmente condicionada por el sistema fonológico de sus lenguas maternas, en especial en lugares donde estas solo tenían un conjunto muy limitado de contrastes vocálicos, digamos cinco o seis (sin incluir normalmente la longitud de vocales como factor distintivo). A menudo, los problemas principales se dan en la entonación, que favorece el compás silábico frente al compás acentual (Görlach 1998: 24; trad.).

En cuanto a sus características, los hablantes de ESL incluyen a miembros de las antiguas colonias británicas en África y Asia (Sierra Leona, Nigeria, India, Singapur, Ghana, Kenia, Botsuana, etc.). Estas son algunas de las características más destacadas del inglés en contextos de ESL (véase a Spencer 1971, Görlach 1998):

1. Las variedades de ESL nacen a partir de una "asimilación" cultural y lingüística, después como auxiliares de las numerosas lenguas maternas de carácter indígena y más tarde como un "desarrollo separado".
2. Aquellos que hablan ESL constituyen una minoría (especialmente en África). De ellos, la mayoría tienen formación académica, con diversas discrepancias y competencias fonológicas individuales.
3. El inglés está limitado al ámbito de las leyes, los medios de comunicación, la administración, la educación (a veces sin incluir los primeros cursos de la escuela primaria) o la religión, entre otros usos oficiales. Por ello, es una lengua institucional y no doméstica.
4. Se adquiere a través de un entrenamiento (en los colegios) principalmente dominado por los registros literarios (desde Shakespeare hasta Dickens) y religiosos (la Biblia).
5. Su uso al margen de las formas y entornos de adquisición causa un "uso incorrecto del registro" y otro tipo de "mezclas inusuales".
6. Se caracteriza por una falta de hablantes nativos. La lengua se adquiere por medio de profesores no nativos en el contexto escolar (con un modo de adquisición instrumental frente a uno integrante) y, así, se aleja de la pronunciación estándar.

Teniendo en cuenta todas estas características, que sitúan las variedades de ESL como diferentes a la matriz o "Inglés Británico", y las de las variedades de ENL (debido a la naturaleza peculiar de sus sociedades desde un punto de vista sociolingüístico, las necesidades nuevas del uso de la lengua inglesa y la experiencia lingüística previa de los hablantes), se introduce a continuación un análisis de la lengua inglesa en África Occidental.

2.3. El Estatus del Inglés como Segunda Lengua (ESL) en África Occidental

Aunque el inglés es el idioma más importante para la mayoría de regiones del mundo en esta era de

globalización y tecnología de la información, esta lengua ha desempeñado tres papeles fundamentales en África Occidental antes, durante y después del colonialismo. De hecho, fue y continúa siendo la lengua de "salvación, civilización y éxito cosmopolita" (Spencer 1971: 13; trad.). Tal y como cuenta un misionero de la *Church Missionary Society* en Londres, el inglés era conocido como una "lengua que parece elevar a aquel que la conoce en la escala de la civilización"(Ajayi citado en Spencer 1971: 13-14; trad.).

Con respecto a la región en su conjunto, el éxito lingüístico de Gran Bretaña como imperio desembocó en el nacimiento de un buen número de lenguas pidgin y criollas, en concreto el pidgin inglés de África Occidental¹⁶ y lenguas criollas (el aku¹⁷ y el Krio) en esta sub-región (Holm 1989). El pidgin inglés de África Occidental de nuestros días en general y el pidgin inglés nigeriano en particular nacieron en Sierra Leona y se extendieron a otros países de África Occidental "desde Gambia en el noroeste hasta Camerún en el sureste", con los sierraleoneses moldeando así el desarrollo del inglés Africano Occidental (Holm 1989: 406ff; trad.; véase también Görlach 1996: 7). Varios investigadores han resaltado la difusión de los pidgin ingleses de África Occidental, de las lenguas criollas basadas en el inglés y del inglés africano occidental en la región. Para Holm

Los sierraleoneses tuvieron una influencia particular al moldear el Inglés de África Occidental tal y como se desarrolló en el siglo XIX. Su Krio se propagó como segunda lengua no solo entre los grupos indígenas más cercanos a Sierra Leona, sino también a lo largo de gran parte del resto de África Occidental (Holm 1989: 411–412; trad.).

Pero para Mazrui, la influencia de Sierra Leona y de sus habitantes está más presente en la difusión de la lengua inglesa que en la del Krio, pues su impacto

se centró en el *Fourah Bay College*, fundado en 1827 como prácticamente la primera institución moderna de enseñanza superior en el África subsahariana. Año tras año, la universidad enviaba a africanos a difundir el Gospel y la educación liberal en inglés a diferentes partes de África Occidental (Mazrui 1975: 41-42 citado en Wolf 2001; trad.).

Podemos, por tanto, indicar que la existencia de las lenguas pidgin y criollas en África Occidental fue una exportación fundamental de Sierra Leona:

1. El aku en Gambia, fruto del Krio (también con hablantes nativos); exportado a Gambia por los sierraleoneses.
2. El pidgin inglés nigeriano (diferente al inglés estándar nigeriano, con un número creciente de usuarios nativos), pues se cree que los misioneros sierraleoneses, entre otros hablantes no nativos de inglés, lo llevaron hasta Nigeria.
3. El pidgin inglés de Camerún (en África central, diferente también al inglés camerunés),

¹⁶ El pidgin inglés de África Occidental se refiere al pidgin basado en el inglés que se habla en Camerún (*Kamtok*, pidgin inglés de Camerún), al pidgin inglés de Ghana y al pidgin inglés de Nigeria. Aunque estas lenguas comparten muchos rasgos, el uso del plural en este caso indica el hecho de que en gran medida son lenguas independientes unas de otras.

¹⁷ El aku es una lengua criolla basada en el inglés que se habla en Gambia y que es descendiente del Krio sierraleonés del mismo modo en que el pichi es también hija del Krio en Guinea Ecuatorial. Se considera que el aku y el Krio solo difieren en determinado léxico, resultado de ecologías diferentes.

importado por misioneros desde Sierra Leona.

4. El pichi (una lengua criolla fruto del Krio) en Guinea Ecuatorial (África central) importado desde Sierra Leona.

El traslado del inglés y de sus versiones reestructuradas (pidgin y lenguas criollas) a otros países de África Occidental, tanto si fue ejecutado por los sierraleoneses como por otros hablantes de inglés como segunda lengua, o por los propios británicos, puede verse desde dos perspectivas relacionadas entre sí y asociadas a la adquisición del inglés:

1. la influencia que las lenguas indígenas y las culturas de África Occidental han ejercido, y aún hoy ejercen, en el inglés, es decir, la "nativización" o "indigenización" del inglés;
2. la influencia que el inglés ha ejercido y continúa ejerciendo en las lenguas indígenas y la(s) cultura(s) de África Occidental, es decir, la "anglicanización" de las lenguas de África (Occidental).

De una forma implícita, existe una influencia recíproca entre el inglés y las lenguas indígenas de África Occidental (véase Kirk-Greene 1971 y Ansre 1971 en Spencer (ed.) 1971). Esto es aún más evidente en propiedades como la alternancia de código, el préstamo de palabras, las estrategias discursivas y las interferencias fonológicas, todas ellas fáciles de identificar en el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje del inglés en los países anglófonos de África Occidental, donde este no es un idioma extranjero, tal y como demuestran las realidades sociolingüísticas de dichos países: el inglés es para muchos una lengua distante, al margen del hecho de que es el idioma oficial y de instrucción en el sistema educativo formal. De igual importancia es el hecho de que en la mayoría de esos países, si no en todos, el inglés coexiste con su pidgin o lengua criolla como una lengua vehicular (el Krio en Sierra Leona; el pidgin inglés en Nigeria, Ghana y Camerún¹⁸; el pidgin inglés de Liberia¹⁹; el aku en Gambia, que no se habla tanto como el wolof).

2.4. El estatus del Inglés como Segunda Lengua (ESL) en Sierra Leona

Nigeria, Ghana, Camerún y Gambia, como países angloparlantes, no muestran un alto índice de movimientos y asentamientos poblacionales en lo que se refiere a la génesis y evolución de sus variedades del inglés, sobre todo en comparación con Liberia (como se muestra arriba) y Sierra Leona dentro del estudio de los "New Englishes" o variedades "indigenizadas" del inglés en África Occidental. De hecho, existen pruebas lingüísticas e históricas que permiten rastrear la influencia del inglés y sus variedades reestructuradas, particularmente en Nigeria, Camerún, Gambia y Sierra Leona (Spencer 1971; Holm 1989; Görlach 1996; Huber 1999, 2004a; Hackert & Huber 2007, entre otros). Ciertos aspectos sociohistóricos y lingüísticos dentro de la historia de la lengua inglesa en Liberia y en Sierra

¹⁸ Se puede decir que el inglés de Camerún tiene tres tipos de influencias lingüísticas: las lenguas nativa, pidgin y francesa (véase Anchimbe 2006).

¹⁹ El pidgin inglés de Liberia en sí mismo, como el Krio de Sierra Leona, es una variedad de AAVE que siguió un camino paralelo pero a la vez distinto en su desarrollo. Este se ha convertido por tanto en el equivalente del Krio sierraleonés, el fruto lingüístico de los colonos traído desde Estados Unidos (en el caso de Liberia) y desde Inglaterra, Estados Unidos, Nova Scotia y los recapturados en el mar de camino a la esclavitud (en el caso de Sierra Leona).

Leona apuntan a que las variedades actuales del inglés habladas en estos dos países pueden tener su origen en las variedades traídas por los colonos afroamericanos de los siglos XVIII y XIX (Jones 1971; Holm 1989; Fyfe 1991; Montgomery 1999; Huber 1999, 2004a; Hackert & Huber 2007). Al evaluar los orígenes del Krio, Jones también menciona los diversos dialectos del inglés en las primeras fases del Asentamiento de Freetown: "hay indicios en varias fuentes de uno o varios dialectos peculiares del inglés en el área peninsular de Sierra Leona desde la primera parte del siglo XIX" (Jones 1971: 67; trad.; véase también Alie 1990: 51ff). Estos datos contribuyen a reforzar la hipótesis de Mufwene (2007) de que el contacto no es el único factor importante en la evolución de las lenguas, sino también lo son los movimientos migratorios.

Teniendo esto en cuenta, esta sección sobre el estado del arte en la lengua inglesa de Sierra Leona debe destacar la importación de una variedad particular del inglés, concretamente la que trajeron consigo los Nova Scotians (re)asentados en Freetown en 1792 (Fyfe (ed.): 1991; Montgomery 1999; Holm 1989; Huber 1999, 2004; Jones 1971; Alie 1990). De entre las variedades de inglés que llegaron al asentamiento, esta es la más documentada y estudiada. Ha sido comparada con el inglés afroamericano (Montgomery 1999), con el gullah y con otras variedades reestructuradas del inglés (Huber 2004; Hackert & Huber 2007). Muchos expertos de la lengua han estudiado esta variedad, que creemos posee una gran importancia en cualquier debate sobre la lengua inglesa en Sierra Leona (Jones 1971: 69ff; véase también Fyfe (ed.) 1991; Montgomery 1999; Huber 2004; Hackert & Huber 2007). Sus análisis no están basados solo en rasgos lingüísticos de la variedad Nova Scotia del inglés (incluyendo sus propiedades fonológicas y estructurales) sino que también la han conectado con el Krio, en particular con el gullah y el criollo de Bahamas, por ejemplo. Una valoración de la lengua inglesa en Sierra Leona debería poner estos trabajos diacrónicos en perspectiva con la intención de establecer un verdadero caso sociohistórico para explicar la evolución de este idioma en el país.

A pesar de la relevancia sociohistórica y lingüística del inglés de los colonos, la importancia que tiene el inglés hoy en día en Sierra Leona como lengua administrativa, legal y de instrucción es indudable, como ocurre también en muchos otros países del tercer mundo en general y, en particular, los países anglófonos de África Occidental. Es la lengua que garantiza el ascenso social y económico (Spencer 1971; Pemagbi 1989). Un aspecto típico diferente del inglés en Sierra Leona (y en Gambia, como ya se ha indicado) es que se ha prestado muy poca atención desde el ámbito académico a su coexistencia con las lenguas sierraleonesas, especialmente con respecto al área de influencia que el primero ejerce sobre las lenguas indígenas, y viceversa, y a los cambios que se pueden haber producido en las lenguas de Sierra Leona (a excepción de Jones 1971; Fyfe 1975; Jabbi 1972; Sesay 1984; Johnson 1986; Pemagbi 1989; Fyfe 1991; Conteh-Morgan 1997; y, más recientemente, Turay 2010). Aunque algunos de estos trabajos están disponibles, la mayoría no, y solo reciben menciones por parte de otros autores.

Turay (2010) es el primer autor en la historia lingüística reciente de Sierra Leona que ha rastreado el proceso de "nativización" del inglés en este país. Además de aportar la noción de que "hay una variedad en evolución en Sierra Leona", observa que las peculiaridades del inglés de los sierraleoneses cultos son tan legítimas como otras variedades que se dan por todo el mundo (Turay 2010: 337-8; trad.). Aunque Turay (2010) sugiere ideas sobre la codificación y la estandarización del

inglés de Sierra Leona, Cheshire (1991:7; trad.) aconseja mayor precaución en este sentido, ya que "la gran cantidad de variación que existe en el inglés en todo el mundo presenta dificultades en la codificación y la estandarización, así como problemas a la hora de elegir un modelo de enseñanza, y ninguna de ellas puede ser pasada por alto en el contexto de la enseñanza de la lengua inglesa". En primer lugar sopesamos, pues, en nuestro caso, una descripción a nivel nacional del Inglés de Sierra Leona (teniendo en cuenta posibles variedades locales y regionales dentro del trasfondo etnolingüístico de los hablantes cultos de la lengua) y comparamos sus características con las otras formas de inglés tanto dentro como fuera de la región, antes de pensar en la codificación y estandarización de la variedad sierraleonesa.

Aparte de esta obra reciente de Turay, este fenómeno mundial de contacto entre lenguas, de variación y cambio, junto con la aparición de "New Englishes", no ha llamado todavía la atención de muchos lingüistas sierraleoneses o profesores de idiomas: "Se podría decir que Sierra Leona constituye una de las 'áreas relativamente vacías en el mapa de la investigación sociolingüística inglesa' en África" (Schmeid 1991 citado en Conteh-Morgan 1997; trad.). Según Conteh-Morgan, la razón por la que faltan estudios de este tipo se debe en parte a que la primera generación de intelectuales de Sierra Leona no ve el inglés como un idioma extranjero, debido la historia social y lingüística del país, en particular de Freetown, y a que la mayoría de los colonos llegados desde Inglaterra, Jamaica y América del Norte no tenían una lengua africana como su L1 y actuaban, por ello, como "Black Englishmen", ya que hablaban un inglés convincente y procedían de países angloparlantes (Conteh-Morgan 1997: 52). Muchos intelectuales sierraleoneses opinan todavía hoy que el inglés no es solo una de las lenguas sierraleonesas sino que los ciudadanos del país hablan "Inglés Británico". Lo que no han entendido todavía es que el "Inglés de la Reina" no fue el exportado a Sierra Leona (véase Fyfe (ed.) 1991; Montgomery 1999) ni la variedad que los sierraleoneses aprendieron (los profesores solían ser misioneros, hablantes no nativos de inglés) (Pemagbi 1989; Sesay 1984; Conteh-Morgan 1997; Turay 2010). Incluso si aceptáramos que ese hubiera sido el tipo de inglés que se tomó cuando se introdujo la educación occidental en el país, el hecho de que el inglés haya coexistido con otros idiomas en Sierra Leona refleja la introducción de nuevos rasgos fonológicos y estructurales, precisamente derivados de esa coexistencia.

Aunque es cierto que este trabajo no aboga por los usos erróneos del inglés con respecto a las normas estándares de uso, es decir, no ignora las cuestiones lingüísticas y pedagógicas relacionadas con la lengua; tampoco está rechazando el contexto cultural y sociolingüístico que rodea al idioma en el círculo exterior, en este caso el Inglés en Sierra Leona. Los tipos de inglés del círculo exterior deben ser entendidos como resultado del colonialismo británico, formas aculturadas e indigenizadas de la lengua. En definitiva, es la "colonización" de la lengua inglesa: "El Inglés es ahora nuestro, lo hemos colonizado" (Abad citado en Schneider 2003: 233; trad.).

9. Marco teórico para la descripción del Inglés de Sierra Leona

3.0. Introducción

Una de las consecuencias de la extensa difusión del inglés tiene que ver con las numerosas formas en

que la lengua se ha diversificado y los modos en que ha sido descrita y clasificada. Mientras que para algunos es su lengua materna, hay quienes la emplean como un idioma no nativo, y otros la usan como lengua extranjera de carácter y estatus internacional. El protagonismo que posee el inglés hoy en día en un mundo ya globalizado se ha estudiado desde varias perspectivas. Para Kachru, "la universalización del inglés y el poder de esta lengua tienen su precio; para algunos, las consecuencias son una fuente de agonía, mientras que para otros son una causa de euforia" (Kachru 1996: 135; trad.). Schneider califica la expansión global del inglés como "uno de los cambios socioculturales más extraordinarios, y quizá inesperados, del período moderno que culmina a finales del siglo XX" (Schneider 2007: 1; trad.). Aunque en su momento todos los esfuerzos se dirigieron hacia la creación artificial de una lengua franca de carácter global, la lengua inglesa ha llegado a asumir esta función de forma natural, con un cierto grado de naturalización y apropiación lingüística (Schneider 2007: 1).

Esta postura puede ser comparada con la que resalta Mufwene (2001: 106ff) en relación a los frutos legítimos e ilegítimos del inglés difundido por el Imperio Británico (véase también Holm 1989: 405). Como consecuencia de su expansión lingüística, la lengua inglesa entró en contacto con otras lenguas y ha sido desde entonces adoptada y apropiada para desempeñar funciones comunicativas en territorios geográficos y culturales muy diferentes (véase Kachru 1996; Mufwene 2001, 2009; Jenkins 2003; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008; Schneider 2007, 2011). Cada diáspora tiene sus propias características únicas y ecológicas:

La primera diáspora, que en sus inicios incluía la migración de unas 25000 personas desde el sur y el este de Inglaterra hasta América y Australia, tuvo como resultado nuevas variedades del inglés, empleadas como lengua materna. La segunda diáspora, que implicaba la colonización de Asia y África, llevó, por otra parte, al desarrollo de una serie de variedades empleadas como segunda lengua, a menudo conocidas como 'New Englishes' (Jenkins 2003: 5; trad.).

Con estas dos migraciones de la lengua inglesa, surgieron "nuevas variedades empleadas como lengua materna", y "New Englishes" o "variedades empleadas como segunda lengua" del inglés. Holm (1989) habla, del mismo modo, sobre esta difusión insólita del inglés por el mundo: "Gran Bretaña tuvo más éxito que ninguna otra nación a la hora de implantar su lengua en todo el mundo, tanto en cuestión de número de hablantes como en la proliferación de variedades en el extranjero" (Holm 1989: 405; trad.). En consonancia con Holm (1989), Kachru (1996), Mufwene (2001, 2009), Jenkins (2003), Anchimbe (2006) y Schneider (2007), es evidente que los "New Englishes" son variedades legítimas y auténticas (aunque muy heterogéneas, en respuesta a sus ecologías) del inglés metropolitano: "Todos los *new Englishes* son progresos naturales y frutos legítimos, aunque algunos se parezcan más que otros a sus antepasados" (Mufwene 2001: 197; trad.).

Esta tesis examina el Inglés de Sierra Leona desde una perspectiva sociohistórica y ecológica con la intención de determinar si se puede considerar legítima la idea de que su uso identifica a sus usuarios como hablantes de una variedad realmente basada en la ecología de Sierra Leona, teniendo en cuenta rasgos fonológicos y estructurales (véase Holm (1989); Pemagbi 1989; Fyfe (1991); Montgomery (1999); Huber (1998, 2004a); y también Mufwene 2001, 2001b, 2009; Anchimbe 2006; Schneider 2007; Turay 2010;). A pesar de esto, está comprobado que allá donde dos o más lenguas coexisten, es inevitable la influencia mutua, bien sea mediante préstamos o por interferencia lingüística (véase Kirk-

Greene 1971, Ansre 1971, Lüpke 2010 para África Occidental; Jabbi 1972; Conteh-Morgan 1997; Pemagbi 1989; Turay 2010 para Sierra Leona).

3.1. Ecología lingüística y evolución

El estudio del Inglés de Sierra Leona implica el análisis de la relevancia del asentamiento y del colonialismo, así como de la difusión masiva del inglés desde su tierra nativa, Inglaterra, hasta áreas lejanas y remotas, por medios tan variados como la religión, la educación, la ciencia y la tecnología, los negocios internacionales y la política (por ejemplo, el impacto que la lengua ejerce sobre sus hablantes y sus otras lenguas y viceversa).

Sin embargo, esta influencia lingüística del inglés tiene un precio. La lengua está inmersa en un proceso de cambio constante y siendo remodelada continuamente para adaptarse no solo a ecologías locales nuevas, sino también a necesidades lingüísticas diferentes, de ahí que algunas variedades del inglés sean reconocidas como "legítimas", "buenas", "correctas" y "apropiadas" mientras otras son inhabilitadas como "ilegítimas", "malas", "incorrectas" e "inapropiadas" (Mufwene 2001; trad.). Esta clasificación de las diferentes variedades del inglés parece ignorar cualquier factor relacionado con la ecología lingüística.

El término "ecología de la lengua" fue introducido por Haugen en los años 1970 en una serie de artículos (Mühlhäusler 1996; Mufwene 2001; Fill 2000). Para Haugen (1972: 323 citado en Fill 2000: 61; trad.), la ecología lingüística se refiere al "estudio de las interacciones que se dan entre cualquier lengua y su entorno". Haugen mantiene, entre otros, que "el verdadero entorno de una lengua es la sociedad que la usa como uno de sus códigos" (Haugen 1972: 325 citado en Mühlhäusler 1996: 3; trad.). En definitiva, por tanto, Haugen "ve más en la ecología de la lengua que tan solo la sociología de la lengua o el estudio del habla en situaciones o contextos" (Mühlhäusler 1996: 3; trad.). La existencia de una lengua en una sociedad, por ello, presupone que esa lengua forma parte de esa sociedad y su uso reflejará a esta inevitablemente desde distintas posturas. Aun así, si esa sociedad tiene hablantes de otras lenguas, esto asegura el contacto entre lenguas, ya que los hablantes toman decisiones sobre qué lengua(s) emplear, cuándo, dónde y para qué. De este modo, se deben tener en cuenta los factores de ecología lingüística cuando se estudia el desarrollo histórico de cualquier lengua en cualquier área, pues "hay de hecho una relación muy estrecha entre una lengua y la cultura de la sociedad que la utiliza" (Akere 1978: 412; trad.). En este sentido, Mühlhäusler aclara: "son los factores ecológicos los que dan existencia a las lenguas, definen sus límites y deciden su crecimiento y supervivencia" (Mühlhäusler 1996: 3; trad.).

La ecología es el factor más importante que determina la competición, tanto entre especies como entre individuos en un entorno particular (Mufwene 2001: 21, 145; véase también Anchimbe 2006: 78ff). En lingüística, la ecología desempeña un papel decisivo en la evolución de las lenguas o sus variedades (Mufwene 2001: 21; Anchimbe 2006: 79). De hecho, cuando observamos estos temas con perspectiva, la ecología impera de forma clara en la evolución de una lengua o variedad, sea una variedad criolla o no de las lenguas europeas (Mufwene 2001). El comentario de Mufwene (2001: 136; trad.) con respecto a que los movimientos poblacionales y sus contactos consiguientes con diferentes dialectos metropolitanos explican "la reestructuración del inglés en Reino Unido durante la colonización del Nuevo

Mundo" también se puede utilizar para explicar resultados lingüísticos similares en cualquier otro entorno colonial, de hecho es más que convincente en el caso de Sierra Leona. Tan solo debemos reforzar la idea, que Mufwene (2001: 136; trad.) clarifica más adelante, de que del mismo modo en que "los detalles ecológicos de los contactos variaron de un lugar a otro", son también diferentes los resultados lingüísticos. Con respecto a esto último, cabe esperar, por tanto, que la realidad ecológica de Sierra Leona moldeara el inglés de sus usuarios en una forma diferente a otros escenarios postcoloniales, dado que la historia lingüística y la actual distribución lingüística de los angloparlantes en Sierra Leona es diferente a otros lugares donde el inglés actúa como lengua materna o segunda lengua. En este caso, en Sierra Leona, el contacto inicial se dio más entre diversas variedades reestructuradas del inglés y lenguas africanas que con dialectos metropolitanos (véase el capítulo tres para una evaluación de la situación lingüística del Asentamiento de Freetown; véase también Holm 1989; Fyfe 1991; Montgomery 1999; Huber 1999, 2004a; Hackert y Huber 2007).

3.2. La indigenización lingüística

Aunque aquellos que utilizan el inglés como lengua materna y los que la emplean como una lengua no nativa debaten constantemente sobre la legitimidad de esta última, Mufwene (2009), en referencia a la indigenización del inglés en América del Norte, sostiene que "todas las variedades del inglés habladas fuera de Inglaterra han sido indigenizadas" (Mufwene 2009: 353; trad.). Por tanto, ¿qué es la indigenización del inglés?

Para Mufwene (2009: 353; trad.), esta es la adaptación de la lengua "a los hábitos comunicativos y las necesidades de sus (nuevos) hablantes en una ecología novedosa", más a fondo mantiene también que

Las modificaciones conllevan una influencia estructural de las lenguas habladas con anterioridad por los nuevos hablantes, así como alteraciones aditivas, sustitutivas y sustractivas como respuesta a las culturas de los usuarios nuevos, determinadas por la fauna, la flora y otras condiciones geográficas a las que se enfrentan. También implican ajustes en la estructura socioeconómica que regula los comportamientos sociales de los nuevos hablantes (Mufwene 2009: 353; trad.).

Como consecuencia de esto, y dado que los aspectos socioculturales de los usuarios nuevos de la lengua y su experiencia lingüística previa juegan un papel destacado en sus vidas, algunos elementos léxicos de esta lengua nueva, que nada tienen que ver con la realidad física, cultural y social de los hablantes, se vuelven redundantes, otros adquieren significados nuevos, mientras que también se introducen otras palabras y expresiones al reflejar la realidad cultural nueva que trae consigo la nueva lengua (Mufwene 2009: 353-4).

¿Podemos, entonces, decir que el Krio y los otros idiomas (principales) de Sierra Leona han tenido alguna influencia en el inglés? ¿Ha adquirido el inglés de Freetown rasgos o características puramente sierraleonesas, es decir, se ha adaptado a la fauna, la flora o a los contextos socioculturales, socioeconómicos y sociopolíticos de Sierra Leona, dentro de los cuales se usa la lengua? Hay un Inglés de Sierra Leona del que se han adueñado sus usuarios, que lo han adaptado a los contextos ya mencionados para dar respuesta a los hábitos lingüísticos de aquellos que lo usan en Freetown, porque "la ecología de la apropiación determina hasta qué punto le han afectado los idiomas con los que el

inglés entró en contacto" (Mufwene 2009: 365; trad.; véase también Pemagbi 1989; Turay 2010).

Uno de los éxitos de la ecología de Freetown en los siglos XVIII y XIX con respecto a la adaptación estructural del Inglés en Sierra Leona es el desarrollo no solo del inglés africano occidental, sino de otros pidgin ingleses y lenguas criollas en la región (Jones 1971; Holm 1989; Huber 1999, 2004a). Mientras que hay investigadores que sostienen que el Krio surgió en la región y fue después trasladado hasta América del Norte durante el momento álgido de la trata de esclavos, para ser traído de vuelta por los colonos en el siglo XVIII, otros expertos han probado una teoría contraria (léase el capítulo tres; también Holm 1989; Huber 1999, 2004a). Sabemos que el Asentamiento de Freetown fue fundamental en el desarrollo de las formas reestructuradas del inglés en África Occidental (variedades criollas y no criollas). Dado que los colonos en Freetown vinieron de varios lugares y con diversos ingleses reestructurados y que a estos se unieron más tarde prisioneros que hablaban muchas lenguas africanas, Freetown sentó las bases para la posterior adaptación lingüística de las formas reestructuradas, hasta llegar a lo que hoy llamamos el Krio y su "lenguas hermanas" pidgin y criollas en África Occidental y en otros lugares (Gambia, Nigeria, Camerún y Guinea Ecuatorial; véase el capítulo tres).

Además de los movimientos migratorios, la colonización también se concibe como uno de los factores responsables de esa indigenización de las lenguas europeas en África y Asia (véase, por ejemplo, Makoni 1993), un proceso que, sin embargo, debemos diferenciar de la llamada "criollización":

... el desarrollo de los criollos enfatiza el hecho de que la aparición de los "ingleses indigenizados" se puede describir del mismo modo. Las diferencias residen en especial en el hecho de que en este último caso, las variedades de la lengua meta han sido académicas y transmitidas de manera artificial a través de la enseñanza, mientras que las variedades de la lengua meta para los criollos fueron transmitidas de forma natural mediante interacciones ensayo-error... En ambos casos, los hablantes nuevos modifican algunos aspectos de la lengua meta, lo que equivale a las adaptaciones locales identificadas... como indigenización... desde el punto de vista de sus resultados, como divergencia y evolución de especies hasta llegar a variedades nuevas (Mufwene 2009: 356; trad.).

Por consiguiente, aunque las adaptaciones y la posterior evolución de las variedades reestructuradas del inglés añadidas al Krio por los colonos puedan haberse dado por medio de interacciones naturalistas en Freetown, las variedades indigenizadas del inglés son resultado del inglés que se enseña en el aula, puesto que este continúa siendo la lengua oficial para la educación y la administración en Sierra Leona.

Sin embargo, como las lenguas no son solo "sistemas adaptativos complejos" en el sentido de que están "constantemente siendo remodeladas para satisfacer (las) necesidades comunicativas" de aquellos que las usan, pero son además "influidas por las condiciones ecológicas en las que se ponen en práctica" (Mufwene 2009: 355; trad.; véase también Mufwene 2001), podemos esperar que el Inglés en Sierra Leona haya sido reconfigurado por sus hablantes nuevos con la intención de satisfacer sus necesidades lingüísticas, tal y como indica Mufwene:

Sin tener en cuenta si los rasgos estructurales más destacados de las variedades metropolitanas o académicas introducidas en colonias particulares son estándar o no, las variedades coloniales están marcadas por varios grados de divergencia de sus metas originales (Mufwene 2009: 356; trad.).

En esencia, por tanto, una de las preguntas imprescindibles que este estudio pretende responder es

hasta qué punto se ha adaptado el inglés a las condiciones ecológicas de Sierra Leona, teniendo en cuenta los hábitos lingüísticos de sus usuarios en Freetown. De hecho, la indigenización, o adaptación lingüística de las lenguas en entornos lingüísticos nuevos tiene que ver con el resultado del contacto entre hablantes diferentes de un idioma nuevo. Para Mufwene, el contacto constante entre los hablantes lleva a la evolución de la lengua (Mufwene 2009: 355; 2001; 2001b), bien a través del contacto entre dialectos de un mismo idioma o mediante la influencia mutua que se produce normalmente cuando los hablantes de lenguas diferentes interactúan dentro del mismo ambiente sociolingüístico y sociocultural. Con respecto a la indigenización del inglés, es posible deducir tres características a partir de la posición de Mufwene (Mufwene 2009: 357):

1. Las formas de inglés criollas o no nativas son diferentes en cuanto a su estructura de las variedades nativas del inglés
2. Las formas de inglés criollas e indigenizadas o no nativas son consecuencia de la adaptación lingüística de las variedades estándar o de las no estándar, y
3. Las formas de inglés criollas e indigenizadas o no nativas reciben influencias de la experiencia lingüística previa de sus nuevos hablantes.

Con estas consideraciones, podemos afirmar que hay un Inglés de Sierra Leona, en base a lo siguiente:

1. El inglés llegó a Sierra Leona a través de movimientos migratorios que empezaron con el Asentamiento de Freetown, las actividades misioneras y el colonialismo, y principalmente con hablantes que no eran nativos;
2. El inglés no es una L1 para los sierraleoneses nacidos y criados en este país;
3. El inglés no es ni una lengua comunitaria ni una lengua nativa en ninguna parte de Sierra Leona;
4. El Inglés de Sierra Leona se adquiere en el sistema escolar, ha sido y sigue siendo enseñado por personas que también lo han aprendido en contexto académico y no por medio de interacciones normales y naturales;
5. El inglés se usa como lengua oficial estatal y lengua de la educación, por ello solo la emplea la élite culta (occidental);
6. Los sierraleoneses se han apropiado del inglés para satisfacer sus necesidades comunicativas y este ha recibido la influencia de las condiciones ecológicas del país, mediante procesos de localización y aculturación;
7. Las características estructurales del Inglés de Sierra Leona difieren de aquellas variedades nativas del inglés y reflejan una adaptación lingüística de la L1 de los hablantes, y
8. La socialización en inglés se produce más entre sierraleoneses cultos y menos con hablantes nativos de inglés, además ocurre más a menudo en contextos profesionales y empresariales de carácter formal.

Dadas estas situaciones que se producen en torno al Inglés de Sierra Leona, debemos ahora revisar las teorías de contacto entre lenguas e interferencia, así como el concepto de interlengua en relación con la adquisición y el uso del inglés en Sierra Leona. Estas se unen a la hipótesis de Competición-Selección de Mufwene con la intención de determinar (a) el papel que juega cada hablante individual en el cambio lingüístico, (b) la relevancia de la ecología lingüística en la evolución de una variedad lingüística y (c) los

rasgos que son más viables para imponerse en otra lengua.

3.3. Sobre el contacto entre lenguas, la interferencia y la interlengua

Es posible estudiar el contacto entre lenguas desde varias perspectivas: la adquisición de la lengua, la producción de la misma, su función en la sociedad, el bilingüismo y el multilingüismo individual y social o los cambios lingüísticos, entre otros (Weinreich 1953; Thomason y Kaufman 1988; Thomason 2001, 2010; Myers-Scotton 2002; Winford 2003, 2010; Matras 2009, 2010; Hickey 2010, entre otros). Las manifestaciones lingüísticas que se dan en estos dominios son el objeto de estudio de los lingüistas de contacto. En cuanto a esta tesis, buscamos explorar la adquisición del Inglés como Segunda Lengua y como instrumento de educación en Sierra Leona, así como su uso en diversos contextos y los efectos lingüísticos subsiguientes que manifiesta la propia lengua. ¿Qué es, por tanto, el contacto entre lenguas y cómo se manifiesta en una comunidad lingüística concreta?

Aunque la obra pionera de Weinreich (1953) ya considera al contacto entre lenguas una disciplina académica, este área no ganó reconocimiento hasta finales del siglo XX, cuando comenzó a ser aceptada como un campo de estudio independiente (Inverno 2011:72; Swolkien 2014: 63ff; véase también Holm 1988-89, 2000, 2004). Su aceptación se produjo primero en el ámbito de estudios de pidgin y criollo, pero ya se ha ampliado hasta abarcar "un lenguaje más amplio de fenómenos de contacto" que incluye las lenguas europeas envueltas en dinámicas y resultados de reestructuración muy similares a los de las lenguas pidgin y criollas (Inverno 2011:72; trad.). Para Inverno,

la lingüística de contacto entre lenguas solo se ha consolidado recientemente como una disciplina académica independiente, pero este estudio científico data de finales del siglo XIX... cuando se produjo un aumento en el estudio del contacto entre lenguas vernáculas como forma de contraargumentar las afirmaciones tradicionales de la lingüística histórica comparada de que el cambio lingüístico era solo inducido de forma interna y que, por tanto, la mezcla de lenguas era imposible (Inverno 2011:76; trad.).

A lo largo de los años, varios estudios han demostrado que el cambio lingüístico no se debe solo a factores de motivación interna, sino que los factores externos también pueden impulsar cambios en los sistemas lingüísticos. Esta es la razón por la que algunos investigadores han considerado que la lingüística de contacto es una disciplina subordinada dentro de la lingüística general que estudia "las diversas estructuras del contacto entre lenguas, el fenómeno que deriva de este, y la interacción de factores lingüísticos y de ecología externa en tanto que dan forma a esos resultados" tanto en el caso del individuo bilingüe o multilingüe como en grupo. (Windford 2003:5; trad.). Para Swolkien (2014: 69 citando a Oksaar 1996; trad.)

la lingüística de contacto es hoy un área interdisciplinar con un amplio espectro que estudia el contacto entre lenguas (a nivel macro-analítico) como resultado de encuentros culturales, económicos y políticos entre varios grupos étnicos y que a nivel micro-analítico tiene en cuenta a los individuos bi- o multilingües. Dada la circunstancia de que el 70% de la población mundial es multilingüe, se hace necesario un replanteamiento de la mayoría de las teorías y metodologías lingüísticas de importancia, que dan por sentado como norma el monolingüismo y la homogeneidad de la comunidad de hablantes.

En este sentido, el hablante individual o el grupo de hablantes que son bi- o multilingües, así como la comunidad en la que estos viven, son factores determinantes en los procesos de contacto entre lenguas, los resultados y direcciones del cambio lingüístico.

Para Windford (2010:170ff, trad.), hay dos categorías de cambios inducidos por contacto: "aquellos debidos a préstamos, y aquellos debidos a lo que ha recibido nombres tan diversos como "interferencia", "transferencia", "influencia por sustrato" o "imposición". Para el propósito de nuestro estudio, nos concentraremos en este segundo grupo -interferencia, transferencia, influencia por sustrato y fenómenos de imposición-, la inclusión lingüística inconsciente de rasgos de una lengua en otra, en contacto y cambio lingüístico, aunque no desecharemos los préstamos como un fenómeno muy influyente dentro del contacto y cambio lingüístico. Las razones de esta decisión no son aleatorias. En primer lugar, el Inglés de Sierra Leona se aprende como Segunda Lengua en contextos académicos y, como tal, la influencia de la lengua materna, junto con la interferencia, transferencia e influencia por sustrato asociadas normalmente con la adquisición de una segunda lengua, desempeñan un papel significativo (Windford 2010:170). No obstante, no existe una distinción clara entre el préstamo y la interferencia, ya que ambos procesos se manifiestan en situaciones de contacto e implican un idioma de partida (source language - SL) y un idioma meta (recipient language - RL) (véase van Coetsen 1988, 2000; Aikenvald 2002). Sin embargo, dado el hecho de que este estudio se centra en el uso del inglés por parte de los sierraleoneses, idioma que funciona como L2 en Sierra Leona, los agentes son usuarios de una segunda lengua y, por tanto, imponen características lingüísticas de su L1 al hablar la L2.

Mientras Weinreich (1953) analiza el contacto entre lenguas centrándose en el hablante bilingüe, Matras (2010: 66; trad.) resalta, al tomar en cuenta las investigaciones más recientes dentro de este campo, que "el contacto entre lenguas trata de la forma en la que los sistemas lingüísticos se influyen mutuamente". Por consiguiente, para él, "el cambio lingüístico inducido por contacto es visto en consecuencia como un cambio externo al sistema lingüístico" (Matras 2010: 66; trad.). En este sentido, una de las formas en que podemos acercarnos a los procesos y resultados del contacto entre lenguas, en relación con el uso del inglés en Sierra Leona, se basa en tres aspectos relacionados entre sí:

- 1) Cómo hablantes sierraleoneses cultos de inglés recurren a la fonología de sus lenguas maternas al hablar este idioma;
- 2) Cómo las estructuras propias de las lenguas maternas de los sierraleoneses se incorporan al inglés, y,
- 3) Qué rasgos fonológicos y estructurales del Krio como lengua franca se pueden considerar como causas primarias, en el caso de que nuestro estudio no sea capaz de trazar dichos rasgos en las lenguas maternas de la mayoría de sierraleoneses.

Teniendo en cuenta que el inglés coexiste con el Krio, el inglés criollo de Sierra Leona que ejerce la doble función de lengua franca y lengua de interacción social en las grandes ciudades del país, creemos que es más fácil que las características fonológicas y estructurales del Krio se transfieran al inglés antes que las de otros idiomas hablados en Sierra Leona, debido a la intensidad del contacto entre estas dos lenguas dentro del repertorio lingüístico de los sierraleoneses como hablantes bi- o multilingües. Además, la similitud analógica entre ambos es otro aspecto a recalcar como parte de dicha integración de los rasgos lingüísticos de Krio en el inglés.

Ya introducido por Selinker en los años 1970 (Makoni 1993; Matras 2009), el concepto de interlengua (IL) "se refiere a la lengua del aprendiente" (Makoni 1993: 97; trad.). Para Matras (2009: 74; trad.) una interlengua "es el uso idiosincrático que hace un aprendiente individual de las estructuras de la

lengua meta, el cual puede variar en diferentes contextos y estar sujeto a cambios en la medida en que continúa el proceso de aprendizaje". Tanto Makoni (1993) como Matras (2009) consideran que la interlengua representa un proceso social y psicológico en desarrollo de la L2 con un punto de partida y una etapa de maestría (Makoni 1993: 97; Matras 2009: 74). En términos tradicionales, la lengua del aprendiente se ha clasificado como "incompleta", "defectuosa", "deficiente", "aproximada" y como versión "transitoria" de la lengua meta (véase Makoni 1993: 97; y también Matras 2009: 74). Frente a esta tendencia tradicional, el enfoque alternativo concibe la IL como un producto de cuatro factores principales: (1) el entorno de aprendizaje/adquisición de la L2, (2) la influencia de la L1 del aprendiente y/o otras lenguas adquiridas recientemente, (3) la variedad de la L2 hablada por el aprendiente, y (4) la variedad en desarrollo de la lengua meta que adopta el aprendiente (Makoni 1993: 97; Matras 2009: 74). Estos factores suponen una contribución inmensa al desarrollo y a la competencia en la lengua meta. Del mismo modo, se manifiestan en lo que se ha considerado como "transferencia" o "influencia translingüística" (Makoni 1993: 97, trad.). Esta alternativa al enfoque tradicional refuerza una valoración positiva de la experiencia comunicativa y lingüística de los aprendientes, así como su "creatividad al adaptar y remodelar elementos de la lengua meta según sus propias necesidades comunicativas" (Matras 2009: 75; trad.; véase Mufwene 2001; y también Schneider 2007), en especial si el entorno de adquisición es formal y no naturalista, y si el aprendiente tiene que lidiar con una lengua de tipología diferente en el contexto de aprendizaje de una segunda lengua (Makoni 1993: 97).

A pesar de las influencias a las que suelen ser propensas las L2, las lenguas de aprendizaje tienden a ser sistemáticas, capaces de constituir rasgos idiosincráticos propios, al margen del hecho de que una IL se considere como una continuación del proceso de aprendizaje (Makoni 1993: 98; Matras 2009: 75). Aunque esta sistematicidad de las IL resulta dudosa para algunos investigadores como Makoni (1993: 98), ha sido comparada en cierta medida, por ejemplo, con la naturaleza sistemática de las gramáticas adultas sin dar importancia a la dimensión o al tipo de sistematicidad.

Para Gass y Selinker (2010), una interlengua (IL) es el sistema lingüístico que los estudiantes crean y que no debería considerarse "como un sistema deficitario, es decir, una lengua llena de errores aleatorios, sino como un sistema libre con su propia estructura" (Gass y Selinker 2010:14; trad.). El aspecto más importante de la IL es que "los mismos aprendientes imponen la estructura a los datos lingüísticos que poseen y formulan un sistema de carácter interno" (Gass y Selinker 2010:14; trad.). Mientras que el sistema de la IL tiene numerosos elementos procedentes de la lengua nativa y de la lengua meta del aprendiente, este posee otros elementos ("novel forms") que no nacen de ninguna de ellas. Estas formas "son la esencia empírica de la interlengua" (Gass y Selinker 2010:14; trad.). Un concepto crucial asociado a la interlengua es el de "fossilización", "que generalmente se refiere al cese del aprendizaje" (Gass y Selinker 2010:14; trad.). Por ello, la "fossilización" se ha definido como una forma lingüística, una característica y norma que ha quedado "consolidada de manera permanente en la interlengua del estudiante de una segunda lengua en una forma que se desvía de la norma de la lengua meta y continúa apareciendo en el habla, inmune a una mayor exposición a la lengua meta" (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language* (Flexner y Hanck 1988: 755 citado por Gass y Selinker 2010:14; trad.). Otros autores (Long (2003) mencionado en Gass y Selinker 2010) han apuntado al concepto de "estabilización" como más apropiado a la hora de describir el sistema lingüístico de los

aprendientes, dado que un cese permanente del aprendizaje es muy difícil de detectar. Sin embargo, es necesario resaltar que las formas "estabilizadas" o "fossilizadas" existen al margen de la cantidad de exposición de los aprendientes a la lengua meta.

Si consideramos las definiciones y características de las IL mencionadas anteriormente, ¿es posible decir que el Inglés de Sierra Leona es una interlengua o un tipo "nuevo" de inglés? Teniendo en cuenta que (a) el inglés se aprende en Sierra Leona en el aula con hablantes no nativos que a su vez lo aprendieron de una forma muy similar, por lo que los alumnos tienen muy poca oportunidad de usar la lengua meta fuera de la clase y de los contextos formales relacionados con ella (en la mayoría de casos), y (b) los usuarios del inglés en Sierra Leona dominan otras lenguas que sin duda alguna han sido una gran influencia para esta (en particular el Krio); podemos determinar estos como los pasos iniciales hacia la indigenización y localización del inglés en Sierra Leona (véase Mufwene 2001, 2009; Makoni 1993: 101ff; Turay 2010; véase también la sección anterior). Asimismo, teniendo en cuenta las áreas y la variedad de propósitos que motivan el uso del inglés en Sierra Leona: como lengua de instrucción, lengua oficial del estado, de debates parlamentarios, de los medios de comunicación, de cooperación y comunicación internacional, entre otros ámbitos, podemos deducir que el inglés es una lengua "localizada" en Sierra Leona, especialmente en zonas urbanas. La mayoría de la gente que vive en zonas rurales utilizan las lenguas sierraleonesas en sus actividades cotidianas y, así, tienen muy poco contacto con el inglés; solo lo emplean en situaciones de estricta formalidad y en ocasiones muy limitadas. En cambio, aquellos que residen en áreas urbanas tienen más privilegios en lo que se refiere a la frecuencia con que pueden escuchar y hablar este idioma (es decir, en el caso de aquellos que hablan y entienden inglés). En general, podemos decir que el inglés no está sustituyendo a ninguna de las lenguas indígenas en Sierra Leona, al menos no de forma evidente. Desde un punto de vista sociolingüístico, si hay algún idioma que reemplaza a cualquier otra lengua(s) en Sierra Leona, este sería el Krio tanto en zonas urbanas como rurales porque, como ocurre en otros países africanos con presencia del inglés, el inglés en Sierra Leona se utiliza principalmente en ámbitos institucionales oficiales, en zonas urbanas y en contextos muy formales. Esta realidad ha llevado a muchos investigadores a confirmar que el inglés en África se adopta como Segunda Lengua en ambientes urbanos y como Lengua Extranjera en zonas rurales (léase el capítulo uno, en el que la bibliografía sobre países anglófonos en África Occidental apoya esta tesis; véase también Makoni 1993: 102).

3.4. "World Englishes", "New Englishes" y "Postcolonial Englishes"

Se ha considerado a los "New Englishes" como consecuencias de las políticas coloniales británicas desde una perspectiva sociohistórica, cultural y política (Makoni 1993; Ugorji 2010; Crystal 1997, 2004; Schneider 2007). Makoni (1993: 103ff) destaca cuatro factores responsables de la aparición de los mismos: la política colonial lingüística británica, la localización, el motor de enseñanza, y las implicaciones pedagógicas. Dejando estos cuatro factores aparte, los "New Englishes" constituyen una experiencia lingüística, psicológica y cultural totalmente nueva. Ugorji (2010) es muy claro en este sentido:

Los "New Englishes" constituyen fenómenos en el mundo material y en la experiencia lingüística; y como entidades, son parte de observaciones diarias; como comportamiento humano, están asociados a los sistemas cognitivos humanos, especialmente con respecto a la

intuición de sus hablantes nativos; y como entidades culturales, se adquieren en un proceso de socialización o se aprenden y transmiten de generación en generación; y, como instrumentos, abordan exigencias comunicativas; y son vehículos de culturas, un cruce de culturas y de ideologías socioculturales (Ugorji 2010: 131, trad.).

En este sentido, el Inglés de Sierra Leona, como una variedad de "New Englishes", muestra la experiencia lingüística y cultural de aquellos que hablan inglés en Sierra Leona; esta variedad se puede evaluar tanto desde una perspectiva cognitiva como combinada con el hecho de que es un instrumento comunicativo que cumple unos requisitos determinados y se puede emplear para expresar lo que es típicamente sierraleonés.

En cuanto a la relación de la historia de la Sierra Leona colonial y postcolonial con la evolución del inglés como la lengua oficial del estado, la educación, la política, la administración, los negocios, la comunicación internacional y su consiguiente indigenización, los capítulos tres y cuatro buscan aportar respuestas a esta cuestión, al considerar que

lo que cuenta aquí no es la historia colonial o el antiguo estatus colonial de un país determinado *per se*, y tampoco la conexión británica en concreto, sino más bien el tipo de situación de contacto que han causado esas circunstancias históricas, la expansión y el traslado de los usos de un único idioma a territorios nuevos donde evoluciona un tipo característico de situación de contacto lingüístico (Schneider 2007: 3-4, 2003: 235; trad.).

En definitiva, esos capítulos (tres y cuatro) seguirán el traslado del inglés hasta Sierra Leona, el contacto que la lengua ha tenido con otros idiomas al ser adoptado allí, el uso de la misma en la educación en Sierra Leona y las políticas lingüísticas impuestas hasta el momento en lo que concierne al protagonismo del inglés o de otras lenguas. Esto también nos recuerda que los "Postcolonial Englishes" deberían considerarse un terreno de investigación lingüística, a partir de casos tanto generales como específicos (Schneider 2007). ¿Cuáles son, entonces, los "Postcolonial Englishes" (de aquí en adelante llamados PCE siguiendo a Schneider 2007)? ¿Es posible llamar al inglés hablado y utilizado en Sierra Leona una variedad postcolonial de este idioma universal? Si es así, ¿qué características comparte con otros PCE? Si no es así, ¿qué diferencia al Inglés de Sierra Leona (a partir de ahora SLE)?

Los "Postcolonial Englishes" son variedades del inglés "moldeadas y determinadas por las condiciones sociohistóricas de sus orígenes y por la naturaleza social del hombre" (Schneider 2007: 8; trad.). Estos dos factores, (a) las condiciones sociohistóricas que dieron forma a los PCE y (b) la naturaleza de los seres humanos, serán esenciales en este estudio del SLE, y su aceptación llevará a una respuesta positiva a la pregunta planteada en el párrafo anterior sobre la consideración del SLE como una variedad colonial. En primer lugar, los hechos sociohistóricos que rodean al Asentamiento de Freetown, lugar de nacimiento del Inglés de Sierra Leona, apuntan a unas variedades diversas de inglés que fueron traídas, moldeadas y desarrolladas a partir de circunstancias muy diferentes a aquellos lugares donde los ingleses "nativos" migraron y se asentaron (es el caso de América del Norte (Estados Unidos y Canadá), Nueva Zelanda y Australia). Las personas que se asentaron en Freetown no eran hablantes nativos de inglés en el sentido más estricto (véase el capítulo tres). De hecho, el inglés que estos trajeron consigo se ha analizado como una variedad reestructurada (véase Holm 1989; Fyfe 1991; Montgomery 1999; Huber 1999, 2004a; Hackert y Huber 2007). El segundo aspecto es el hecho de que la lengua inglesa es una adquisición educativa en Sierra Leona, que eleva al profesor a la clase alta de

la sociedad en los ámbitos social, político y económico debido a su posición especial dentro del Estado y a su papel en el sistema educativo (Schneider 2007; Spencer, ed.: 1971). Esto implica que todos aquellos que hablan inglés en Sierra Leona aprendieron la lengua en el sistema escolar y la practican con otros que la adquirieron del mismo modo; lo que incluye a miembros de la familia, amigos, compañeros de trabajo y conocidos.

3.5. Fases de evolución de los "New Englishes"

En base a los conceptos de contacto entre lenguas, la ecología de la evolución de la lengua y los principios de Competición-Selección e Indigenización de la lengua (véase Thomason 2001; Mufwene 2001b, 2005, 2009; Hickey (ed.) 2010), el "Modelo dinámico" de cinco fases, o los ciclos evolutivos de las PCE desarrollados por Schneider (2003, 2007), está de acuerdo con el hecho de que "los hablantes continúan redefiniendo y expresando sus identidades lingüísticas y sociales, adaptándose de forma constante a otros individuos y de ese modo ajustando sus comportamientos discursivos a aquellos con los que desean asociarse y estar en asociación" (Schneider 2007: 21; trad.; véase también Milroy 1992; Labov 1994; Campbell 1998; Tagliamonte 2012). ¿Cómo se produce este fenómeno? Una respuesta clara sería la siguiente: los "World Englishes", "New Englishes" y PCE se desarrollan, moldean y hablan en ambientes bi- o multiculturales, como los que se dan en situaciones de contacto entre lenguas (Schneider 2011:335). En definitiva, el contacto entre lenguas y la ecología lingüística dictan la evolución de los diversos tipos de inglés en todo el mundo. Por este motivo, nos proponemos poner en perspectiva el "Modelo dinámico" de Schneider (2003, 2007) para explicar la evolución del Inglés de Sierra Leona, al mismo tiempo que lo unimos al proceso histórico que comenzó con los ingleses reestructurados llegados a Freetown con los primeros colonos y al entorno sociolingüístico que determina su uso en la Sierra Leona actual.

Primera fase - Fundación (Schneider 2007: 33-36)

Esta fase señala la llegada de un grupo humano y, con este, de un idioma nuevo. Aunque el número de inmigrantes o colonos sea insignificante, el hecho de que puedan usar su lengua entre ellos es de gran importancia. Su relación con los indígenas no es muy cordial en un principio y los recién llegados se consideran superiores a ellos bien por su educación o por su estatus militar o social, del que la población local parece carecer. La relación en apariencia amable se volverá violenta debido a la forma en que los colonos intenten controlar a la población local.

Esta fase, en el contexto de Sierra Leona, se podría explicar a nivel contextual como la llegada de los europeos a África Occidental, en general, y a Sierra Leona en particular durante la trata de esclavos, seguida por la fundación del Asentamiento de Freetown, la declaración de Freetown como colonia británica y las consiguientes actividades misioneras. Las secciones 3.2 y 3.3 analizan esta fase en mayor detalle.

Segunda Fase – Estabilización Exonormativa (Schneider 2007: 36-40)

En los orígenes de esta fase parece existir una estabilidad política debido a una influencia extranjera, en nuestro caso, Gran Bretaña. Se establecen colonias o territorios dependientes. El inglés, en este caso,

sirve como lengua para la administración, y la educación, y hay un pequeño número de hablantes nativos expatriados. Lo que resulta interesante es que la colonia, como se conoce en este momento,

cumple el propósito para el que se fundó - dar hogar a nuevos colonos y aportar tierras agrícolas; servir como puesto fronterizo para actividades comerciales, para la milicia o para actividades misioneras; asegurar el control político y rutas navales; proporcionar un lugar de destierro para criminales y otra gente no deseada en la metrópolis (Schneider 2007: 36; trad.).

Las actividades mencionadas en este fragmento requieren más tierra y una expansión territorial de la colonia y, por consiguiente, más contactos con la población indígena. Esto también es alentador para un número cada vez mayor de indígenas que buscan el contacto con los colonos como medio para "mejorar su estatus o su prosperidad económica" (Schneider 2007: 37; trad.).

Si tenemos en cuenta que Freetown fue declarada colonia de la Corona Británica en 1808 y que el *Fourah Bay College* fue fundado en 1827, podríamos dar por sentado que esto marca el comienzo de esta fase, aunque también se puede unir a la primera fase, pues ya existía un cierto grado de organización en Freetown antes de que fuera declarada colonia británica. La declaración del resto del país como Protectorado Británico en 1896 y la expansión de la educación y las relaciones entre etnias sierraleonesas y representantes de la corona Británica derivadas de la misma aportó un nuevo impulso para el nacimiento del Inglés de Sierra Leona, teniendo en cuenta la intensidad del contacto entre aquellos que hablan inglés y los otros idiomas que ya existían y el contacto con el inglés en todo el país. Al considerar también el hecho de que los primeros colonos trajeron consigo algunas variedades reestructuradas del inglés, esta fase se podría considerar como aquella que trajo esta lengua a Freetown. El contacto con los indígenas y con otros africanos recapturados trasladados al asentamiento allanó el terreno para el contacto entre lenguas y el proceso resultante de pidgin y criollización de estas variedades del inglés. Las valoraciones incluidas en las secciones 3.4, 4.1 y 4.2 pueden aportar más en lo que concierne a esta fase.

Tercera Fase - Nativización (Schneider 2007: 40-48)

Como esta supone la fase más importante, "la transformación lingüística y cultural" se afianza en este momento. Los diversos grupos presentes en el país comienzan a darse cuenta de que se están produciendo transformaciones a diferentes niveles: tradicional, de identidad, se forman asociaciones y grupos socio-políticos, se produce una combinación de lo antiguo y lo nuevo, y el uso de la lengua "se convierte en un problema eminentemente práctico" (Schneider 2007: 41; trad.).

En esta fase se obtiene la independencia política y se crea un estado semi-autónomo, además la diferencia entre los grupos indígenas y colonizadores se reduce aunque "las diferencias en el trasfondo cultural, el origen étnico, la lengua, la prosperidad y el estilo de vida, así como el estatus y el poder político no desaparecen de repente, sino que van reduciendo su importancia de forma gradual" (Schneider 2007: 41; trad.). Las barreras iniciales entre "nosotros" y "los demás" se fusionan en un "nosotros" al tiempo que los diferentes grupos se acercan unos a otros en busca de un bien común.

Con la independencia conseguida en 1961 y el despliegue de responsabilidades que caen ahora en manos de los sierraleoneses, el inglés se habla cada vez más entre los mismos, en especial en lo concerniente a asuntos de estado. Esto promueve la aparición de un Inglés de Sierra Leona auténtico

y ecológico. Las funciones de representantes políticos, educadores, directores de instituciones gubernamentales y otras responsabilidades administrativas están ahora en manos de sierraleoneses procedentes de diferentes orígenes étnicos y culturales. El inglés se convierte así en la lengua administrativa, neutra y funcional; por ello, los sierraleoneses se convierten en creadores de un inglés local, hablado dentro y fuera de casa. Las secciones 4.3 y 4.4 estudian los aspectos relacionados con esta fase.

Cuarta Fase - Estabilización Endonormativa (Schneider 2007: 48-52)

Esta etapa sigue inmediatamente a la independencia de la nueva nación y, como tal, el país tiene ahora la obligación de tomar decisiones sobre sus cuestiones lingüísticas, convirtiéndose así en una nación autónoma a nivel cultural.

Los antiguos colonos se ven a sí mismos ahora como parte de esta nueva nación y su nueva identidad y, por ello, "el papel de la identidad étnica, y los límites étnicos en sí, tenderán a redefinirse y a ser considerados cada vez menos importantes" ya que ahora se ha caído en la cuenta de que el concepto de etnia "no es más que un constructo social" y no biológico (Schneider 2007: 49; trad.). Al tiempo que la idea de construir una nación se convierte en la consigna del nuevo país, todas las otras posibles diferencias quedan, de este modo, como periféricas.

El proceso de nativización que comenzó en el período anterior justo después de la independencia se completa durante esta fase. Se ha producido un progreso lingüístico y, como consecuencia, el inglés ha consolidado su presencia como representación simbólica y está ahora bien arraigado en el panorama lingüístico de Sierra Leona. Ahora es el Inglés de Sierra Leona. Un sierraleonés pasa a ser conocido por su forma de hablar esta lengua tanto en casa como en un plano internacional. El capítulo cinco y el corpus incluido en el CD tienen como interés ampliar algunas nociones sobre esta fase.

Quinta Fase - Diferenciación (Schneider 2007: 52-55)

Esta etapa marca una independencia política, cultural y lingüística absoluta. La aparición de una nueva variedad lingüística ya se ha completado y es indiscutible. La diferenciación lingüística interna sale a la luz pues las diferencias "entre individuos y en relación a su estatus económico, sus categorías sociales y sus predilecciones personales salen a la luz y pueden ganar un mayor protagonismo" (Schneider 2007: 53; trad.).

La construcción de la identidad de las personas se restringe -la comunidad inmediata gana más peso que la nacional (Schneider 2007: 53). De este modo, la identidad de un individuo se basa ahora en su grupo sociocultural y sociolingüístico y en cómo este se define. Cabe destacar que resulta muy complicado llegar a alcanzar esta fase en comunidades anglófonas monolingües. Esta etapa solo es posible en comunidades bi- o multilingües donde hay lenguas indígenas que coexisten con el inglés y sus habitantes muestran un alto nivel de competencia en al menos una de esas lenguas o más. Dada la expansión de la educación y la importancia que ha recibido el inglés en la Sierra Leona de nuestros días, y el uso del inglés en los medios de comunicación y en las redes sociales, así como en otras muchas esferas de Sierra Leona, se debería considerar que el inglés conduce a la diferenciación.

Esto significa que el inglés de los hablantes sierraleoneses cultos puede reflejar sus afiliaciones étnicas y regionales. Sin embargo, los hallazgos de diversos expertos de la lengua con respecto al Inglés de Sierra Leona se deben reforzar antes de pasar a un intento de aproximación a esta fase. Una investigación sobre las afiliaciones regionales y étnicas de los hablantes sierraleoneses cultos aportará cierta ayuda en este sentido.

10. Historia sociolingüística de la lengua inglesa en Freetown

4.0. Introducción

El envío de gente y la consiguiente diáspora de variedades reestructuradas del inglés, a través de las acciones filantrópicas de Granville Sharp para reubicar a los "Black Poor" de Londres y, como consecuencia, a otras personas en la misma situación desde América a Freetown hace doscientos veintiocho años no fue solo una misión para civilizar o de salvación, sino que también implicaba la idea de "una posible frontera utópica para la mente y el alma: un comienzo nuevo, en el que la humanidad pueda enmendar sus pecados del pasado" (Bledsoe 1992: 186; trad.; véase también Alie 1990: 48). Para Alie (1990: 51, trad.), Sharp "imaginó una comunidad libre e independiente" que "sirviera como núcleo de la expansión del cristianismo y la civilización europea por África". Por tanto, la existencia del inglés con todos sus dialectos en la nueva ecología de Freetown, la "Provincia de la Libertad" (Fyfe 1991: 2; trad.), que ha llamado la atención de algunos lingüistas (Spencer 1971; Jones 1971; Jabbi 1972; Holm 1989; Pemagbi 1989; Fyfe 1991; Conteh-Morgan 1997; Huber 1999, 2004a; Montgomery 1999, y Hackert y Huber 2007) se debería tomar como una variedad inducida por contacto, teniendo en cuenta la diversidad lingüística de las distintas formas de inglés que hablaban los colonos y su coexistencia con hablantes de otras lenguas (africanas en ese caso) en diversas circunstancias dentro de una sociedad en la que una mezcla de personas y lenguas convivían en lo que fueron dos fases especialmente importantes: el asentamiento (1787-1850; 1808-1863) y la colonización (1808 & 1896). Como en otros países de habla inglesa en África (Occidental), con la llegada de la independencia en 1961, el inglés se mantuvo como lengua oficial del estado y la administración y, como lengua de instrucción con sus respectivas implicaciones sociales, políticas y económicas en Sierra Leona.

Este apartado es una apreciación sociohistórica y (socio)lingüística del Asentamiento de Freetown durante los siglos XVIII y XIX, con especial atención a una de las variedades del inglés más documentadas en esta zona, la implementada por los colonos de Nova Scotia, con el fin de determinar si es posible considerar que el uso actual del inglés en Sierra Leona, y en Freetown en particular, muestra una reestructuración y un cambio lingüístico inducidos por contacto, según la historia de este asentamiento en relación con la lengua, la gente y la sociedad.

4.1. El panorama lingüístico de Sierra Leona

La instauración del inglés como lengua administrativa y diplomática oficial y como lengua de instrucción en los países de Asia y África que eran antiguas colonias británicas exige una investigación sociolingüística exhaustiva. Esto se viene produciendo así porque el inglés se ha convertido en una más de las "lenguas indígenas" en estos países, primero por su uso, función y estatus y, segundo, por su coexistencia continua con esas lenguas indígenas. Por medio de este contacto lingüístico, es posible

apreciar la presencia del inglés en esos idiomas y viceversa, en forma de "préstamos", lo que da pie a una situación de influencia mutua.

Siempre teniendo presente el panorama lingüístico de Sierra Leona (de aquí en adelante SLLL), y la política lingüística del país, que no ofrece igualdad de oportunidades de uso y función a todas las lenguas habladas en él, no podemos considerar que Sierra Leona sea un país multilingüe, sino más bien un país con una gran diversidad lingüística (Sengova 1987; Kamanda 2002; Fyle 2003). Esto se debe a que el multilingüismo implica que dos o más lenguas poseen un protagonismo idéntico en la educación, la identidad lingüística, el estatus y la puesta en práctica de políticas lingüísticas (véase UNESCO 1953, 2003; Dalby 1981; Bamgbose 1999; y también Baptista, Brito y Bangura 2010, entre otros).

Para Fyle "Tal vez no existe ni un solo país realmente monolingüe en África, incluso si pensamos solo en lenguas indígenas" (Fyle 2003: 115; trad.). También mantiene que "en África el ciudadano medio es por necesidad un animal multilingüe, no solo bilingüe" (Fyle 2003: 117; trad.). Esta última cita está conectada con nuestro punto de vista de que Sierra Leona, como la mayoría de los países africanos, tiene lo que deberíamos llamar "diversidad lingüística" en lugar de multilingüismo. Por decirlo de otro modo, posee un multilingüismo individual, pero no social. Esto se apoya también en el ejemplo de Fyle (2003: 116; trad.): "En Sierra Leona, por ejemplo, una persona puede hablar el vai antes que el mende, antes que el Krio, antes que inglés, antes que el francés". Al margen de las discrepancias, para poder tener una sociedad multilingüe funcional debe haber igualdad lingüística en la educación, la identidad y el estatus lingüístico. Lo que es evidente en Sierra Leona, como en otros países de África, son las tendencias multilingües individuales, pero no aquellas que afectan a la sociedad al completo.

4.2. La Historia del inglés en Sierra Leona

Como ocurrió con todos los idiomas europeos, la diáspora del inglés en África en general y en Sierra Leona en particular se debe a diversos factores: el comercio, el colonialismo, la evangelización y también la Segunda Guerra Mundial (Jenkins 2003). En el caso de Sierra Leona, consideramos que son factores de esa diáspora la trata de esclavos, el Asentamiento de Freetown, el colonialismo y la evangelización. En lo que respecta a la perspectiva histórica del inglés en este país, nuestra incumbencia es el estudio de la lengua a partir del contexto de sus hablantes.

4.2.1. La trata de esclavos y el desarrollo del inglés reestructurado

Aunque los portugueses fueron los pioneros de la trata de esclavos en África Occidental, los ingleses participaron en igual medida en estas actividades: "Los portugueses mantuvieron su monopolio en la trata de esclavos hasta el siglo XVII, cuando esta actividad les fue arrebatada por los holandeses primero y después por los ingleses, los franceses y otros europeos del norte" (Holm 1989: 410; trad.). Con su participación en la trata, los ingleses iniciaron varias expediciones con el fin de llevarse esclavos de muchos países de África Occidental, en concreto Sierra Leona, Gambia, Ghana y otros países hoy anglófonos en esta zona de África, y como consecuencia fundaron, primero fuertes y después familias con mujeres africanas para agilizar el comercio de esclavos (Holm 1989: 410; véase también Huber 1999: 62). Con estas dos creaciones, los fuertes y las familias, se puso en marcha el motor que

favorecería el uso del inglés como lengua o de sus variedades. Mientras que las mujeres africanas de los ingleses hablaban "una variedad pidgin estable del inglés o una variedad inestable de aprendizaje o incluso una variedad del Inglés como Segunda Lengua", las terceras generaciones de este tipo de familias ya hablaban una "variedad criolla del inglés" y los niños afro-ingleses "crecieron hablando no solo el criollo sino también la lengua del grupo etno-lingüístico de su madre" (Holm 1989: 410; trad.). Teniendo todo esto en cuenta, podemos decir, por tanto, que el nacimiento del pidgin inglés y de las lenguas criollas en África Occidental se produjo a raíz de la presencia británica en el negocio de la trata de esclavos. No obstante, esas variedades reestructuradas del inglés no eran inmunes a las influencias tanto de las lenguas africanas indígenas como de otras lenguas europeas relacionadas con el comercio de esclavos, en especial el portugués (Holm 1989: 411).

Otro factor que determina el uso extendido del inglés en África Occidental fue la exportación de afroamericanos con su inglés reestructurado y de otros hablantes de criollo inglés procedentes de Jamaica y de otros núcleos de plantaciones, que marcó el comienzo de la fundación de Freetown como asentamiento de esclavos emancipados y, así, la consiguiente fundación de Freetown como colonia británica primero y después del resto de Sierra Leona como Protectorado (véase Fyfe ed.: 1991; Montgomery 1999; Huber 2004). Asimismo, muchos africanos que eran recapturados y embarcados en barcos negreros hacia la esclavitud, llegaban a Freetown cuando los británicos interceptaban esas embarcaciones (Holm 1989: 411–412). Según Mazrui "el impacto de Sierra Leona en el conjunto de África Occidental tuvo más que ver con la difusión del inglés que del Krio", en especial con la fundación del *Fourah Bay College* (Mazrui 1975: 41 citado en Wolf 2001; trad.). El éxito de los misioneros sierraleoneses, sobre todo porque sus actividades estaban vinculadas a la educación y la civilización, se expresa en el siguiente fragmento:

Los hombres de Sierra Leona están por eso imponiendo la civilización, las costumbres inglesas, enseñando a la gente el uso de la escritura y la imprenta y propiciando la adopción de leyes escritas. Ellos están haciendo lo que nosotros no podemos, pues no podemos utilizar los medios que ellos emplean para conseguir sus objetivos (Townsend a Venn, 3.4.1866; CMS CA2/085 citado por Ajayi 1965: 197 citado en Huber 1999: 139; trad.).

Por sí misma, la difusión del inglés y del Krio, y su consiguiente influencia en el pidgin inglés de África Occidental por parte de los sierraleoneses se debía al hecho de que, después de que Gran Bretaña ganara con éxito el control de ciertas áreas, los británicos enviaron a Krios sierraleoneses hacia otras regiones (Gambia, Nigeria, Camerún, y también Guinea Ecuatorial) como administradores, misioneros, comerciantes y educadores en lugar de enviar a ciudadanos británicos (Holm 1989: 412). Sin embargo, cuando los británicos "predominaban en el imperio colonial británico que fue África Occidental desde la década de 1880 hasta su independencia", los administradores y educadores británicos fueron enviados a los países ya mencionados para sustituir a los sierraleoneses, puesto que "las variedades pidgin y criollas del inglés se empezaban a considerar bárbaras y antiéticas para ser parte de la "misión civilizadora" de Gran Bretaña" (Holm 1989: 412; trad.).

4.2.2. El Asentamiento de Freetown

La fundación de Freetown como la "Provincia de la Libertad" en 1787 (Holm 1988/9; Fyfe 1991; Huber 1999; véase también Alie 1990), supuso el comienzo del período que sentó las bases de la colonización

de Sierra Leona y, en consecuencia, la ecología lingüística del inglés y del Krio. Una plétora de formas de inglés y lenguas africanas traídas por los colonos o los inmigrantes dominó la escena lingüística de la zona occidental de la actual Sierra Leona. Hubo cuatro grupos principales que se establecieron en Freetown, tres de ellos con diferentes variedades del inglés como resultado de sus diferentes antecedentes lingüísticos:

1. Los colonos originales o "Black Poor" de Inglaterra (reasentados en Freetown en 1787),
2. Los "Nova Scotians", esclavos africanos que ayudaron a los británicos durante la Guerra Americana de Independencia (reasentados en Freetown entre febrero y marzo de 1792)
3. Los Cimarrones de Jamaica (reasentados en Freetown en septiembre de 1800) y,
4. Los esclavos "recapturados" -africanos emancipados que se habían asentado en Freetown entre 1808 y 1863 con sus respectivas lenguas africanas.

Aparte de estos cuatro grupos también tuvieron presencia los colonos europeos, la mayoría británicos, aunque este grupo de residencia no tuvo un número significativo de miembros debido a los altos índices de mortalidad y a que su población total no llegaba al 1% en 1811 (Huber 1999: 80). Además había otros grupos minoritarios: 34 esclavos libres de Estados Unidos que llegaron en 1816; 1100 soldados licenciados del 4º Regimiento de India Occidental ubicados en aldeas cercanas (Kent, Waterloo, Hastings, Wellington y York) en abril de 1819, que trajeron consigo variedades reestructuradas del inglés del Nuevo Mundo, las cuales pueden haber dejado huellas lingüísticas en el Krio. Junto a estos, un mes más tarde llegó a Freetown otro grupo de soldados, el 2º Regimiento de India Occidental "para sustituir al disuelto *Royal West African Corps*". Además, ochenta y cinco presidiarios barbadenses compraron su libertad en Freetown después de dos o tres años de servicio comunitario (Kuczynski 1948 citado en Huber 1999: 81).

Aunque en un principio los krus representaban un número minúsculo de los habitantes de Freetown, con la abolición de la esclavitud estos decidieron emigrar a Freetown, ya que su fuente de ingresos (por trabajar en los barcos de esclavos) se había visto reducida en lo que es hoy Liberia. Así, comenzaron a trabajar en tierra como cocineros, sirvientes o en fábricas de madera a lo largo de Sierra Leona: en Freetown "cada familia tiene un *krooman* que carga el agua, la madera y a menudo cocina" (Davies 1835: 25 citado en Huber 1999: 82; Fyfe 1962: 78, 136 citado en Huber 1999: 81, 82; trad.). Aunque se sabe poco sobre si los krus tuvieron influencia en el Krio debido sobre todo a su estilo de vida, y a sus contratantes, que solían ser negreros, comerciantes, exploradores y miembros de la Marina Inglesa, algunos lingüistas como Tonkin los consideran difusores importantes del pidgin inglés (Huber 1999: 83; véase también Tonkin 1971: 143).

Los indígenas sierraleoneses que vivían alrededor de la península de Freetown en esta época eran los Temné, que fueron de gran utilidad para los colonos, ya que ayudaban a algunas mujeres emigrantes a preparar la yuca, les vendían productos locales y trabajaban en sus granjas (Huber 1999: 80). Sin embargo, como el influjo de colonos aumentó "no se puede considerar que los Temné vivieran "dentro" de la colonia" (Kuczynski 1948: 75 citado en Huber 1999: 80; trad.).

4.3. Colonización y evangelización

El *Fourah Bay College*, fundado en 1827 como institución teológica, era popularmente conocido como la

"Atenas de África Occidental" por el hecho de que era el primer centro de estas características en África Occidental y por la excelencia académica de la institución y de sus graduados. Pero, ¿qué implica esta asociación? Mientras que los hablantes griegos sostenían que las lenguas no griegas "sonaban como el balido de las cabras" (Hair 1987: 560; trad.), Freetown, por medio del *Fourah Bay College*, perseguía una tradición lingüística muy diferente a la de Atenas: "El Freetown del siglo XIX pudo o no haber sido lo que se llamó una vez la "Atenas de África Occidental" pero, por lo menos en un sentido, mejoró el papel de Atenas" (Hair 1987: 560; trad.). ¿Cómo hicieron esto Freetown o el *Fourah Bay College*?

El cristianismo no tiene una lengua sagrada, como ocurre con el Islam. De hecho, es una religión políglota que acoge a todo tipo de personas con sus lenguas propias y, como tal, apoya el estudio de otros idiomas, incluso de los indígenas "para permitir la instrucción y la conversión" (Hair 1987: 560; trad.), un procedimiento muy seguido por muchos misioneros. Según Hair (1987: 560-61), el estudio de las lenguas africanas en Freetown pretendía descubrir qué idiomas se hablaban en África y cuáles eran sus zonas de uso para poder así sentar un precedente en el estudio de esas lenguas y sus dialectos en relación a su necesidad inmediata. De igual importancia fue el estudio de la gramática, la sintaxis y el vocabulario de esas lenguas para crear alfabetos que "representaran el habla de forma adecuada". Con tal objetivo, de entre los mil idiomas africanos que estudiaron, cuatrocientos "tenían formas escritas más o menos competentes" y, así, la Freetown colonial tuvo una contribución inmensa en el estudio global de las lenguas africanas (véase Koelle 1963 [1854]). En consonancia con esta actitud lingüística compasiva hacia las lenguas indígenas africanas en general (opuesta a la actitud despectiva de Atenas hacia las lenguas "barbáricas" no griegas), la Freetown colonial, lideró, mediante el *Fourah Bay College*, los esfuerzos arduos que suponía el análisis de las lenguas sierraleonesas como el temné, el susu y el bullom, sus vecinas lingüísticas más cercanas, al menos de forma superficial. Entre los lingüistas que estudiaron estas lenguas africanas destacan Hannah Kilham, que exploró los vocabularios de treinta lenguas africanas a partir de la comunidad políglota de la Freetown colonial, publicando sus resultados en 1828; los misioneros Shön y Crowther, que evaluaron de forma exhaustiva las lenguas del Níger bajo (el hausa, el yoruba y el ibo), cuyo trabajo fue publicado en 1841; Koelle, que analizó los vocabularios de cien lenguas habladas en Freetown y los publicó en *Polyglotta Africana* en 1854; Nyländer, que estudió el bullom; y Schelenker, que investigó sobre el temné y el bullom (después de Nyländer). Solo con *Polyglotta Africana*, la Freetown colonial contribuyó a alumbrar el panorama lingüístico de África, y con la obra de Crowther con una lengua africana, el yoruba, y el inglés.

4.4. El Inglés de Freetown de los siglos XVIII y XIX

Tras este informe sobre el Freetown precolonial y colonial, desde perspectivas sociohistóricas y sociolingüísticas, esta sección repasa a continuación las peculiaridades de la lengua inglesa traída por uno de los grupos colonizadores, los "Nova Scotians". En cuanto al material publicado en torno al inglés de los colonos en Freetown, el grupo de "Nova Scotia" ha recibido siempre una atención especial debido sobre todo al hecho de que su variedad del inglés se ha conectado y comparado al inglés afroamericano (AAE) y al gullah y el Krio (véase Spencer 1971; Jones 1971; Holm 1989; Fyfe (ed.) 1991; Huber 1999, 2004; Hackert y Huber 2007; Montgomery 1999). De entre estos investigadores, procedemos a comentar las cartas recopiladas por Fyfe (ed.: 1991), así como los artículos de Huber (2004a) y Montgomery

(1999) sobre las similitudes lingüísticas del inglés de Nova Scotia con el AAE, el Krio y el gullah.

Esta sección analiza tres obras esenciales sobre el inglés de los colonos de Sierra Leona, publicados primero en Fyfe (ed. 1991), una colección de cartas y peticiones escritas por los colonos de Nova Scotia en Freetown. Montgomery (1999) y Huber (2004) conectan las características lingüísticas de estas cartas con las primeras fases del AAE y con el gullah, una variedad reestructurada del inglés hablada en los estados del sur de Virginia, Carolina del Norte y del Sur y Georgia. Huber (2004) lleva esta conexión más allá del estudio inicial del asentamiento de Freetown (Huber 1999); y conecta el gullah con el Krio y otras variedades reestructuradas del inglés (Huber 2004). Los documentos (Fyfe ed.1991) en los que se basa esta investigación son resultado de una serie de quejas, desacuerdos y frustraciones acerca de promesas incumplidas por la Compañía de Sierra Leona, como la obtención de libertad y tierras, que fueron prometidas a los "Nova Scotians" al venir a Freetown desde Canadá, donde Gran Bretaña les había situado inicialmente. Sin embargo, dado que las condiciones climáticas y sociales de Nova Scotia eran hostiles y sus condiciones económicas estaban en deterioro, "aproximadamente dos mil de esos refugiados se marcharon a Sierra Leona en busca de un clima más cálido y de oportunidades para mejorar sus circunstancias, en especial en la posesión de tierras" (Montgomery 1999:3; trad.; véase también Alie 1990: 55ff). Aunque el protagonista, Isaac Anderson, perdió la vida en el proceso, el Asentamiento de Freetown no es solo "el primer intento de establecer un gobierno representativo autónomo en África" (Montgomery 1999: 2; trad.) sino que además garantiza la aparición del Pan-Africanismo: "Su decisión de instalarse en Sierra Leona en 1787, y la consiguiente decisión de construir sus hogares allí por parte de los colonos de Nova Scotia, se puede considerar la primera manifestación práctica del Pan-Africanismo" (Fyfe ed.1991: 2; trad.).

Analizado en retrospectiva, el Asentamiento de Freetown se debería tener en cuenta junto a las ideas de:

- a) La acción filantrópica de personas como Granville Sharp, Thomas Peters, John Clarkson y la Compañía de Sierra Leona para mitigar el sufrimiento de otras personas y mejorar sus condiciones de vida (Alie 1990; Fyfe ed. 1991; Montgomery 1999; Huber 2004);
- b) El Pan-Africanismo: Fyfe cree que la decisión de los primeros colonos y de los "Nova Scotians" de instalarse en Freetown a partir de 1787 "se puede considerar la primera manifestación práctica del Pan-Africanismo" (Fyfe ed.: 1991: 2; véase también Montgomery 1999: 2). Fyfe también menciona que la "Provincia de la Libertad", que alude al asentamiento y la constitución concebidas por Sharp "sería una comunidad con un gobierno autónomo cuyos miembros elegirían su propio gobierno" en la Sierra Leona del siglo XVIII (Fyfe ed.: 1991: 2; trad.), y, en consecuencia,
- c) La falta de fondos de la Compañía de Sierra Leona para hacer funcionar el asentamiento y la búsqueda de una base naval por parte del Gobierno Británico "para la protección de su flota en África Occidental", tomando el puerto natural de Freetown, bien situado, y "el 1 de enero de 1808, la colonia se transformó en una Colonia de la Corona" (Alie 1990: 63; trad.).

Las cuarenta y una cartas y peticiones fueron escritas por personas semi-alfabetas, cuyas profesiones iban desde artesanos, líderes de comunidades, clérigos, hasta aquellos que acudían a iglesias de blancos o que "conocían las instituciones y los procesos administrativos británicos", como se puede

deducir del contenido y estilo de los documentos (Montgomery 1999: 3; trad.). A continuación, repasaremos los análisis de Montgomery (1999) y Huber (2004) sobre los rasgos fonológicos y estructurales de "El Inglés Colonial de Sierra Leona" para Montgomery (ibidem), "la lengua de los Nova Scotians" para Huber (ibidem) y (una de las muchas variedades de) "el gullah en la diáspora" para Hackert y Huber (2007), entre otros.

4.4.1. Rasgos fonológicos

A partir de los documentos recopilados en Fyfe (ed. 1991), Montgomery (1999: 8) y Huber (2004: 80-81) es posible considerar los siguientes como rasgos fonológicos del inglés de los "Nova Scotians", tomando siempre conciencia de su naturaleza coloquial y de su ortografía incorrecta, que muestran la naturaleza fonética y fonológica del nivel de competencia lingüística de los que escriben dichas cartas (Montgomery 1999: 8; Huber 2004: 80-81). Aportamos en el siguiente párrafo algunos ejemplos de Montgomery (ibidem) y otros de Huber (ibidem), aunque todos ellos aparecen en Fyfe (ed.1999):

1. neutralización de la vocal laxa frontal antes de una consonante nasal *sence* (since) y *senceer* (sincere), *blessen* (blessing), *endependence* (independence), *entention* (intention), *sining* (sending);
2. Ausencia de uso de las vocales centrales /ə, ɜ, ʌ/ como en *marcy* (mercy), *sarvant* (servant), *consarned* (concerned), *considaration* (consideration), *porpose* (purpose), *yong* (young);
3. Ausencia de aspiración antes de /w/ o la omisión de /h/ en fórmulas wh- como en *wane* (when), *wich* (which), *wether* (whether);
4. La velar nasal inglesa articulada como /n/ como en *shillen* (shilling), *a Coarden* (according), *being* (been), *blessen* (blessing);
5. Evita grupos consonánticos finales como en *greates* (greatest), *cappin* (captain), *nourishmen* (nourishment);
6. La naturaleza no rótica de los documentos muestra una ausencia de la /r/ en la ortografía de palabras como *honnah* (honor), *yea* (year), *they* (there).

¿Qué relevancia tienen estas escrituras fonológicas del Inglés de Sierra Leona del siglo XVIII con respecto al SLE de hoy? Tomando la caracterización de los rasgos fonológicos de Jones (1971) y la consiguiente influencia que estos tienen en el Inglés de Sierra Leona, es imprescindible conectar los orígenes de algunos de esos rasgos del SLE de hoy con aquellos del SLE del siglo XVIII, tal y como muestran algunos de los rasgos mencionados previamente (véase el capítulo cinco, sección 5.2).

4.4.2. Rasgos estructurales

Montgomery (1999: 9–17) y Huber (2004: 81-84) investigan las características morfológicas de los documentos escritos por los "Nova Scotians", las cartas recogidas en Fyfe (ed. 1991). Sus estudios cuantitativos revelan que el SLE del siglo XVIII presenta los siguientes rasgos estructurales: "zero copula", verbos en tiempos pasados con marcaje nulo, no presentan la -s final en el verbo para la tercera persona del singular, hay una -s verbal como marca de concordancia en contextos de tercera persona del plural, y posee una pluralización de sustantivos regulares e irregulares. También posee otros rasgos estructurales, como el marcaje impreciso del pasado en verbos irregulares o el uso inadecuado de los

artículos indefinidos (véase la sección 3.4.2.2 y compárense estos con los rasgos estructurales del SLE de hoy presentados en 5.3).

5. Descripción general de las tendencias actuales en el Inglés de Sierra Leona: análisis sociolingüístico de una selección de rasgos fonológicos y estructurales

5.0. Introducción

Si bien es cierto que resulta difícil determinar las diferencias categóricas entre una variedad del inglés y otra en el contexto de los "World Englishes" (WE) y los "Postcolonial Englishes" (PCE), sí es posible utilizar los patrones fonológicos, morfológicos y sintácticos de una variedad para localizar características que son particulares de esa variedad en concreto (Wells 1982; Ebot 2000; Schneider *et al* (eds.) 2004; Huber 2004; Huber & Dako 2004; Schneider 2007; Mesthrie y Bhatt 2008, entre otros). Estas peculiaridades, también conocidas como "rasgos característicos de nativización estructural" (Schneider 2007: 72ff; trad.), en especial en países que tienen el Inglés como Segunda Lengua/Lengua Oficial (lo que no implica ignorar a aquellos que usan el inglés como L1), se pueden obtener y son de hecho más evidentes en el registro oral, más que en el escrito. Esto coincide con la postura de Schneider (2007: 72; trad.) que defiende que, "normalmente solo hacen falta unos pocos enunciados del hablante para que los receptores puedan adivinar sus orígenes regionales, y hasta cierto punto también sociales, -nuestros acentos delatan de dónde somos". Aunque esto no se limita solo a los hablantes de inglés L2, incluso los llamados "ingleses estándar de cualquier lugar se marcan a través de la fonética" (Schneider 2007: 72; trad.).

Con esto como telón de fondo, las particularidades lingüísticas de los ingleses nativizados se deben sobre todo a ciertos factores, en concreto: el nivel educativo de sus hablantes (teniendo en cuenta que el inglés se aprende en sociedades L2 por medios académicos y no naturalistas), la experiencia lingüística de esos usuarios, la tipología de otra(s) lengua(s) que estos utilizan, los contextos en los que se adquiere el inglés, el grado de formalidad de la conversación, o la frecuencia de uso del inglés, entre otros.

De este modo, este trabajo se concentra en el registro oral de hablantes cultos de SLE y, por tanto, analiza el corpus obtenido mediante entrevistas que el autor realizó en Freetown en 2011, así como entrevistas y discursos en inglés publicados (Youtube y BBC) y producidos por accionistas y políticos sierraleoneses, en un intento de aportar rasgos únicos del SLE. En este análisis del SLE hemos adoptado rasgos fonológicos y estructurales desde una perspectiva inducida por contacto. Las pruebas derivan de descripciones fonológicas de vocales y de una selección de sonidos consonánticos producidos por sierraleoneses en Freetown, y el marco teórico y metodológico de esta investigación se basa en Wells (1982), Ebot (2000), Huber (2004), Schneider (2007), Mesthrie & Bhatt (2008). También se presenta una valoración morfosintáctica del SLE con atención a su Sintagma Nominal (Noun Phrase - NP) y a su Sintagma Verbal (Verb Phrase - VP). En cuanto a las orientaciones teóricas y metodológicas de esta sección, hemos seguido a Huber & Dako (2004), Schneider (2007), Mesthrie & Bhatt (2008).

Por otro lado, rehusamos etiquetar las peculiaridades lingüísticas del inglés hablado por los sierraleoneses residentes en el país como desviaciones de cualquier otra forma de inglés, digamos británico o americano. Es obvio que los hablantes cultos de Sierra Leona tienen la tendencia de intentar

seguir una fórmula británica del inglés, ya que Sierra Leona fue una colonia británica (desde 1808/1896 hasta 1961) y los criterios educativos están del mismo modo basados en un modelo británico, aunque la realidad lingüística se aleja mucho de la realidad británica, especialmente en lo que concierne al uso del idioma. Sin embargo, el inglés de los sierraleoneses residentes en el país es fruto de factores sociohistóricos y de ecología lingüística, tanto a nivel individual como social. No obstante, las características que presenta el SLE no son exclusivas de Sierra Leona; estos mismos rasgos se encuentran en otros lugares donde el inglés es Segunda Lengua en África (Occidental) (véase Wells 1982; Ebot 2000; Huber 2004; Huber & Dako 2004; Schneider 2007; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008, entre otros).

5.1. Corpus y metodología

Nuestro corpus se elabora a partir de formas de habla tanto casuales como muy formales (entrevistas grabadas por el autor y material publicado en Youtube y BBC) de diferentes hablantes cultos que oscilan entre aquellos que todavía están aprendiendo la lengua (estudiantes de grado y otros cursos en instituciones de educación terciaria) y los que ya se consideran hablantes competentes con fluidez en inglés (profesionales y oficiales públicos y políticos) en Sierra Leona. Nos hemos decantado por datos orales a la hora de analizar las características del SLE porque creemos que a través de ellos podemos recopilar información muy valiosa sobre las tendencias fonológicas de los hablantes, así como de los rasgos estructurales de la variedad. Esto no significa que consideremos insignificantes los datos escritos. Sin embargo, como ya se sabe por la bibliografía moderna, "los datos escritos son una condición *sine qua non*" en los estudios contemporáneos sobre los "World Englishes" (Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 42; trad.), en especial aquellos que adoptan la perspectiva de la sociolingüística variacionista.

En nuestra definición anterior del corpus, nos referimos a "hablantes cultos", pero ¿quién es hablante culto de inglés en Sierra Leona? Conteh-Morgan (1997) clasificó a los hablantes de inglés en Sierra Leona en las siguientes categorías: basilectales, mesolectales, acrolectales y hablantes de inglés casi-británico. Sin embargo, en este estudio seguimos las categorías de Mesthrie & Bhatt (2008) de aquellos que hablan inglés como L2. Esta clasificación se basa en las competencias en desarrollo del inglés L2 y no en competencias de L1, por lo que las terminologías de "basilecto", "mesolecto" y "acrolecto" han tenido que ser adaptadas (véase Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 40). Según esta, un hablante culto de inglés en Sierra Leona debería entrar en uno de los siguientes grupos: *basilang*, *mesolang* bajo, *mesolang* alto, *acrolang* bajo y *acrolang* alto.

No obstante, para nuestro análisis, hemos descartado los grupos a ambos extremos del rango debido a sus competencias en inglés (mínima y demasiado alta respectivamente) y nos hemos centrado en usuarios de inglés en términos de *mesolang* bajo, *mesolang* alto y *acrolang* bajo en Freetown, con edades que comprenden entre los diecisiete y los sesenta años, procedentes de diversos grupos etno-lingüísticos y ambientes profesionales. Por tanto, se observa y analiza una variedad de competencias lingüísticas y niveles de fluidez lingüística, suficientes como para aportar un compendio sólido de datos que fundamenten nuestro estudio.

Nuestro corpus principal comprende un grupo de nueve hombres y ocho mujeres, entrevistados por el autor en 2011 en Freetown. Cada entrevista tuvo una duración aproximada de entre quince y veinte minutos. Estas se realizaron en el campus universitario, así como en el hotel en el que el

autor se alojaba durante su estancia. El autor no conocía a ninguno de los sujetos, y todos ellos fueron seleccionados de forma aleatoria. Aunque guiadas, las conversaciones fueron casuales con la intención de capturar muestras espontáneas del habla natural. Nuestro segundo corpus engloba a un grupo de personajes políticos sierraleoneses de alto nivel, tres hombres y dos mujeres cuyas entrevistas, publicadas en Youtube, se analizaron para respaldar nuestros hallazgos en las entrevistas previas realizadas en Freetown. Abajo presentamos tablas que resumen la información sociolingüística sobre los sujetos de nuestro corpus, incluyendo a los que pertenecen al segundo grupo de hablantes. Dada la naturaleza del objeto de nuestro estudio, identificar algunos de los rasgos fonológicos y estructurales del SLE, no relacionamos todos estos aspectos lingüísticos con las variables sociales que se aprecian en estas tablas. Estas variables sociolingüísticas pueden ser objeto de estudio para futuras investigaciones. Con el fin de mantener el anonimato de nuestros colaboradores, hemos empleado códigos: tres letras y números para aquellos a los que entrevistó el propio autor y cuatro letras para los pertenecientes al corpus extraído de Youtube. Los números para los entrevistados del primer grupo coinciden con las pistas del CD. En la sección 5.3, solo recurrimos a estos números de entrevistado para que le resulte más fácil al lector acceder al enunciado en el CD a través de su número de pista.

5.2. Tendencias fonológicas del Inglés de Sierra Leona

En esta tesis proporcionamos una descripción general de los rasgos peculiares del SLE, características que separan al SLE, por ejemplo, del RP o del Inglés Americano General (GenAm), y tendencias que hacen de igual manera que esa variedad sea similar a otras dentro del contexto de los WE/PCE en África y en el resto del mundo. Hablamos de RP o de Inglés Americano General no para compararlos con el SLE, sino por seguir las normas de aceptabilidad internacionales y por el prestigio que estas mantienen. En cuanto a nuestro corpus (entrevistas y material publicado de hablantes de SLE *mesolang* alto y bajo, y *acrolang* bajo, excluyendo a aquellos con un trasfondo sólido en inglés, los hablantes de un inglés *acrolang* alto), no todos los rasgos mencionados en este capítulo son característicos de todos los hablantes del SLE. Los aquí mencionados son solo un indicio del gran rango de variación fonológica y sus posibilidades. Por ello, se cumplen los principios de la sociolingüística variacionista. Por consiguiente, esta sección describe las tendencias o aproximaciones fonológicas más prominentes del SLE según las obtenidas en el corpus de este estudio. Para proceder de este modo, y en base a los contextos de los WE y PCE en los que analizamos nuestro corpus, hemos acudido a los "Standard Lexical Sets" de Wells (1982: xix, 637) para describir sonidos vocálicos evidentes en el SLE. Para el caso de los sonidos consonánticos, empleamos letras mayúsculas para algunos sonidos y para el resto los símbolos fonéticos habituales, siguiendo a Mesthrie & Bhatt (2008: 126ff). En casos necesarios, hemos utilizado los rasgos fonológicos del Inglés Estándar (RP) solo en beneficio de la comparación (y no como rasero) en nuestra descripción de las tendencias fonológicas del SLE.

Ya se ha aludido a la gran influencia del sistema vocálico del Krio, con siete vocales, en el Inglés de Sierra Leona (Jones 1971: 72; Wells 1982: 636). Con respecto a los sonidos consonánticos, aunque se dice que las lenguas africanas "tienen un sistema consonántico relativamente amplio" (Wells 1982: 639-40; trad.), estos sonidos no parecen tener demasiada interferencia, aunque sí muestran variación en su realización (Huber 2004: 858ff). Dadas las diferencias entre el inglés y la mayoría de lenguas africanas

en relación con el inventario de sonidos del habla, incluso con criollos lexicalizados a partir del inglés (en nuestro caso el Krio), algunos sonidos del inglés son o bien neutralizados, ensordecidos o sustituidos al ser articulados por hablantes que ya tienen otras lenguas (Ebot 2000: 171).

5.2.1. Descripción de los sonidos vocálicos del SLE

Como ya mencionamos arriba, esta sección presenta una guía general para describir las tendencias fonológicas del SLE, un marco teórico en el que se basarán futuras investigaciones sobre la peculiaridad de esta variedad. Por sí misma, no es una descripción detallada del sistema vocálico individual del SLE, sino que más bien busca ofrecer un boceto de las aproximaciones fonológicas de los hablantes de inglés en Sierra Leona.

La coincidencia del Krio y el SLE en lo que respecta a su sistema de siete vocales es resultado de la influencia fonológica del primero por analogía o de la monoptongación de las vocales de "FACE" y "GOAT" articuladas como /e/ y /o/ respectivamente en las formas del inglés en África Occidental (Wells 1982: xix, 637; véase también Huber 2004: 849). En definitiva, por tanto, el SLE, como otras variedades L2 en África Occidental, neutraliza y simplifica las distinciones en cuanto a longitud del RP y el sistema vocálico da como resultado sonidos vocálicos homófonos (que forman pares mínimos) (véase Huber 2004: 849). A pesar de esto, compartimos la idea de Mesthrie & Bhatt (2008: 120) de que la schwa, /ə/, es marginal y que la distinción de longitud no es una característica de las variedades L2 del inglés. En este sentido, el SLE no es una excepción al hecho de que las vocales largas se realizan como vocales cortas (Ebot 2000; Huber 2004; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008). Los resultados de nuestras búsquedas en ambos corpus confirmaron el hecho de que las tendencias fonológicas de SLE, por lo menos en lo que respecta al sistema vocálico, corroboran la hipótesis de que los ingleses de África (Occidental), incluido el SLE, tienen un sistema vocálico reducido, tal y como se muestra a continuación. Casi todos nuestros entrevistados, entre el 98% y el 99%, tanto hombres como mujeres, producen sonidos vocálicos basados en los descubrimientos de Wells (1982) y Jones (1971: 72). Es por esto que, en nuestro caso, proporcionamos un resumen de las tendencias fonológicas conversacionales de los sonidos vocálicos del SLE según han sido observadas en nuestros participantes, tanto del primer como del segundo corpus:

KIT	i	FLEECE	i	NEAR	ia
DRESS	ε	FACE	e	SQUARE	ia
TRAP	a	PALM	a	START	a
LOT	ɔ	THOUGHT	ɔ	NORTH	ɔ
STRUT	ɔ	GOAT	o	FORCE	ɔ
FOOT	u	GOOSE	u	CURE	ɔ
BATH	a	PRICE	ai	happY	i
CLOTH	ɔ	CHOICE	ɔi	lettER	a
NURSE	ɔ	MOUTH	au	commA	a

Figura 1. Conjuntos léxicos estándares de Well

5.2.1.1. Monoptongos cortos

Basándonos en el resumen de las tendencias fonológicas de los sonidos vocálicos del SLE presentado sobre estas líneas, y siguiendo los "lexical sets" de Wells (1982), los monoptongos cortos se convierten en:

KIT = i
DRESS = ε
TRAP = a
LOT = ɔ
STRUT = ɔ
FOOT = u

Hay una fusión entre las vocales de LOT y STRUT. Aquí, una vez más, casi todos nuestros participantes, entre el 98% y el 99%, producen estas vocales tal y como indicamos arriba. Esto quedó también confirmado en el segundo corpus.

5.2.1.2. Monoptongos largos

Teniendo en cuenta que la longitud vocálica no es un rasgo característico en la mayoría de variedades L2 del inglés (Huber 2004: 849; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 122), el SLE, como otras variedades L2 en África, no presenta rasgos contradictorios. Por este motivo, los monoptongos largos se convierten en cortos para la mayoría de nuestros entrevistados:

FLEECE = i
GOOSE = u
THOUGHT = ɔ
NURSE = ɔ
BATH = a

Aparte de la fusión que se produce en THOUGHT y NURSE, como en cualquier otro lugar de África y Asia, no hay distinción entre las vocales de KIT y FLEECE, FOOT y GOOSE y LOT y THOUGHT.

5.2.1.3. Diptongos

Dadas las tendencias fonológicas de nuestros sujetos, los diptongos en el BrE y el GenAm se realizan en el SLE de la siguiente manera. Apreciamos esto en casi todos nuestros colaboradores, tanto hombres como mujeres:

FACE = e
PRICE = ai
MOUTH = au
CHOICE = ɔi
GOAT = o
SQUARE = ia
NEAR = ia
CURE = ɔ

En esencia, las vocales en FACE y GOAT, realizadas como diptongos en el BrE y el GenAm, se convierten en el SLE en vocales cortas, como ocurre en otras variedades L2 y como se muestra arriba (véase Ebot 2000; Huber 2004; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008). La vocal de CURE también se acorta. Asimismo, notamos que las vocales de SQUARE y NEAR se fusionan.

5.2.1.4. Vocales átonas

Las vocales átonas en happY, lettER y commA se articulan como

happY = i
lettER = a
commA = a

Sin excepciones, todos nuestros informantes, tanto hombres como mujeres, producen las vocales átonas tal y como mostramos arriba.

5.2.2. Descripción de los sonidos consonánticos del SLE

Aunque los sonidos vocálicos reflejan variaciones y diversificaciones en su realización en África en general y, como hemos mostrado en el apartado anterior, en el caso de las tendencias fonológicas del SLE los sonidos consonánticos no presentan mayor dificultad en relación con su inteligibilidad mutua.

5.2.2.1. Fricativas

Como ocurre en otras variedades L2 del inglés en África, las fricativas interdentes, /θ, ð/, se sustituyen en el SLE por alveolares oclusivas en posición inicial (en palabras como *think, that, thanks*), intermedia (en palabras como *nothing, something*) y final (en palabras como *mouth, with, bath, birth*) (véase también Ebot 2000: 171; Huber 2004: 858-9; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 126). Esta sustitución consonántica se debe o bien a la falta de fricativas interdentes en el Krio o a la falta de las mismas en otras lenguas indígenas de Sierra Leona. Los ejemplos que aporta Ebot (2000: 171-2) sobre la fonología del inglés de Camerún con respecto a este tipo de sustitución consonántica también se cumplen en el caso del SLE. No parece haber una diferencia en la producción de las fricativas interdentes y las alveolares oclusivas, que se vuelven homófonas en las siguientes palabras: *three* y *tree*; *think* y *tink*; *things* y *tings*; *this* y *dis*; *bath* y *bat*, *birth* y *bat*, *with* y *wit*, *faith* y *fate*, etc.

Presentamos un gráfico con información sobre los entrevistados que pronuncian de esta forma:

GENDER		AGE GROUP				SLE TYPE		
F	M	17-25	26-35	36-46	47-60	LOWER MESOLANG	UPPER MESOLANG	LOWER ACROLANG
70%	67%	67%	67%	100%	50%	75%	67%	63%

5.2.2.2. Nasales

El sufijo progresivo *-ing* se convierte en /n/ en el SLE, como en otras variedades L2 en África (véase Huber 2004: 858; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 128). Todos nuestros participantes, así como aquellos del segundo corpus, realizan el sufijo *-ing* como /n/.

5.2.2.3. Líquidas

Con respecto a este grupo de consonantes, nuestro corpus no ofrece información suficiente sobre, por ejemplo, la alternancia /r – l/, que sí es evidente en algunas de las otras variedades del inglés y que se podría encontrar quizá en algunos hablantes *basilang* de inglés en Sierra Leona (véase Huber 2004: 860-1; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 128 para ejemplos de otras variedades). Sin embargo la "linking /r/" es rara o ausente en el llamado "connected speech", al igual que en otras variedades L2 del inglés en África (Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 128).

5.2.3. Conclusiones

Las tendencias fonológicas o rasgos del SLE presentados arriba confirman las dos preguntas que planteábamos. La primera, si los rasgos fonológicos del SLE eran similares a los de otras variedades de África (Occidental), ya está abordada. No hay grandes diferencias con los hallazgos de otros

investigadores sobre las formas del inglés de África (Occidental). El SLE comparte la mayoría de sus características fonológicas con otras variedades L2 del inglés en África (Occidental) y otros lugares. Un estudio descriptivo en profundidad sobre estas tendencias de los grupos etno-lingüísticos de hablantes de inglés en Sierra Leona (lenguas indígenas individuales como el fula, el limba, el mende, el Krio, el temné, etc.) podría probablemente revelar resultados más interesantes. Con respecto a la segunda pregunta, debe tenerse en cuenta que el trasfondo lingüístico no es una variable con mucho peso en el caso del Inglés de Sierra Leona en esta etapa. La lengua nativa y los antecedentes etno-lingüísticos no parecen retratar el inglés de nuestros entrevistados, pues todo hablante de inglés en Sierra Leona habla también el Krio bien como su L1 o como L2 y esta es la lengua franca en Sierra Leona. En la medida en que otras lenguas indígenas de Sierra Leona puedan estar influyendo al SLE (un hecho que no se puede refutar, especialmente teniendo en cuenta que el autor es nativo de Sierra Leona), la mayor influencia procede del Krio, tal y como Jones (1971) demuestra. En base a nuestros resultados, el nivel de inglés no parece producir muchas diferencias en lo que concierne a las tendencias fonológicas, pues este corresponde con el nivel educativo del hablante del SLE. Cuanto mayor sea el nivel de educación y la exposición al uso del inglés, mayor será el nivel de competencia. Este factor está relacionado con las características del Krio que se trasladan al inglés. La postura de Mufwene (2001: 106 citado en la introducción al capítulo cinco) parece predominar en Sierra Leona. Las nuevas generaciones perpetúan las normas que ya establecieron las primeras generaciones de SLE.

5.3. Rasgos estructurales del SLE

Este apartado proporciona una visión en conjunto de los rasgos estructurales de SLE. Nuestro enfoque es descriptivo y no prescriptivo, dado que ofrecemos un entendimiento de las particularidades de la morfología del SLE, basándonos en los niveles del Sintagma Nominal (Noun Phrase - NP) y del Sintagma Verbal (Verb Phrase - VP). Teniendo en cuenta la gama de rasgos que caracterizan al inglés L2, las propiedades estructurales del SLE siguen el marco teórico de los WE y PCE (Huber 2004; Huber & Dako 2004; Schneider 2007; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008). No podemos clasificarlas como "no estándar" debido a los factores sociohistóricos y de ecología lingüística, los cuales explican su aparición y evolución, puesto que están condicionados por realidades psicolingüísticas que son diferentes a las de sus L1 homólogos (Schneider 2007: 82ff; Mufwene 2001, 2015). El análisis prescriptivo tradicional podría quizá verse tentado a interpretar esos rasgos de L2 como "asistemáticos y prueba de un fallo al intentar dominar el sistema de la lengua meta" (Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 47; trad.). Sin embargo, cuando consideramos el hecho de que las variedades L2 fueron exportadas en colonias de explotación de una forma no estándar y transmitidas a través del sistema educativo con patrones evolutivos diferentes a los de las variedades L1, los puntos de vista prescriptivos se vuelven indefendibles (Schneider 2007: 84ff; Mufwene 2001, 2002, 2009, 2015). Optamos, pues, por el término "rasgos" en esta sección del mismo modo en que hemos empleado antes "tendencias" en nuestra descripción fonológica del SLE. Teniendo en cuenta el hecho de que los hablantes de inglés en Sierra Leona tienen otra(s) lengua(s) y que esta(s) no desaparece(n) cuando el individuo habla inglés, los rasgos estructurales que muestra el SLE "constituyen elementos del abanico del cual las PCE emergentes seleccionan sus patrones gramaticales distintivos" (Schneider 2007: 85; trad.; véase también Mufwene 2001, 2002, 2015). Siguiendo a

Schneider (2007), Mesthrie & Bhatt (2008), presentamos a continuación un resumen de nuestros descubrimientos relacionados con los rasgos morfosintácticos del SLE en el nivel de los sintagmas nominal y verbal.

5.3.1. El sintagma nominal (NP)

5.3.1.1. Artículos

El uso de los artículos determinado (the) e indeterminado (a, an) se ha destacado como uno de los aspectos más relevantes que caracterizan a los WE/PCE (Huber & Dako 2004: 859; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 47). La utilización de los artículos en el SLE, como en otros WE/PCE, proporciona ejemplos muy interesantes. Con esto, encontramos:

- a. El artículo determinado con sustantivos genéricos/no específicos
- b. Las expresiones singulares no específicas no necesitan artículo
- c. Artículos indeterminados que se usan con una forma plural
- d. Omisión del artículo
- e. Inserción del artículo
- f. Artículos intercambiables

5.3.1.2. Número

El número es una de las categorías dentro de los rasgos de los WE/PCE que indican un mayor nivel de variabilidad, en especial en la marca de plural de los sustantivos (Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 52). El SLE refleja las siguientes tendencias:

- a. No se utiliza la -s plural
- b. Se regularizan los "zero plurals" y otras excepciones del inglés

5.3.1.3. Género

Aunque el género en inglés tiene un papel menor y no parece tener las complicaciones estructurales que presenta en otros idiomas, sí parece haber un uso indiscriminado del mismo en los WE/PCE. Algunos de nuestros entrevistados muestran cierta confusión al usar el género.

5.3.1.4. Pronombres

Los WE/PCE suelen presentar casos interesantes en el uso de los pronombres. El SLE hablado refleja ejemplos de aposición pronominal del tipo "Me I" y "Me myself I", cuyo origen nos lleva al Krio.

5.3.2. El sintagma verbal (VP)

Teniendo en cuenta nuestro corpus y otras fuentes (véase, por ejemplo, Huber & Dako 2004; Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 58ff), los "New & World Englishes" codifican y utilizan los tiempos verbales principales de una forma diferente a la de sus L1 homólogos. Por ejemplo, hay mucha variación en el pasado y en el presente, ya que reflejan un marcaje nulo cuando son necesarias las marcas gramaticales.

5.3.2.1. Tiempo gramatical

Los WE/PCE codifican sus tiempos verbales, en especial los tres básicos (pasado, presente y futuro) de forma diferente a otras variedades del inglés (Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 58). No obstante, los tiempos pasado y presente son más variables que, por ejemplo, el futuro. El SLE no es una excepción. Las siguientes son algunas de sus características:

- a. Marcaje nulo en los tiempos pasados:**

Los ejemplos del SLE siguen el mismo patrón de la mayoría de los WE/PCE donde el presente histórico conversacional no muestra marca gramatical en pasado. Debemos tener en cuenta que estos ejemplos provienen sobre todo de los grupos lingüísticos *mesolang* bajo y alto.

b. Los complementos circunstanciales hacen que las marcas de tiempo pasado sean redundantes

El SLE, como otros WE/PCE, sigue los mismos patrones para dejar sin marca aquellos tiempos pasados en los que un complemento circunstancial ya ha anunciado la referencia de pasado (véase Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 59).

c. Secuenciación de los tiempos

Cuando se combinan varias cláusulas para formar una oración, el SLE, como algunas otras variedades del mundo, muestra una diversidad combinatoria de tiempos gramaticales (véase Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 59). Encontramos casos donde la proposición subordinada tiene un tiempo pasado con marca gramatical, y la proposición principal permanece sin marcas o viceversa. Cuando las proposiciones son coordinadas, si la primera está en pasado, la siguiente no presenta marca.

5.3.2.2. Aspecto

Como ocurre con el tiempo, el aspecto es otro ámbito que muestra gran variabilidad en los WE/PCE. El SLE presenta pruebas de ello:

a. El Perfectivo *have* + EN poco apropiado a nivel semántico

Aunque la semántica del perfectivo *have* + EN en nuestro corpus no parece similar a la de otros WE/PCE, el aspecto es ligeramente diferente, ya que no siempre presenta la marca *have* + EN.

b. Variación en el pasado habitual

El pasado habitual *used to* en el SLE, como en otros WE/PCE no es completivo, pues "*use(d) to* significa un pasado habitual que se extiende hasta el presente" (Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 63; trad.). Nuestros ejemplos expresan un pasado habitual no completivo que continúa hasta el presente.

5.3.2.3. Modalidad: diferencias semánticas en el uso de los verbos modales

La semántica de los modales, en el uso de los WE/PCE, expresa un modo que no denota claramente "la orientación y la actitud del hablante hacia la acción del verbo" (Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 63; trad.). Encontramos casos en los que *would* reemplaza al tiempo presente, modales reduplicados y el presente continuo sustituyendo al *will* + Inf.

5.3.2.4. Número

Teniendo en cuenta la naturaleza empobrecida del número en inglés, este muestra mucha variación en muchas variedades del mundo, especialmente en los WE/PCE (Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 65-66). Los debates sobre esta categoría se centran en el tiempo presente, puesto que la -s final marca solo la tercera persona del singular en presente simple (Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008: 66). Los rasgos del SLE que reflejan esta categoría se evalúan a continuación:

a. Tercera persona del singular en presente simple con "zero forms"

El SLE, como otros WE/PCE, alterna la tercera persona del singular con "zero forms", sin marca gramatical.

b. Sufijo -s para otras personas del singular y del plural

En esta categoría, el SLE añade de igual forma la -s final a verbos con sujetos en plural y a aquellos en

primera persona del singular.

5.3.2.5. *El to be pasivo*

Aunque algunas variedades, incluido el SLE, suelen eliminar el *be* en estructuras pasivas (Mesthrie and Bhatt 2008: 69), en el SLE este también puede ir acompañado por un verbo sin marca gramatical.

5.3.2.6. *"Novel forms": cambios en parte del discurso*

El SLE introduce una innovación que, como en otros WE/PCE, parece "insinuar las dificultades que las primeras o las siguientes generaciones de aprendientes de inglés en entornos coloniales han tenido a la hora de dominar" la lengua (Mesthrie and Bhatt 2008: 71; trad.). Encontramos muestras de verbos con marcas en el pasado, mientras los hablantes están expresando un presente habitual. El uso de las preposiciones también revela fórmulas nuevas.

5.4. Conclusión

Este capítulo ha podido proporcionar una visión general de las tendencias actuales del Inglés de Sierra Leona, teniendo en cuenta algunos de los rasgos fonológicos y estructurales de esta variedad. Desde una perspectiva teórica, el capítulo ha respondido a dos preguntas básicas: las causas que explican esas características de los WE/PCE y los procesos de indigenización de los mismos. Hemos evaluado algunas de sus tendencias fonológicas, como las vocales y algunos sonidos consonánticos, en la producción de los hablantes del SLE en Freetown. También relacionamos la existencia de estos rasgos con algunas variables sociales. Una de nuestras aportaciones en este sentido es que los rasgos fonológicos del Krio, los sonidos vocálicos y algunos consonánticos, son una de las influencias principales en el SLE. Sin embargo, algunas de estas producciones fonológicas del SLE están también presentes en otras variedades tanto en África (Occidental) como en otras partes del mundo. Con respecto a los rasgos estructurales, la mayoría de aspectos evidentes en las estructuras de sintagma nominal y sintagma verbal apuntan hacia una variedad lingüística ya arraigada. En este sentido, algunos de nuestros hallazgos trascienden los niveles lingüísticos y educativos. Algunas de estas características fonológicas y estructurales ya eran evidentes en el Inglés de Sierra Leona del siglo XVIII. Por tanto, esto indica que las tendencias actuales del inglés sierraleonés se remontan a la variedad que trajeron consigo los colonos de Nova Scotia al asentarse en Freetown.

En resumen, por consiguiente, no se debería calificar los rasgos fonológicos y estructurales que se han evaluado en esta tesis como "incorrectos" o "de calidad inferior al estándar". En nuestra descripción del SLE, una variedad del inglés L2, hemos trazado los procesos de nativización estructural, las causas de los rasgos estructurales, y cómo estos se han indigenizado o arraigado en el panorama lingüístico de Sierra Leona. Las tendencias fonológicas del SLE son un indicador de los lugares donde esta variedad se utiliza y quiénes son sus hablantes. Estas representan rasgos característicos desde una posición ecológica, e identifican a los sierraleoneses como capaces de moldear una variedad del inglés dentro del contexto de los "World Englishes" y "Postcolonial Englishes". Estas propiedades también deberían valorarse como trayectorias evolutivas de la existencia y aparición del inglés en Sierra Leona. De este modo, estos rasgos revelan, desde un punto de vista histórico, cuánto tiempo lleva la lengua inglesa en Sierra Leona y con los sierraleoneses.

6. Conclusiones finales: hallazgos y perspectivas futuras

6.0. Introducción

Este estudio ha proporcionado un análisis de los efectos sociales y lingüísticos que ha tenido la lengua inglesa en África Occidental en general y, en concreto, en Sierra Leona, a través del Asentamiento de Freetown. Parte de la bibliografía que hemos examinado sobre el inglés en los cinco países angloparlantes de África Occidental (Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, Gambia y Sierra Leona) y en Camerún indican que la exportación de una lengua a otro país implica que esa lengua se adapta no solo al repertorio lingüístico de sus nuevos usuarios, sino también a las realidades socioculturales de su nuevo entorno. Por tanto, cualquier estudio lingüístico de los "World Englishes" o los "Postcolonial Englishes" debería ir precedido de una explicación de los factores sociohistóricos. Esta tesis adopta tal marco teórico, con perspectivas sociohistóricas y ecológicas.

En ese sentido, hemos concebido este estudio como una especie de hoja de ruta que nos ha servido como guía y nos ha ayudado a encontrar un camino hasta el Krio y el SLE. Nuestro viaje sociohistórico y ecológico (Mufwene 2001; Schneider 2007) nos ha llevado hasta el ámbito de las variedades reestructuradas del inglés que los colonos, en especial los de Nova Scotia, trajeron consigo al Asentamiento de Freetown (véase Jones 1971; Fyfe (ed.) 1991; Holm 1989; Huber 1999, 2008; Montgomery 1999; y también el capítulo cuatro de este estudio) y, como es obvio, al desarrollo de esas variedades hasta convertirse en el Krio. Un repaso al Freetown pre-colonial y colonial ha sido determinante a la hora de entender los rasgos del SLE actual. Pero, entonces, ¿qué contribuciones académicas aporta este estudio?

6.1. Contribuciones

1. Antes que nada, este estudio es una contribución a las investigaciones que se están realizando en la actualidad en diferentes países sobre los WE/PCE. Nuestro trayecto a través de los cinco países angloparlantes de África (Occidental) y de Camerún nos ha proporcionado nociones sobre los efectos lingüísticos de la exportación de una lengua a nuevos territorios, su existencia, evolución y consiguiente indigenización. La investigación de sus características lingüísticas nos ha equipado con una orientación sólida sobre cómo perseguir estudios similares de y sobre el SLE. Teniendo en cuenta el hecho de que Sierra Leona supone un vacío dentro de este campo académico, esta tesis ha recopilado y analizado unos pocos artículos desperdigados sobre el inglés en Sierra Leona o el SLE. También hemos probado que las nomenclaturas de variedades de inglés L2, tales como "World English(es)", "New English(es)" y "Postcolonial English(es)" son adecuadas: estos nombres revelan los desarrollos históricos de estas variedades, que corresponden a los entornos ecológicos donde se utilizan. En lugar de observarlas únicamente desde una perspectiva lingüística actual, deberíamos relacionar sus historias con su estado en este momento. Las descripciones fonológicas y estructurales del capítulo seis y las conexiones que establecemos a partir de los análisis de Montgomery (1999) y Huber (2008) de las cartas de Nova Scotia, son otro indicio de que nuestra interpretación del "Modelo dinámico" de Schneider (2007) para explicar el desarrollo sociohistórico del SLE es apropiada. Se debería estudiar el SLE, al igual que otros PCE, desde una perspectiva

histórica y ecológica.

2. Dentro del contexto africano (occidental), nuestros descubrimientos han servido para responder a nuestras preguntas iniciales planteadas en la introducción del estudio: las variedades traídas al Asentamiento de Freetown no eran estándar, es decir, eran variedades reestructuradas del inglés; el asentamiento sirvió como base para el desarrollo del Inglés Africano Occidental y la exportación de algunas de las lenguas pidgin y criollas habladas hoy en esta zona de África (Nigeria, Camerún, Gambia y Guinea Ecuatorial). El Asentamiento de Freetown no solo ayudó al estudio de las lenguas africanas, la expansión del cristianismo y de la civilización occidental a otros países africanos (occidentales) a través del

Fourah Bay College, sino que también contribuyó en igual medida a dar forma y a difundir el Inglés Africano Occidental y algunas de las lenguas pidgin y criollas que tenemos hoy en la región (Mazrui 1975; Holm 1989). Si prestamos atención al hecho de que existieron más de mil lenguas africanas y que todas ellas se estudiaron de forma equitativa en Freetown tanto con fines de divulgación religiosa como para estudios lingüísticos (Hair 1987), y recordamos también que algunos de estos idiomas han dejado huellas muy notables en el Krio, este estudio muestra además que hay un SLE que existe desde hace mucho tiempo a todos los niveles lingüísticos.

3. Teniendo en cuenta el objeto principal del estudio, proporcionar una perspectiva sociohistórica y ecológica que pueda explicar el desarrollo del SLE, hemos recopilado información antes dispersa sobre el SLE en un único trabajo, parte de la cual solo se puede consultar en persona debido a su accesibilidad limitada. Asimismo, los investigadores de los WE/PCE interesados en relacionar los desarrollos históricos de diversas variedades tienen ahora la oportunidad de recurrir a la evolución del SLE gracias a esta tesis. Como consecuencia de la falta de armonía lingüística y sociocultural en Freetown, este contexto ecológico ha aportado, no solo el Krio, sino también sus lenguas hermanas en Gambia, Camerún y Guinea Ecuatorial.
4. Nuestros descubrimientos confirman e identifican rasgos que se remontan a la variedad de Nova Scotia, los mismos que se pueden identificar también en otras variedades de PCE en África (Occidental). Como ha demostrado este estudio, no podemos separar una lengua de la sociedad que la utiliza (Romaine 2000; Meyerhoff y Nagy (eds. 2008), en especial cuando esa sociedad es la asentada en Freetown, un lugar que recibió a un grupo muy heterogéneo de personas procedentes de diferentes trasfondos lingüísticos y que con el tiempo se convirtió en el grupo etno-lingüístico del Krio, lengua franca del país. Por tanto, la afirmación de que los factores sociales deben preceder a los lingüísticos en cualquier examen del resultado lingüístico de una situación de contacto entre lenguas ha quedado más que probada en este estudio (Thomason y Kaufman's 1988; Hickey (ed.) 2010). A través del análisis de la situación sociohistórica y sociolingüística de Freetown, particularmente la que lidia con la variedad de Nova Scotia, hemos podido encontrar bibliografía y hallazgos que se pueden yuxtaponer a los rasgos actuales del SLE, en especial en lo referente a fonología y morfosintaxis. En este sentido, este estudio prueba también que el inglés utilizado en Sierra Leona refleja peculiaridades culturales y lingüísticas, no solo porque está en contacto con otras lenguas y culturas sierraleonesas, sino también ya que el este fue exportado a Sierra Leona y se emplea como un idioma opcional o adicional para expresar realidades socioculturales, políticas y

económicas típicas del país (Jenkins 2003; Holm 1989; Huber 1999, 2004; Fyfe (ed. 1991; Montgomery 1999; Mufwene 2001, 2009, 2015; Schneider 2007).

5. Las ideas de que los colonos de Freetown hablaban un Inglés Estándar y de que la lengua inglesa utilizada en la Sierra Leona de hoy es una variedad británica son en sí mismas contradictorias. Las cartas de "Nova Scotians" recopiladas en Fyfe (ed. 1991) y los análisis de Montgomery (1999) y Huber (2008), así como los otros estudios que conectan el gullah con el Krio (Hackert y Huber 2007, por ejemplo) dan fe de que un estudio diacrónico debería estar precedido de un estudio sincrónico. Es evidente que, mientras que las personas que se asentaron en Freetown no eran hablantes nativos de inglés, sino gente que hablaba diversas variedades reestructuradas del mismo, no se puede considerar que las generaciones posteriores de esos colonos hablen una variedad nativa del mismo. De igual modo, y al tener en cuenta la influencia que una L1 puede tener en la adquisición de una L2, en particular si esta se produce más tarde o se aprende de forma imperfecta debido bien a la ausencia de la cultura que complementa a esa lengua o por una metodología de aprendizaje y enseñanza inapropiada, se da por sentado el hecho de que el inglés hablado por otros sierraleoneses puede estar influido por sus antecedentes socioculturales y lingüísticos, junto con la ausencia de una cultura inglesa en Sierra Leona. Por consiguiente, no se puede esperar que otros sierraleoneses con lenguas L1 etno-lingüísticas que no sean el Krio y que aprendieron inglés en Sierra Leona, hablen como lo hacen los británicos, los americanos o los canadienses.

6.2. Líneas de investigación futuras

Dado que los resultados obtenidos en este estudio están limitados por condiciones sociales y geográficas, una futura línea de investigación podría incluir unos análisis sociohistóricos y ecológicos completos del SLE en Sierra Leona, en general, y en Freetown, en particular. Una descripción lingüística del SLE en el país en su conjunto podría determinar los rasgos peculiares que podrían diferenciar al inglés hablado en Freetown de otras variedades usadas dentro de la nación. Un estudio de estas características podría también revelar las similitudes del SLE con otras variedades L2 del inglés. Así, este análisis podría acometerse de dos formas: (a) un trabajo basado en los hablantes cultos de los grupos etno-lingüísticos individuales en el país, y/o (b) un estudio comparativo del SLE basado en regiones. Estas investigaciones deberían presentar esfuerzos de codificación y estandarización.

Del mismo modo, los investigadores interesados en sociolingüística, estudios sobre el criollo y el contacto lingüístico pueden realizar un estudio comparativo de (a) el SLE y el Krio, y/o (b) el SLE, el Krio y cualquier otra lengua indígena de Sierra Leona con el fin de localizar influencias trans-lingüísticas a todos los niveles de la lengua.

Otras líneas de investigación pueden de igual manera incluir los problemas que plantea la enseñanza del inglés en un entorno criollo inglés como es Sierra Leona (en el caso de los interesados en lingüística aplicada) y el conflicto de la política lingüística en una sociedad con tendencias multilingües (para coordinadores de políticas lingüísticas).