



**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**NEGATION STRATEGIES IN GONJA**

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**of requirements for the award of the degree of  
Master of Philosophy  
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## DECLARATION

### STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, Mohammed Amin Tahiru, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works, which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE: .....

DATE: .....

### SUPERVISORS' DECLARATION

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis/dissertation/project as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my brother (Mr. Ibrahim Karim) who has contributed in diverse ways to bring me this far.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I am much grateful to God for giving me the strength from the beginning of this work to the end. With him everything is possible, my special appreciations go to my supervisors, Prof. Avea Ephraim Nsoh and Prof. Samuel Alhassan Issah for the supervisory role discharged on this work. I appreciate their suggestions, guidance and patience displayed during this work. May God protect and guide them.

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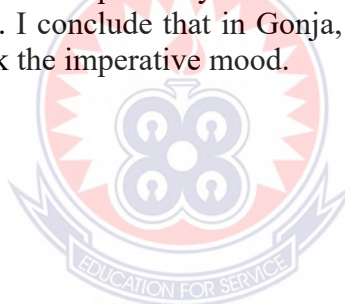


## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1	first person
2	second person
3	third person
DET	determiner
DEM	demonstrative
FOC	focus marker
FUT	future marker
HAB	habitual
IMP	Imperative verb form
IMPERF	imperfective
NEG	negative marker
PERF	perfect
PST	past tense
PROG	progressive marker
PL	plural
SG	singular
TZ	tua zaafi
INTO	intonation
INT	interrogative
LOC	location
BLT	Basic Linguistic Theory
*	Ungrammatical

## ABSTRACT

This thesis discusses the concept of negation strategies in Gonja, a Guan language spoken in the Savannah Region of Ghana. It focuses on how sentential, imperatives and constituent negation is marked in Gonja. Negation in Gonja is marked via the use of syntactic independent particles which come before the verb. The analysis is mainly descriptive and is cast within the theoretical framework of the Basic Linguistic Theory (BLT) by Dixon (2012). The study also examined the various preverbal particles used in the language for marking negation. Data for this thesis were collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data were drawn mainly from naturally occurring spoken texts (spontaneous speech) which were recorded from a Gonja speaking community in the East Gonja District dialect. The spontaneous data which were phone recorded were formally and informally transcribed for the analysis. These were supplemented by elicited data, as well as data based on my native speaker intuition. The secondary data were collected from some Gonja books. The findings in this study indicate that, Gonja employs one strategy for marking of negation. The overtly expressed negative markers are **maa**, **maŋ**, **maaŋ**, **saŋ** and **mane** used for negating declaratives and imperatives and constituent constructions respectively. The findings show that these preverbal negative markers interact with aspectual markers in the language. The findings further indicate that there is incompatibility between the progressive aspectual and future markers in Gonja negation. I conclude that in Gonja, there is no overt morpheme that is attached to the verb to mark the imperative mood.



## CHAPTER ONE

### GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE THESIS

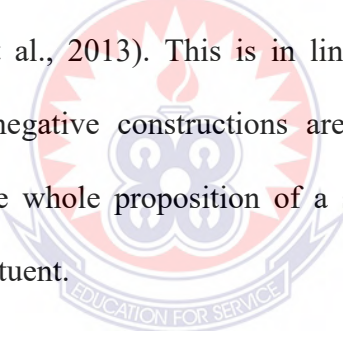
#### 1.0 Introduction

This study seeks to investigate negation strategies in Gonja. Negation has been a topic that is of concern to both syntacticians and semanticists for some of these reasons: (i) it is present in every language; (ii) it exhibits a range of variations with respect to the way it is expressed or interpreted; (iii) it interacts with many phenomena in natural languages; (iv) and finally due to its central position in the functional domain, it sheds light on various syntactic and semantic mechanisms (Zeijlstra 2004: 1). All these reasons are relevant in all natural languages of which Gonja is not an exception. Negation is one of the aspects, which remain largely unexplored in the study of Gonja language, which belongs to the Guan language family. The study of negation has been insufficient as far as a study on the grammar of Gonja is concerned. As the first of its kind in Gonja, this current thesis attempts to provide a descriptive study of the syntax of negation. This study particularly pays attention to the syntactic characteristics of negation strategies and how they are distributed within the structure of Gonja sentences.

Beyond the introduction, the rest of the chapter will proceed as follows: section 1.1 provides a brief background to the study whilst section 1.2 presents the problem statement of the study. The purpose and objectives of the study are stated in sections 1.3 and 1.4 respectively. In section 1.5 presents the research questions. The significance of the study is outlined in 1.6 while section 1.7 and 1.8 respectively deal with the delimitations and the organization of the study.

## 1.2 Background to the study

The study examines negation strategies in Gonja. ‘Negation is one of the distinctive properties of human language. Negation is one of the few truly universal grammatical categories: every language seems to have some grammatical zed means to deny the truth of an ordinary declarative sentence. Yet the expression of this category varies significantly both from language to language and historically within the same language (Horn,2001: 3). The type of negation sentential or constituent negation may also be accounted for in terms of the scope of the negative element. Sentential negation requires the negative element to have scope over the sentence (or at least the matrix clause), whereas in instances of constituent negation the negative element scope sonly over the local constituent (Willis et al., 2013). This is in line with what Quirk & Greenbaum (1975) categorization of negative constructions are, where they stated that, clausal negation which negates the whole proposition of a sentence, and the lexical negation which negates only a constituent.

The logo of the University of Education, Winneba, is a circular emblem. It features a central shield with a book and a lamp, surrounded by a wreath. The text 'UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA' is written around the top inner edge of the circle, and 'EDUCATION FOR SERVICE' is written around the bottom inner edge.

Dahl (1979:80) defines negation as “a means for converting a sentence one into another sentence two, such that sentence two is true whenever sentence one is false and vice versa.” Negation is, therefore, employed to deny an assertion in natural languages. Givon (1979:79) contends that ‘negative sentences are not used in discourse to introduce new arguments (i.e. indefinites), but rather are used in contexts in which the referential arguments have already been introduced in the preceding context.’ Negation enables us maintain the truth-value of a proposition, which is one of the basic aspects of language plays (Altman, 1967). Indeed, it is one of the most basic elements in human mind that



makes it an indispensable part of natural languages which are the tools for human thoughts. Dahl (1979: 80), who examined 240 languages and concluded that negation is expressed either morphologically or syntactically and therefore proposed a typology for negation. He further claimed that the morphological strategy may involve prefixation, circumfixation or suffixation while syntactical strategy is encoded by means of negative particles and auxiliary verbs. Though Afari-Twako (2015) identified some preverbal negative particles in the language that are used to encode negation but the strategies employed were not investigated. It is for this reason that I seek to explore the various strategies in negating clauses in Gonja to ascertain how it behaves in the language using Dahl's (1979) proposed typology on negation.

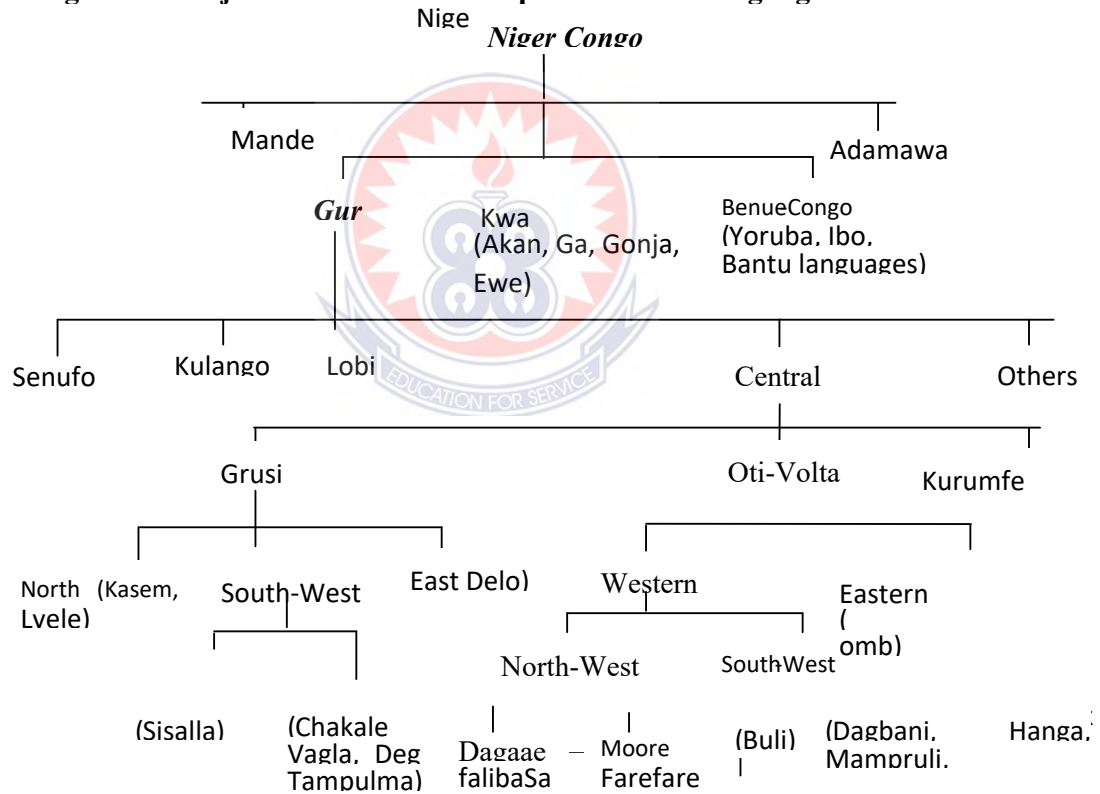
Gonja belongs to the Kwa branch of the Niger Congo family tree of Guans and spoken by the Gonja people in the Savannah Region of Ghana. The indigenous name for the people is Ngbanya plural and Kagbanya singular while the language they speak is Ngbanyato, which literally means 'in Gonja.' Afari-Twako (2015) indicates that Gonja has three main dialects which include East Gonja dialect spoken in Kpembu and its environs, West Gonja dialect spoken in Damongo and its environs and Ndompo dialect spoken in Buipe and Kintampo North district and are used in all domains and by people of all ages. Gonja is taught in basic, secondary schools and in some tertiary institutions in Ghana. Gonja is considered as the northernmost Guang language speakers in Ghana (Nelson et al, 2016). Considering the linguistic features, the language exhibits both voiced and voiceless consonants at each place of articulation. Gonja has been analyzed recently as having a nine-vowel system though seven are used in its writing. Gonja predominantly exhibits

CV, V, CVN and CVV syllable structures (Nelson et al, 2016). The language is strictly subject-verb-object (SVO). This study is aimed at analyzing the various negation strategies, and their syntactic behavior in the language.

### 1.1.1 The Speakers and Linguistics Affiliation of Gonjas

The North Guang language family comprises of Chumuru, Gichode, Krachi, Nawuri, Choruba, Gonja and Nkonya (Dakubu, 1988:76, Nelson et. al. 2016:2). The schema (1) below indicates the position of Gonja and the north Guang to which it belongs

**Figure 1: Gonja and Her Relationship with Other Languages**

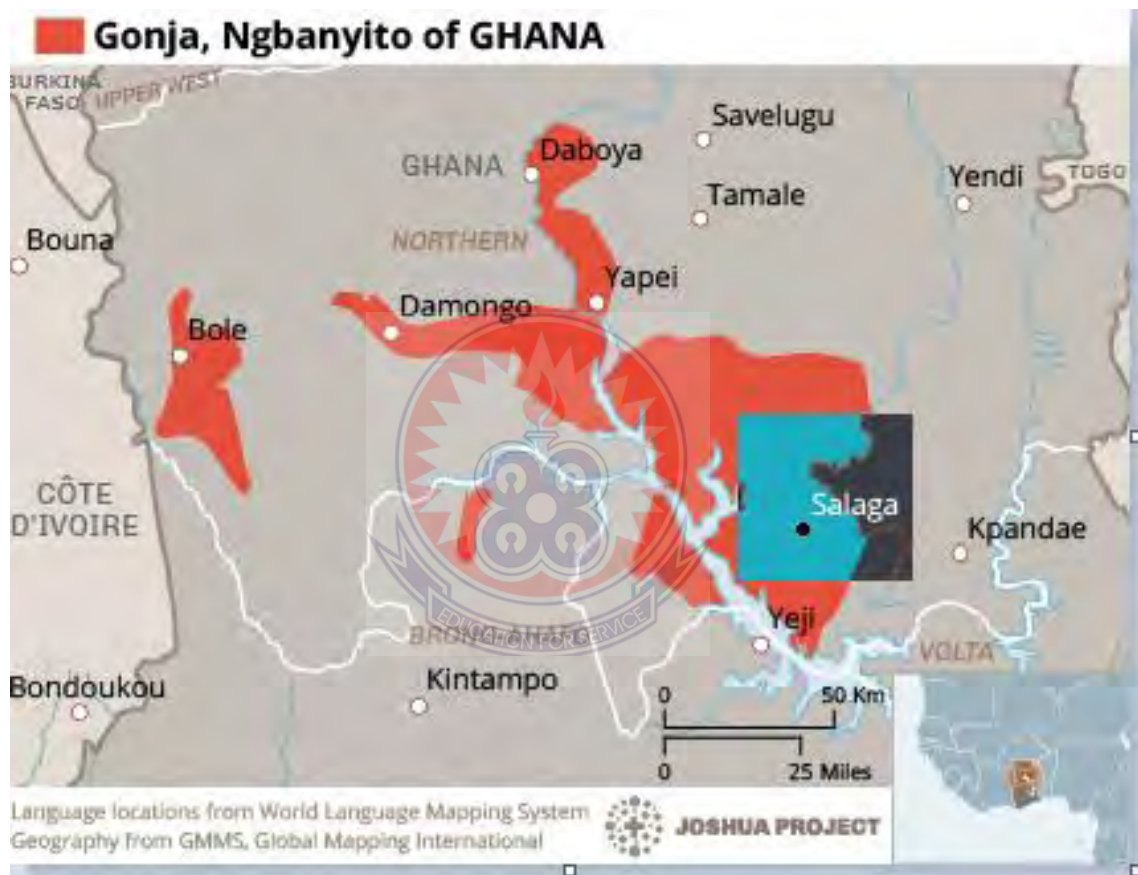


Source: Adapted from Dakubu (2007: 8)

(1) Niger- Congo > Volta Congo > Kwa > Tano > Guang > North Guang > Gonja

Gonja is spoken widely across the Savannah region of Ghana in towns and villages like Daboya, Yapei, Damongo, Bole and Salaga. Figure 1 below shows the language area with the research site colored blue.

**Figure 2: Language area**



**Modified from the Joshua project**

There is considerable amount of mutual intelligibility among Chumuru, Yeji, Prang and Krachi but significant in less intelligibility between the other forms and Gonja (Dakubu, 1988). All the major ethnic groups in Ghana claim to have come to meet the Guangs already settled.

## 1.2 Statement of the problem

Language experts concern themselves with the development of natural languages. Tremendous efforts have been made by scholars to highlight the significance of negation and its range of variation with respect to how it is expressed in Africa and non-African languages. Despite the efforts made in the study of the Gonja language and particularly Gonja grammar, Gonja is one of the languages that has received little linguistic attention in terms of literature. Prominent among the few available works on the language include Painter (1970), who worked on the phonology and morphology of Gonja, Afari-Twako (2015), worked on preliminary descriptive study of the grammar with much emphasis on phonology, syntax and also on word formation process in Gonja in the field of morphology for beginners. Nelson, et al. (2016) worked on preliminary overview of Gonja phonology. Others include Amidu (2009) works on the grammar of Gonja for beginners, Seidu (2019) and Tanko (2020) also worked on the oral literature of the language specifically dirges and proverbs in Gonja respectively.

According to Dolphyne & Dakubu (1988: 84) the Guang languages consistently mark negation “by means of a prefix, which usually precedes or attached to the verb.” This is generally true of the North Guang languages but Gonja happens to employ a pre-verbal particle, which is projected as the head of the negative morpheme within the structure of negative construction in Gonja. The data below shows how Gonja negative particle comes before the verb but an immediate constituent of the verb in action behaves similar in support of Dolphyne and Dakubu’s argument.

- (1) a. **Edɔpo na ba**  
Farmer DET come.PERF  
'The farmer has come'
- b. **Edɔpo na maŋ ba**  
Farmer DET NEG ba.PERF  
'The farmer has not come'
- (2) a. **E beeŋ nuu nchu**  
3SG FUT drink water  
'He/she will drink water'
- b. **E maaj nuu nchu**  
3SG- NEG-FUT drink water  
'He/she will not drink water'

From the data in (1b) and (2b) above, even though few they have shown that the strategies Gonja employs in marking negation behave differently from other Guan languages. There is therefore, the need to undertake this all-important research on the phenomenon of negation in Gonja to ascertain how the strategies behave within the structure of the language.

### **1.3 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study is to provide a descriptive analysis of negation coding in Gonja.

### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Explore the various particles that are used in expressing Gonja negation;
2. Investigate the distribution of negative particles in Gonja;
3. Explore the interaction between the progressive aspectual and future markers in Gonja negation.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

This research therefore seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are the various particles that are used in expressing Gonja negation?
2. How are the negative particles distributed in Gonja?
3. What is the interaction between the progressive aspectual and future markers in Gonja negation?

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study would be significant in diverse ways. First, it will provide useful information on the structure of negation strategies in Gonja. This is particularly good because there is no literature on Gonja that has discussed this issue in the language. Secondly, the outcome of this research will also add up to the existing literature in the language. Gonja is a language that has no enough literature and this is a great opportunity

to undertake this study. In addition, the study will serve as a resource material for teachers and students of Gonja in schools. Finally, the documentation of this aspect of the language will largely serve as a reference point for future researches in the language and other related languages in the area of syntax.

### **1.7 Delimitation of the Study**

The study is delimited to the analysis of negation in the syntax of Gonja. The study is restricted to the Gonja language, specifically the East Gonja dialects since the data the study used is obtained from the speakers of that area.

### **1.8 Organization of the Study**

The thesis is organized in five chapters. Chapter 1 presents the general overview of the thesis which include, introduction, background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations, and the organization of the study. In chapter 2, I discuss two components of this study; I review literature and the theoretical framework. The scope of the literature review covers the general notion or perceptions of negation, previous studies on negation in some non-African languages, works on Kwa languages, Guan languages and the Mabia languages. In chapter 3, the methodology that is used in collecting both primary and secondary data is discussed in this chapter. Emphasis is placed on research design, site and sample size, data collection techniques, data analysis and limitation.

Chapter 4 is where the analysis on the study begins; it opens the discussion on negation strategies and how they are identified by drawing examples from Gonja. Chapter 5 concludes the research by summarizing the main findings and recommending areas for future research on negation in Gonja.





## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter deals with two main issues of the thesis. It first provides a review of related literature on negation strategies and its distribution. It also outlines the theoretical framework within which the discussion of negation strategies in Gonja is framed. The structure of the chapter are as follows. Section 2.1 provides a brief background to the general concept of negation and section 2.2 considers previous works on non-Ghanaian languages related literature in general section Section 2.3, focuses on previous works on negation strategies in Kwa languages, 2.4 reviews literature on previous studies on negation strategies in Mabia languages whereas section. 2.5 reviews literature on previous studies on negation strategies in the Guan languages. Section 2.6 outlines the theoretical framework and 2.7 finalizes the chapter with summary of the whole chapter.

#### **2.1 General notion of negation**

This sub-section provides a background to the notion of negation. Despite the fact that negation occurs in all human languages, each language has a unique way of realizing or expressing it. As a result, different languages employ different strategies of marking negation. Alongside this view, Obiamalu (2014) expresses that “it is no surprise then that all languages have a systematic means of the polar contrast of a sentence”. In other words, all natural languages have either a device or operators to mark negation. All human languages have negation, yet it seems not to be present in all other animal communication systems. We make good use of negation oftentimes for a wide range of

purposes, including rejection, denial and talking about non-existence. Negation enables us maintain the truth-value of a proposition, which is one of the basic aspects of language play (Altmann, 1967).

Morante and Sporleder (2012: 15) define negation as a grammatical category that allows the changing of the truth-value of a proposition. Negation is often expressed using negative signals or negators – words like *not* or *is not* and *never*, and it can significantly affect the sentiment of its scope. Horn (2001: 116) argues that negation is a universal category since all human aspect of communication incorporate a representation of propositional negation. Thus, one of the most basic characteristics of negation is its distinctiveness, which sets a contrast between affirmation and negation. This markedness is carried out in various ways in the languages of the world. To him, negation is a heterogeneous phenomenon leading to multiple meanings and raising different interpretations. In the same line, Greenberg (1966) observes that negation typically gives an open expression, while affirmation usually has no expression. Cross linguistically, negation acts as a syntax operator that affects a specific range of sentences on which it has specific effects (Horn, 2001).

Horn (1996) posits sentential negation as “predicate denial”. He follows the Aristotelian tradition that negation is a mode of predication which rejects that a predicate applies to the subject. So, the sentence “Coke is not nutritious” reject that being nutritious applies to coke. Note that this is still a “wide-scope” use of negation, which is different from a narrower scope use, where negation is infused into the predicate. The wide-scope use (1)

allows negation to be contracted with auxiliaries. Below are the illustrations that supports the views of Horn (1996).

“don’t”, “isn’t” or “ain t”, whereas narrow-scope use (2) doesn’t. It can be argued that this sentence is not really ill grammatical but perhaps not natural. Here (1) has wide-scope negation, as the predicate P is denied of the subject S; (2) has narrow-scope negation, as the predicate not P is affirmed of the subject S.

(1) S is not P./ S isn’t P.

(2) S is (not-P). this situation above equally fits well in Gonja with regards to the wide-scope which give accept negation to contract with auxiliaries.

Klima’s (1964) illustrates a well-known distinction between sentence and constituent negation which is based on four well-known syntactic tests: the neither / too-test, the not even-test, the question tag test and the neither-test. Sentences which can combine with (n)either, positive question tags and not even give rise to sentence negation, whereas those that cannot are either affirmative or consist of a constituent negator, which is a broad term also encompassing cases of affixal negation Klima 1964: 261-265). Basically, the Klima-tests distinguish between negative markers that have wide scope over the tensed predicate and can be said to have a low(er) negative scope. A similar distinction as the one found in Klima can also be found in the work of Jespersen (1917). Jespersen referred to sentence negation as nexal negation and all other negation types as special negation. The term nexal refers to the fact that a negative form unites two different “ideas” (Jespersen 1917: 43), as in (3). In this sentence, the “idea” he and the “idea”

coming are “negative” by the nexus n’t. (3). He doesn’t come. Jespersen also points out that the distinction between special and nexal negation is clear in principle but that there are ambiguous instances. He discusses the example in (4), which displays nexal negation and can actually be traced back even further. Jespersen states that sentential negation typically involves negating the finite (non-lexical) verb, since this may be said to be the link of the sentence or the ‘nexus’ “as the (finite) verb is the linguistic bearer of a nexus, at any rate in all complete sentences. We therefore always find a strong tendency to attract the negative to the verb” (Jespersen 1917:44). Constituent negation means one of the constituents is negated without the result being a negative sentence as show (4).

4. They live not far from here.

Although the sentence contains the negative element not, it is not interpreted as negative: not negates the constituent far from here. This could be argued to be because the negative element follows the finite lexical verb and thus does not have scope over the verb. However, even when the negated constituent precedes the finite verb, local negation is possible, as the following examples illustrate (Kilima 1964, in Mohsen 2011:2).

5a. In not many years will Christmas fall on a Sunday (in not many years = not often)

5b. In not many years will Christmas fall on a Sunday, Will it?

5c. In not many years Christmas will fall on a Sunday (In not many years = soon)

5d. In not many years Christmas will fall on a Sunday, won’t it?

Sentence (5a) is negative; sentence (5b) is not. This is proven by the fact that in (5c) the proposed negative element triggers inversion, while in (5d) it does not. The tag questions in (5b) and (5d) also confirm this, only proposed negative elements with sentential scope trigger inversion, and negative sentences require positive tag questions.

According to Mohsen (Mohsen 2011: 3), the difference between sentential and constituent negation may be explained in terms of operators: “negative constituents which trigger inversion are operators and those that don’t trigger inversion are not”. In other words, sentential negation seems to require a negative operator. Negative constituent may also be accounted for in terms of operators: one (negative) operator binds a number of variables through absorption. From this follows that in all instances of sentential negation negative constituent should be an available option.

Kahrel (1996: 2) came out with four semantic types of negation in English: predicate negation, predicational negation, propositional negation and illocutionary negation. Predicate negation is confined to the predicate itself. In English, this type of negation is usually expressed morphologically, as in the following examples:

6 a. unintelligent

6b. meaningless

6 c. non-constructive

(Kahrel, 1996: 2)

Sadock & Zwicky (1985: 175) assert that in their language sample about half display a special negative of an imperative sentence type, i.e. the prohibitive marker. Van der

Auwers & Lejeune (2005) forth put a typology of negative imperatives (prohibitive) based on a sample of 495 languages: (7) The prohibitive uses the verbal construction of the second singular imperative and sentential negative strategy found in (indicative) declaratives. (8) The prohibitive uses the verbal construction of the second singular imperative and a sentential negative strategy not found in (indicative) declaratives. (9) The prohibitive uses a verbal construction other than the second singular positive imperative and a sentential negative strategy found in (indicative) declaratives. And (10) the prohibitive uses a verbal construction other than the second singular positive imperative and sentential negative strategy not found in (indicative) declaratives.

For Hulse (2010: 30), 'the phenomenon of negation can be defined in a number of different ways in English. It is an abstract phenomenon in which there are some forms of contradiction or opposition are expressed, although this is achieved either grammatically or semantically, which is realized by a grammatical construction or by using a certain procedure.

Gleason (2001) is of the view that negation allows us to discuss what is not happening, or what we do not want. Gleason added that negation is the opposite of affirmation; one sentence or statement can be the negation or denial of another. Thus, negation is the process of making a sentence negative usually by adding negative particles. Gleason further added that Negation is a fundamental linguistic phenomenon for the whole language system, which appears at different syntactic levels and has different purposes or meanings.

Bloom (1970) suggests that, when children are learning a language, it is likely that they learn to produce and distinguish between two basic types of sentences: the affirmative and the negative. Along this view, Crystal (2008) remarks that negation is a process in grammatical and semantic analysis which typically expresses the contradiction of some or all of a sentence. Still, Imoh (2012) quotes Anagbogu (2005) as saying that negation is a grammatical process by which an affirmative sentence is negated. In other words, Anagbogu (2005) as cited in Obiamalu (2014) considers a negative sentence as one that has at least a negative operator in form of an affix. In the literature, the primary focus of negation is to negate a sentence. No wonder Payne (1997) argues that the function of negation is to negate that clause which refers to an affirmation of an event, situation or state of affairs. Following Quirk & Greenbaum (1975), there are two types of negation: clausal negation which negates the whole proposition of a sentence, and the lexical negation which negates only a constituent. This means a language either negates a constituent or the whole sentence. Also, negation is a universal grammatical category and its realization is often not the same in all languages.

Brustad (2000) studies negation in four Arabic dialects from a dialectological point of view. These four Arabic dialects are: Egyptian Arabic (EA), Moroccan Arabic (MA), Syrian Arabic (SA), and Kuwaiti Arabic (KA). She states that the four dialects have three strategies of negation: verbal negation, predicate negation, and categorical negation. She has also defined categorical negation in these dialects as that kind of negation which is not restricted to a single entity or two of the categories but includes the whole category which, according to her, does not mirror the mood of the speaker but has a normative

aspect that is arrived after witnessing the negation of a certain relationship, incident, member of a group, etc. Following a recent analysis, Miestamo (2007) makes a general overview of typological studies of negation among which Dahl (1979) surveys standard negation in a sample of 240 languages. Dahl makes a basic distinction between syntactic and morphological negation. In the former, negative markers are particles or auxiliary verbs and in the latter affixes (with a few exceptions). Some attention is also paid to other structural aspects of negatives. The placement of negative markers is discussed at length. Dryer's work on word order (1988,) plays much emphasis on the position of negative markers with respect to clause-level constituents. Dryer (2013) further looks at the geographical distribution of the three main types of negators identified by Dahl on double negation (in the sense of negation expressed with two (or more) negation elements simultaneously present).

The above analysis is relevant to study with regards to not only how negation is expressed in Gonja but their distribution or how they are positioned in various sentences is one of my objective to be achieved in this thesis.

Dahl (1979: 27) in regards various to negative structures as non-standard in languages exhibiting special means of expressing negation: negative imperatives, negation in sentences with nonverbal predicates, negation in existential sentences, and negation in embedded clausal structures. Van der Auwera (2005) offers a four -way typology, based on whether the verb of the prohibitive is the same as the verb of the imperative and on whether the negator is the same as the one in standard negation. They further posit that



English imperatives and prohibitive have identical verb form and, despite the differences, both prohibitive and standard negations use identical negators. In the same view Sadock & Zwicky (1985: 175) assert that in their language sampled, about half display a special negative of an imperative sentence type, i.e. the prohibitive marker.

It is noteworthy that, in a clear majority of languages imperative use a negative strategy that differs from standard negation of which Gonja is not an exception in this study. Following the analysis of and interpretation of Dahl (1979) basic distinction of negation, which are syntactic and morphological. Gonja happens to fall within the syntactic classification, which hammers, on how languages use a particle to express negation be it negating verbal construction, non-verbal construction, imperatives, indefinite pronoun within the structure of Gonja negative construction. Having elaborated some detailed background on negation, the next sub-section is to provide an overview of some related literature of negation within the Guan languages.

## **2.2 Previous works negation strategies in non-Ghanaian languages**

This section also looks at some works of people in some non-Ghanaian languages. This section of the literature reviews some research works on negation strategies in non-Ghanaian languages.

### 2.2.1 Review of Kiswahili negation

This section examines the works of Ngonyani (2001) in Kiswahili, Ilori (2010) in Igbo, Adewole (1992) in Yoruba, Akumbu (2016), Dahl (1979), Honda (1996), Miestamo (2000, 2003, 2005).

Ngonyani (2001) argues that Kiswahili, a Bantu language, uses four strategies for expressing negation: (a) negation in tensed clauses, (b) prefix -si-, (c) negative copula si, and (d) kuto- in gerundive and infinitival clauses. To him the negative marker is prefixed to the verb where the form of the affirmative verb in Kiswahili is: Subject Agreement Marker (SAM) + Tense marker (TM) + Verb stem (VS).

- Affirmative sentence: SAM + TM+ Verb stem.
- Negative sentence: Negative marker + (SAM) + TM + Verb stem.

He further added that the negative marker can be realized in various forms depending on the type of pronoun the subject is: si- before first person singular pronoun, h- before second- and third-person singular pronouns, ha- before plural forms. This is illustrated below.

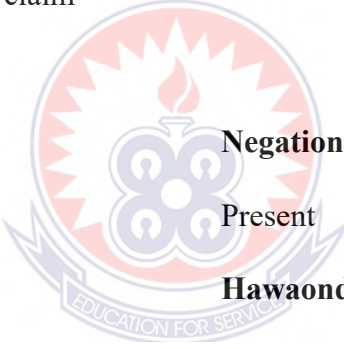
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| (11) a. <b>nitaondoka</b> ‘I will have.’ | <b>sitaondoka</b> ‘I will not have.’      |
| b. <b>utaondoka</b> ‘you will have.’     | <b>hutaondoka</b> ‘you will not have.’    |
| c. <b>wataondoka</b> ‘they will have.’   | <b>hawataondoka</b> ‘they will not have.’ |

(Ngonyani, 2001: 19)

In the first person singular negated form, it is realized that the Subject Agreement marker ‘**ni**’ is dropped (See Ngonyani, 2001: 19)

Ngonyani further added that in Kiswahili, negative sentences are realized differently depending on the type of Tense/Aspect they are in. Aside the negative marker, the Tense marker is realized differently in various tense forms:

- The present tense negative sentence replaces the final vowel with the suffix –i. (Ngonyani ibid: 20)
- In the past tense, the negative sentence replaces the past tense marker -li- by –ku- (its negative counterpart).
- In the future tense, the negative and the affirmative counterparts have the same tense marker (nothing changes). Below are examples in its affirmative and negatives forms in support of the above claim

		
<b>Affirmative</b>		<b>Negation</b>
Present		Present
(12) <b>Wanaondoka</b>		<b>Hawaondoki</b>
‘They are leaving.’		‘they are not leaving.’
Past		Past
(13) <b>Waliondoka</b>		<b>Hawakuondoka</b>
‘They left.’		‘they did not leave.’
Future:		Future
(14) <b>Wataondoka</b>		<b>Hawataondoka</b>
‘They will leave.’		‘they will not leave.’

	Perfect		Perfect
(15)	<b>Wameondoka</b>		<b>Hawajaondoka</b>
	‘They have left.’		‘they have not left.’

(Ngonyani 2001: 19-20)

He posits again that the pattern of the past negative sentence can also be seen in negating the perfect aspect. The aspectual marker **–me-** is replaced with the negative form **–jaas**. It seems then that negation is marked twice in Swahili. Ngonyani again argues that these are two different markers (not discontinuous).

Ilori (2010) argues that a negator is a functional element used to deny a proposition. He further argues that there are two arguments with respect to negators in languages. Firstly, he posits that negators in most languages are Infl items, which linearly precede the predicate that they are to negate. Secondly, he affirms that there are other languages where Neg is not solely realized in Infl. Contrary to the first assertion, in Igbo the negative marker is an inflectional item, which is suffixed to the predicate it negates (see Obiamalu, 2014). Consider the Igbo examples below.

(16)	a.	. da	m. -rà	mmã
		Ada	be beautiful-rV	beauty
		‘Ada is beautiful.’		

**b. Àda a mǎ-ghi mma**  
 Ada AGR be beautiful-Neg beauty  
 ‘Ada is not beautiful.’

(17) **a. O zu -ru akwà**  
 3sg buy-rVpast cloth  
 ‘S/he bought some clothes.’

**b. O zụ-ghi akwa**  
 3sg buy–Neg cloth  
 ‘S/he did not buy clothes.’

(18) **a. Òbi e ri e-la nrĩ**  
 . bi AGR eat-OVS PF food  
 ‘Obi has eaten.’

**b. Òbi e ri be-ghi nri**  
 . bi AGR eat PF-Neg food  
 ‘Obi has not eaten.’

(Obiamalu, 2014:12)

In examples (16b, 17b, 18b), where he observes that *ghí/ghi* are the negative markers in Igbo. The negative markers are suffixed to the verb, which they negate. He again posits that the rV suffixes which mark present tense, and the past tense marker in (16a) and

(17a), are replaced with the negative markers *ghí/ghi* in (16 and 17). He is of the opinion that the *rV* (a fusion of an alveolar trill and a vowel of the verb) is an Archi morpheme for suffixes that are used to indicate present, stative and past in Igbo. The vowel of the suffixes is dependent on vowel harmony constraints in the language. To him in Igbo, co-occurrence restrictions are placed on the occurrences of vowels such that vowels in the language are divided into two harmonic sets: +ATR vowels and –ATR vowels. The +ATR vowels co-occur with each in both derived and underived words and the same thing is applicable to –ATR vowels. He further stated that the choice of the *rV* suffixes is dependent on the vowel of the verb to which they are attached. In (16a) it is observed that *e-la*, which is used to mark perfective aspect, becomes *bè* in (18b) and it linearly precedes the negative marker.

In Basà, there is a case whereby the negative marker attaches to the verb root to express negation. Imoh (2012) presents the following data to demonstrate how negation is marked in Basà.

- (19) a.     **ẹẹ zhe a rità utakàda**  
           3PL Aux AGR read book  
           ‘They will read a book.’
- b.     **aà zha-shẹ a rità utakāda-ò**  
           3PL Aux Neg. AGR read book Neg.  
           ‘They will not read the book.’

With critical observation in (19), the negative suffixes in Basà attach to the verb (Aux) to express negation. Notice also that there is tonal change in (19b) which, however, introduces phonological contents as presented above.

### 2.2.2 Review of Yoruba negation

Adewole (1992) is of the view that in Yorùbá, the negative imperative may or may not have an overt grammatical subject and when it has a subject, it is always second person. Similarly argue by Obiamalu (2014) where claims that in Igbo language commands are only given to the addressee (second person). He further added that when the subject is the second person singular, it is left unexpressed, but, when it is the second person plural there are two options in the imperative. The second person plural pronoun can occur in the subject position before the verb or as an enclitic after the verb. Imperative sentences in Úwù are negated with *mè* and this marker precedes the verb. See the examples below.

(20) a. **Dá!**

‘Go!’

b. **Mè dá!**

Neg. go

‘Don’t go!’

(21) a. **Se uàṣe!**

‘Eat food!’

**b. Mè ɣe uaɣe!**

Neg eat food

‘Don’t eat the food.!’

(22) **a. Húre!**

‘Run.!’

**b. Mè húre!**

Neg run

‘Don’t run.!’

He again postulated that in examples (20b), (21b), and (22b) above, where he further affirms that **mè** occurs before the verb and it negates the imperative assertion of the verb. He however stressed that aspectual markers cannot co-occur with negative markers in an imperative sentence in Úwú because they are incompatible in terms of their syntactic position in the language structure. Hence, the sentence below is ill-grammatical.

(23). \* **Mè ká dá!**

Neg PERF. Go

To him the ungrammaticality of (23) is motivated by the presence of the perfective marker in the imperative sentence. Moreover, it is a fact of the language that perfect and progressive aspects, and other preverbal particles, cannot appear in the same position with imperative verbs.



Akumbu (2016) opines that Bum uses three negative markers that are clearly differentiable because of the language structure. These are (a) the discontinuous marker **tá...(jè)** which combines only with the past tenses, (b) the discontinuous marker **wí...(jè)** which combines with the present tense as well as future tenses, and (c) the marker **bú** which can combine with the present tense and past tenses to form negative constructions.

### 2.2.3 Review of Indo-European languages

Based on about 240 sampled languages, Dahl (1979) states the basic strategies used for languages to negate simple indicative clauses with a verbal predicate. He further added a fundamental distinction between morphological and syntactical means of expressing negation, which includes the various means by which language users negate simple statements and forms principle that guides the use of language regardless of structure. He added stating basic fundamental classification according to the strategies above. First of it is morphological means of expressing negation, is further subdivide into prefixal for Latvian language in example (24), suffixal for Lezgian language in example (25), and circumfixal for Chukchi language in example (26), prosodic, and reduplicative negation; the latter two types are only marginally documented and stated below in support of the claim above.

Latvian (Indo-European, Baltic) (Lazdiņa, 1966: 24-25, 303)

- (24) a. **tēv-s      strādā      pļavā**  
 father-NOM work.3 meadow.LOC  
 ‘Father is working in the meadow.’

b. **tēv-s ne-strādā**

father-NOM NEG-work.3

‘Father is not working.’

Lezgian (Nakh-Dagestanian, Lezgitic) (Haspelmath 1993: 127, 245)

(25) a. **xürünwi-jri ada-waj meslät-ar ãaču-zwa**

villager-PL(ERG) he-ADEL advice-PL take-IMPF

‘The villagers take advice from him.’

b. **xürünwi-jri ada-waj meslät-ar ãaču-zwa-č**

villager-PL(ERG) he-ADEL advice-PL take-IMPF-NEG

‘The villagers do not take advice from him.’

Chukchi (Chukotko-Kamchatkan, Northern Chukotko-Kamchatkan)

(Kämpfe and Volodin 1995: 68, 69)

(26) a. **čejwə-rkən**

go-DUR

‘(S)he goes.’

b. **a-nto-ka (itə-rkən)**

NEG-go.out-NEG be-DUR

‘(S)he does not go out.’

(Dahl, 1979: 81-82).

The negation strategy stated and exemplified above about standard negation is different from that of Gonja in negating declarative verbal main clause but relevant to this study because it gives me a fair idea on how negation strategy is materialized through a morphological means.

In the second case, that is, negation expressed by syntactic means, the negative marker may be an non-diffracting negative particle or a negative auxiliary with regards to Indonesian language in illustration (27), French language in illustration (28) and lastly Finnish language in illustration (29) and to him a further distinction can be made as to whether the verb is modified morphological. Below are the illustration in backing the above phenomenon. Indonesian (Austronesian, Sundic) (Sneddon, 1996: 195)

- (27) a. **Mereka menolong kami**  
 They help us.EXCL  
 ‘They helped us.’
- b. **Mereka tidak menolong kami**  
 they NEG help us.EXCL  
 ‘They didn’t help us.’

French (Indo-European, Romance) (constructed examples)

- (28) a. **Je chante**  
 1SG sing.PRES.1SG  
 ‘I sing.’

- b. je ne chante pas**  
1SG NEG sing.PRES.1SG NEG  
'I do not sing.'

Finnish (Uralic, Finnic) (constructed examples)

- (29) **a. koira-t haukku-vat**  
dog-PL bark-3PL  
'Dogs bark.'

- b. koira-t ei-vät hauku**  
dog-PL NEG-3PL bark.CNG  
'Dogs do not bark.'

Also Miestamo (2007) argued within a typology perspective where he made a distinction between symmetric and asymmetric negation where he made an assertion that a clause with a symmetric negative construction differs only by the presence of the negative marker(s), whereas a clause with asymmetric negative construction exhibits additional structural differences. The above explanation is illustrated below in example (30) for Swedish and example (31) for Finnish respectively.

- (30) **a. hund-ar-na skäll-er ute**  
dog-PL-DEF bark-PRES outside  
'The dogs are barking outside.'

**b. hund-ar-na skäll-er inte ute**

dog-PL-DEF bark-PRES NEG outside

‘The dogs are not barking outside.’

(31) **a. koira-t haukku-vat ulkona**

dog-PL bark-3PL outside

‘The dogs are barking outside.’

**b. koira-t ei-vät hauku ulkona**

dog-PL NEG-3PL bark.CNG outside

‘The dogs are not barking outside.’

(Miestamo 2007: 163-165)

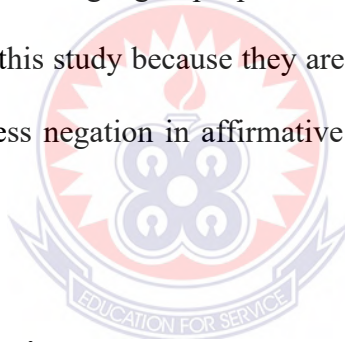
In Swedish, the negative particle **inte** is added after the verb but in other respects the structure of the clause remains the same as in the affirmative. In Finnish, the negative marker is the auxiliary **ei** that carries person marking and the form of the lexical verb changes as it loses its finiteness, appearing in the connegative form. The phenomenon above as one of the negation strategies outlined by Dahl, is also true of Gonja where Gonja negates simple sentences through a syntactic particle and this will be elaborated more in chapter four (4) of this study juxtaposing the phenomenon above with examples in Gonja.

There is a third type mentioned by Dahl where the negative marker is a particle, a dummy adjuvant is added to the sentence, and modifying the finite verb appearing in the

affirmative sentence is morphological. Dahl is also of the view that the type where negation is expressed through change in word order might also exist, but this reserved for him unsure. According to Dahl's analysis and interpretation languages where negation is indicated by morphological means, portmanteau realization of negative morphemes and the subject or a tense marker may be found.

### **2.3 Previous works on negation strategies in Kwa languages**

In this sub-section, I review literature on negation strategies representing data from the Kwa languages. Here, I review various works by scholars on the negation strategies. Kwa is a language of the Niger Congo group spoken in Ghana. The review of the Kwa languages is necessary for this study because they are all in Ghana and I want to find out how those languages express negation in affirmative constructions as far as negation is concern in Gonja.



#### **2.3.1 Review of Fante negation**

Osam (2004) opines that in Akan there are less forms of negatives than affirmatives, that is to say that certain aspectuals in the affirmative forms may not go well with the negative's forms. Osam again posits that in the negative, the perfect morpheme take place as a suffix (however, in the affirmative it is exhibited as prefix), with the negative marker taking place as a high tone prefix in Fante. In the other dialects, the tone of the negative prefix depends on the verb and on whether the subject is pronoun or a full noun phrase the progressive aspect and the future tense are negated using the same form. The negative prefix follows the form used to function as the progressive and future. In

negating habitual, the negative morpheme takes place as a prefix with or without tonal effect in the verb stem. Below are examples to back up the above claim respectively:

(32) a. **Ekua á-tɔ̀ bi**  
Ekua PERF-buy some  
'Ekua has bought some.'

b. **Ekua ń-tɔ̀-ɔ̀ bi**  
Ekua NEG-buy-PERF some  
'Ekua hasn't bought some.'

(33) a. **Abofra no rɛ-kásá**  
Child DET PROG-speak  
'The child is speaking.'

b. **Abofra no ré-n`-kásà**  
Child DET PROG-NEG-speak  
'The child is not speaking.'

(34) a. **Kofi bias no**  
Kofi ask-HAB 3SGOBJ  
'Kofi asks him/her.'

- b. Kofi m`-bísà no**  
Kofi NEG-ask-HAB 3SGOBJ  
‘Kofi doesn’t ask him/her.’

(Osam, 2004: 25-27)

In Akan, the negative marker may appear before or after the Tense or Aspect marker. Negation is immediately prefixed to the verb stem. This means all other affixes would appear before the Neg prefix or after the verb in a negative sentence. However, the Negative marker is always pre-verbal. This situation is also true in Gonja where the negative marker always comes before the verb in a negative construction.

Dolphyne (1995) reports that, negation is phonologically marked in Akan. He presents the example as follows:



- (35) **a. Kofi ba ha**  
3SG come here  
‘Kofi comes here.’

- b. Kofi m-ba ha**  
3SG Neg.come here’  
‘Kofi does not come here.’

(Dolphyne, 1995: 42)



In 35b, negation is marked by a homorganic nasal prefixed to the verb stem. We can see further that the negative marker *m-* appears before the verb, hence attaches to the verb stem based on the defining features of the verb, such as tense and aspect.

Abakah (2005) states that in all classification of Akan, all verbs express negation using a nasal prefix, *N*. The table illustrations below show classification of Akan negation

	FANTE	AKUAPEM	ASANTE	GLOSS
(36) a.	mɔ̀-n-tɔ́n'	mì-n`-tɔ́ŋ'	mì-n`-tɔ́ɔ̀	'I do not sell.'
b.	ì-n`-tɔ́ń	wɔ́-n`-tɔ́ŋ'	wɔ́-n`-tɔ́ɔ̀	'you do not sell.'
c.	ɔ̀-n`-tɔ́ń	ɔ̀-n`-tɔ́ŋ'	ɔ̀-n`-tɔ́ɔ̀	'he/she do not sell.'

(Abakah, 2005: 109)

Abakah further stress that, the negative prefix is a homorganic nasal that assimilates to the place of articulation of the following consonant. In the illustration above, the prefix is realized as [n` -] when it is attached to the verb 'sell'. This happens to be a clear case of morphological negation with the preverbal negative marker acting as an affix rather than a separate word. There are varied analyses for the tone of this segment. The above illustration analyzed by Abakah behaves differently in Gonja as Gonja express negation using a free negative morpheme rather than been prefixed or attached to verb based on the data at hand. But however looks similar base on the negative marker in Gonja being a nasal negative morpheme but however relevant to this study for the purposes of getting firsthand information about strategies expressed by other languages. In his analysis of

Kwawu Akan, Campbell (1988: 210) represents the segment as having a low tone. This is the representation below

- (37)            **yaw n- hú-ù**                            **no**  
                   Yaw NEG-see-PAST                him  
                   'Yaw hasn't seen him.'

(Campbell 1988: 214)

Another recent discussion of Abakah (2005: 124), describes the negative morpheme in Akan as being toneless. All classification of Akan employs morphological negation using verbal prefixes. Negation in simple present clauses is symmetric in the sense that the only thing that changes is the addition of the negative prefix to the verb. The tone pattern can be affected but not the addition of the negative marker. Campbell (1988) presents a more comprehensive explanation on the treatment of the tone rules in Kwawu Akan where tone is not a criterion for negation in support of what Miestamo (2007) outline a more practical distinction between the type of asymmetry and in these examples, the tone shift appears to be largely a phonetic rather than exhibiting any grammatical changes. While negative asymmetry does not occur in the negation of simple present tense clauses, it does occur in other tenses and aspects in Akan. In negative clauses, the difference between the future tense and progressive aspect marking is neutralized. In non-negative sentences, future tense is marked on the verb by a prefix **bɛ** - and progressive aspect by the verbal prefix **re-**. In negative contexts, **re-** is used. See the example (38) below;

(38) a. **Kwasí bε-yε tikya**  
 Kwasí FUT-be teacher  
 ‘Kwasí will be a teacher.’

b. **Kofi re-ń-kə́ Kùmàse**  
 Kofi FUT/PROG-NEG-go Kumasi  
 ‘Kofi will not go Kumasi or Kofi is not going to Kumasi.’

(Campbell, 1988: 210, 216)

While this is clearly a case of negative asymmetry, it does not fit nicely into one of Miestamo’s categories. It most closely resembles the subtype A/Cat, where marking of grammatical categories is different from their marking in affirmatives, usually affecting TAM and person-number-gender distinctions. Perhaps a more specific category is accepted, such as A/Neut, which would indicate that certain verbal tense/aspect contrasts are neutralized in negative contexts. This is supported by Dixon’s generalization that there are often fewer tense/aspect choices in a negative clause than in a positive one (2012: 129). This argument above clearly fit into the affirmatives and negatives situation in Gonja where the structure of future affirmative differs from that of future negatives structure.

### 2.3.2 Review of Ewe negation

Agbedor (1994) argues that negation marking in Ewe is basically expressed through a discontinuous element **me....o** where **me** is the head and ‘**o**’ is the specifier. Below are the illustrations in support of Agbedor’s claim in (14).

- (39) a. **Kofi de suku**  
K. go school  
'Kofi went to school.'
- b. **Kofi mede suku o**  
K. NEG.go school NEG  
'Kofi did not go to school.'

(Agbedor, 1994: 55)

It is noteworthy to say that the negative elements in Ewe behave like the French **ne...pas**.

This can be shown below:

- (40) a. **Je suis etudiant**  
1SG be student  
'I am a student.'
- b. **Je ne suis etudiant pas**  
1SG Neg. be student Neg.  
'I am not a student.'

In French, as observed in (40b), negation is marked via the use two syntactic particles **ne** and **pas** in a form of circumfixation. In other words, French allows double negation marking. Agbedor again treated two categories of negative construction which is been represented as sentence negation and constituent negation where sentence negation has normal or simple tense and agreement structure while constituent negation involves a

cleft construction signifying different underlying structure in terms of negation construction in Ewe.

(41) a. **Kofie tle agbalea**

K.FOC buy bookthe

'It was Kofi who bought the book.'

b. **Menye Kofie tle agbalea o**

NEGbe K.FOC buy bookthe NEG

'It was not Kofi who bought the book.'

(Agbedor, 1994: 57)

The example in (41b) is the negative counterpart of the example in (41a) above. Example (40a) above is a simple indicative sentence. Following the systematic analysis of the example above, (40a) differs from (41a) in which the earlier example has a focused subject (i.e it is X, not Y, who performed the action denoted by the predicate). The negation in (40a) is term as sentence negation, while (41b) represents as constituent negation, which occurs within negative construction with focusing as a tool for constituent negation in Ewe. The above analysis and interpretation of negation phenomenon in Ewe is similar to that of Gonja following the structure negative construction in Gonja. It is also interpreted as simple negative sentence and constituent negative construction based on the data gathered on negative constructions in Gonja.

However, the only difference is that, unlike in Ewe where a discontinuous negative morpheme **me.....o** is used in negating simple declarative sentences of which **me** is the head and **o** is the specifier, Gonja happens to use pre-verbal negative marker which also serves as the head of negative morpheme in the negative construction. Interestingly about constituent negation, Ewe has the same constituent negation structure to that of Gonja where the construction is termed as cleft construction. More of this is discussed in chapter four (4) of thesis.

### 2.3.3 Review of Dangme negation

Ameka & Dakubu (2008) posit that Dangme employs several negation strategies in negating affirmatives. The first one involves a post-verb morpheme /**we**/ which could be interpreted as a suffix (-we) with different allomorphs, depending on the tone of the verb stem. Ameka & Dakubu added that /**we**/ seem to look like Ewe's clause-final negator, the particle /**o**/ but looks different from negation in Ewe because negation in Dangme consistently exhibits a high tone on the verb stem. The illustration below shows Dangme verb paradigm

	Aspect	Form	Gloss
(42) a.	Perfective	<b>Nà lá</b>	'Na sang.'
b.	Habitual -	<b>Nà lá-á</b>	'Na sings.'
c	Negative	<b>Nà lá we<sup>-</sup></b>	'Na did not/ does not/ is not singing.'
d	Subjunctive	<b>Nà á lá</b>	'Na is to sing, would sing.'
e	Absolute	<b>lá</b>	'sing.!

Ameka & Dakubu further add that the phenomenon above clearly fits into Miestamo's asymmetry category A/Cat, in which the marking of grammatical properties in negative clauses differs from their marking in affirmative clauses. In the negative, the aspect distinction found in the affirmative is neutralized. The negative marker is in complementary distribution with habitual or subjunctive and that the first negation strategy neutralizes the contrast between the realis forms. The phonological form of the realized negative depends on the tone class of the verb and varies slightly from one dialect to another. Below are the illustrations in support of the above claim:

TONE CLASS	VERB	NEGATED VERB
(43) a. High	<b>lá</b> 'sing'	<b>lá we<sup>-</sup></b>
b. Low	<b>dò</b> 'dance'	<b>dú-í</b>
c. Mid	<b>dū</b> 'bathe'	<b>dú wē</b> (Krobo dialect) <b>dú-í</b> (Ada dialect)

In Dangme, tone plays a vital role in the negation strategies as outlined above. Ameka & Dakubu opine that where the verb stem has a final high tone, the tone does not change and the particle, **we** follow the verb. If the verb has a final low tone, the stem vowel is raised, there is a suffix consisting of a high vowel, and the whole construction has high tone. Final mid tone verbs follow the patterns of high tone verbs in the Krobo dialect and follow the pattern of low tone verbs in the Ada dialect (Ameka & Dakubu 2008: 255). In their analysis, Ameka and Dakubu (2008) describe **we** as a particle with phonological realizations as suffix.

Again the example in the usage of tone for negation marking draws information from Caesar (2012) where she established that the tone is a key element in separating the affirmative construction from the negative construction in Dangme. While the affirmative construction in (44a) is authorized by the low tone of some monosyllabic verbs with nasalized vowels, the negative construction is triggered by the high tone (44b). In the same vein, Verbs containing the high and low tones as well as the low and high tones co-occur with the **wē** segment in disyllabic verbs. Consider examples (45a-b) and (46a-b) respectively.

- (44) a. **Ngmlè      ́      pè.**  
 Bell            DET    sound.PERF  
 ‘The bell has been sounded.’
- b. **Ngmlè      ́      pé.**  
 Bell            DET    sound.PERF.NEG  
 ‘The bell has not been sounded.’
- (45) a. **Í      lá-á.**  
 1SG    sing-HAB  
 ‘I sing.’
- b. **Í      lá      wē**  
 1SG    sing    NEG  
 ‘I sing not.’



(46) a. **Í ngè lá-é.**  
 1SG be.at: sing-PROG

‘I am singing.’

b. **Í lá wē**  
 1SG sing NEG

‘I am not singing.’

(Caesar 2012: 5)

The aspectual markers in the positive have changed in sentences (44a) due to the negation (44b). Because of this, the habitual and progressive markers ‘a’ and {**ngè...-e**} do not appear in the negative. Additionally, the habitual and progressive phrases in (45a) provide proof that the word "**wē.**" comes just after the verb. Because nothing else follows the verb (45b), it appears to occur clause-finally in the intransitive phrases in (46b).

#### 2.3.4 Review of Ga negation

Dakubu (2008a:112) postulates that there are two kinds of verbs in Ga, imperfective verbs and future verbs based on their lexical tones, which differ in how they produce the negative of bare verbs. She refers to these groups as verb tone classes. Her description of these tone classes is true, thus it is worthwhile to repeat it here. She observes that while class 2 verbs lack the lexical specification of a low beginning syllable (i.e., they have a high tone or are underspecified), class 1 verbs do. Below are the classes of verbs in Ga with tone playing a significant role in showing their difference with respect to unique class each verb belongs to?

Class 1 verbs - first syllable low e.g. yì ‘beat’, fò ‘throw’, kɔ̃ ‘bite’, gbèè ‘fall’, shwiê ‘sack’  
 Class 2 verbs - first syllable high e.g. yí ‘pass’, kɔ ‘take’, tsá!ké ‘change’, fíté ‘spoil’

OR first syllable underspecified e.g. ba ‘come’, ye ‘eat’, nũ ‘hear’ OR disyllabic low-low e.g. shã̀ tà ‘tear off (esp. meat)’, sèlè ‘swim’, dà mɔ̃ ‘stand’

Campbell (2017: 284) illustrates the strategies as means of marking negation in Ga. While the low tone of certain class 2 bare verbs licenses affirmative polarity in (47a) a high tone with final vowel lengthening triggers negative polarity (47b). Whereas class 1 bare verbs, a low tone syllable licenses affirmative in (48a), a prefix é in addition to final vowel lengthening triggers negative polarity (48b). In the following examples, the (47a) sentences are in the affirmative while the (b) sentences have the corresponding negative forms and sentence (47c) and (48c) showing the ungrammaticality form of the sentence of the class 1 and 2 bare verbs in the language.

(47) a.      **áku yì álb ñté=!é**  
           aku    beat    cat=DEF  
           “Aku beat the cat.”

b.      **áku é-!yííálb                    ñté=!é**  
           aku    NEG-beat.NEG            cat=DEF  
           “Aku did not beat the cat.”



- (49) a.      **ònúfú kǎ -ǎ      mǎ**  
              snake bite-HAB      person  
              “Snakes bite.”
- b.      **ònúfú é-!kǎ ǎ ǎ      mǎ**  
              snake NEG-bite.NEG person  
              “Snakes do not bite.”
- (50) a.      **nǎná!ǎ kǎ -ǎ      tsòfǎ      dáá      lèé!bí**  
              nana      take-HAB medicine everyday      morning  
              “Nanaa takes medicine every morning.”
- b.      **nǎná!ǎ kǎ ǎ ǎ      tsòfǎ      dáá      lèé!bí**  
              nana take.NEG medicine everyday      morning  
              “Nanaa does not take medicine every morning.”

(Campbell, 2017: 286)

Again the progressive aspect - class 1 verb is illustrated in example (51a) sentences are in the affirmative while the (b) sentences have the corresponding negative forms sentence while class 2 verbs are illustrated in example (52a) sentences are in the affirmative while the (b) sentences have the corresponding negative forms and sentence.

(51) a. **òkó ŋ -shwíé wùó -!í=é**  
Oko PROG-sack chicken-PL=DEF  
“Oko is sacking the chickens (i.e. shooing them away).”

b. **òkó é-shwíééé wùó -!í=é**  
Oko NEG-sack.NEG chicken-PL=DEF  
“Oko is not sacking the chickens”

(52) a. **òkó ŋ -sèlè**  
Oko PROG-swim  
“Oko is swimming.”

b. **òkó sélééé**  
Oko swim.NEG  
“Oko is not swimming.” (Campbell, 2017: 287)

In the above example in (51b) and (52b), the negative prefix segment is removed when the subject of a class 1 verb is a pronoun, and the pronoun's final syllable takes on the negative prefix segment's high tone. The verb stem's initial syllable has a down-stepped tone. A class 2 verb's pronoun subject contains low tones on every syllable and the verb stem does not descend. Compare (53a) with the class 1 verb and (53b) with the class 2 verb below:

- (53) a. **àmě =!yííí álǔ òtè=!é**  
 3PL=beat.NEG cat=DEF  
 “They did not beat the cat.”
- b. **ã mē =yííí tsú=ē sε ε**  
 3P =pass.NEG building=DEF back  
 “They did not pass (go via) the back of the building.”

Campbell (2017:288) asserts once more that class 1 verbs are negated by the use of the prefix é in addition to the negative future – η while class 2 verbs are negated by the use of the suffix -η. The tone distinctions with regard to pronominal subjects that were demonstrated for bare and imperfective negatives are applicable, albeit only instances with full noun phrase subjects will be provided in example (54a) and (54b) whereas future aspect - class 2 verbs is illustrated in example (55a) sentences are in the affirmative while the (b) sentences have the corresponding negative forms and sentence.

- (54) a. **kòjò bàá-sū kã né=!é**  
 Kojo FUT-turn.on light=DEF  
 “Kojo will switch on the light.”
- b. **kòjò é-sú-η kã né=!é**  
 Kojo NEG-turn.on-NEG.FUT light=DEF  
 “Kojo will not switch on the light.”

- (55) a. **è=ŋǎ bàá-!shí lɛ**  
 3SG=wife FUT-leave 3SG.OBJ  
 “His wife will leave him.”

- b. **è=ŋǎ shí-ŋ lɛ**  
 3SG=wife leave-NEG.FUT 3SG.OBJ  
 “His wife will not leave him.”

The example (54b) demonstrates that, contrary to what has already been demonstrated, imperfective and bare verbs can also use final vowel lengthening to communicate negative future proposition. As long as it has been established in the discourse context or any extralinguistic context that a future occurrence is being referenced, it might indicate future denial. For instance, in (56) when A asks B if she will attend a funeral (in future), Instead of using the negative future suffix -ŋ to indicate negation, B uses the imperfective/bare verb negation technique of vowel lengthening.

- (56) a. **ò=bàá-yà yàlá=à**  
 2SG=FUT-go funeral=DEF  
 “Will you go to the funeral?.”

- b. **.í=!yááá**  
 1SG=go.NEG  
 “I won’t go.”

Campbell (2017: 288) asserts once more that the language's usage of the negative perfect marker suffix, -ko, distinguishes perfective affirmatives. Verb stems in class 1 require an additional negator, é. This shows up as a downstepped high on the initial stem and a high tone on the pronominal subject. Syllable, as in (57) and (58) with the class 1 verbs ná 'see' and tsɛ́ 'be.long (duration)'.

Example (57) has the class 2 verb, sò lè 'pray (baptize)'

**è=bà      í=ŋɔ̃      nĩ í=kɛ́      í=!ná-kò**

3SG=come 1SG=presence and 1SG=say 1SG.NEG=see-NEG.PERF

daɲ

before

“He came to see me and I said I have not seen dollar currency before.” [MM:64]

(58) **ĩ      =bà é=!tsɛ́ -kò      kɾáá ê 1SG=come**

3SG. NEG=be.long-NEG.PERF at.all IJ

“I came not very long ago.” (Lit: “I came, it has not been long at all”)

[FH:106]

(59) **á=sɔ̀lè      bò òò**

3PL.IMPERS.PERF=baptise 2SG.OBJ IJ

**à=sɔ́ lé-kò      bò òò**



3PL.IMPERS=baptise-NEG.PERF 2SG.OBJ IJ

**dáá áfi=!é à=bàá-féé á-há**

everyday year=TOP 3PL.IMPERS=FUT-do 3PL.IMPERS.SBJV-give

**bò**

2SG.OBJ

“Whether you’ve been baptized or you haven’t been baptized, every year it will be done for you.” [OYO: 152] (Campbell, 2017: 293)

Campbell (2017: 293) goes on to show that the subjunctive marker *á-* in conjunction with the negative subjunctive prefix, *ka-*, negates imperative constructions in Ga. The distinction is that *ka-* comes before the subjunctive marker in these negative imperatives. The negator comes after the subjunctive marker in negative subjunctives. Because the morpheme *ká* serves to negate irrealis propositions generally, it is more useful to think of it as a negative irrealis marker. Examples (60) and (61) contain negative imperative propositions in support of the above claim

(60) **kà-á-fó ní ó=yítsò bà-gbá bò**  
 NEG.SBJV-SBJV-cry NMLZ 2SG=head VENT-split 2SG.OBJ  
 “Don’t cry and give yourself a headache.” [FH:178]

(61) **ôh Mr. Mensah kà-á-!shwíé í=híě à-shĩ**  
 oh Mr. Mensah NEG.SBJV-SBJV-pour 1SG=face PERT-down  
 “Oh, Mr. Mensah, don’t embarrass me.” (Lit: “...don’t pour my face down.”) [MM:49]



### 2.4.1 Review of Kusaal negation

Musah (2018) point out that negation in Kusaal is expressed by a means of preverbal negative marker appearing before a verb they negate in negatives construction. He further added that Kusaal expresses negation through the following strategies with the help of these negatives' particles or morphemes **pɔ** for negating declarative construction in (63), **da** for negating imperatives construction in (64) and lastly **ku** for negating future construction in (65). Below are the illustrations in (63) for negating declarative and (64) for negating imperative respectively:

(63). **Amus la sa pɔ di-i**  
 cat DET HEST.PST NEG eat-SFE  
 'The cat did not eat (yesterday).'

(64). **Da di diib la!**  
 NEG eat food DET  
 'Don't eat the food.!'

Musah (2018) further affirms that in negating future construction in Kusaal, the future negative particle **kɔ** replaces the default future particle **na** in negative construction. To him the default future particle, and the negative future particle cannot co-occur in negative construction in Kusaal, and when that happens, the construction becomes ill-grammatical automatically. He demonstrated by giving examples to prove that such phenomenon indeed exists in Kusaal. The examples are illustrated below:

(65) a. **O na pies la'ad la**  
 3SG FUT wash clothes DET

‘S/he will wash the clothes.’

b. **O kɔ pies la'ad la**

3SG NEG wash clothes DET

‘S/he will not wash the clothes.’

c. **\*O kɔ na pies laad la**

3SG NEG FUT wash clothes DET

Similar pattern exists in Gonja where the future marker and negative marker are incompatible in terms of their syntactic slot in Gonja negation.

#### 2.4.2 Review of Dagaare negation

Saanchi (2008) is of the view that, negation is expressed in Dagaare by the use of these preverbal particles such as **ba, kuɲ, ta and tɔɔ** to negate the predicate. Saanchi (2008) also added that aspect plays a vital role in determining negation strategies used in Dagaare. To him, in Dagaare, **Ba** is a non-future negative marker that is used to negate constructions in the present tense and it is also used in conjunction with the past tense particle **daɲ** to negate constructions in the past tense in the example 66a-66d below.

(66) a. **bie ba do a zie**

DEF child NEG weed DEF place

‘The child has not weeded the place.’

**b. a monaabu ba ku a naŋkpaana**

DEF buffalo NEG kill DEF hunter

‘The buffalo has not killed the hunter.’

**c a naŋkpaana daŋ ba ku woo**

DEF hunter PAST NEG kill elephant

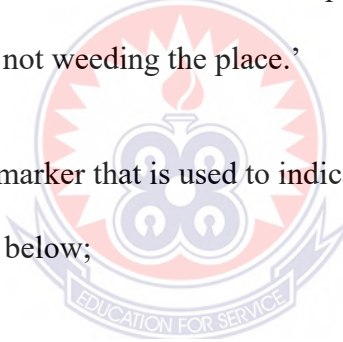
‘The hunter has never killed an elephant.’

**d. a bie ba duoro a zie**

DEF child NEG weed-IMPERF DEF place

‘The child is not weeding the place.’

**Kuŋ** is the negative future marker that is used to indicate that an event or situation will not occur as in example **e-f** below;



**e. a bie kuŋ gaa a tigrɪ**

DEF child NEG-FUT go DEF festival

‘The child will not go to the festival.’

**f. u kuŋ wa**

3SG NEG-FUT come

‘S/he will not come.’

**Ta** is a negative imperative marker that is used to prevent an event or situation that is just about to start from starting as in example **g-h** below

g.     **ta zo**  
NEG-IMP run-PERF  
'Do not run!.'

h.     **ta nyu a zum**  
NEG-IMP drink-PERF DEF soup  
'Do not drink the soup!.'

The structure of negation strategies in the above illustration and their distribution behaves similar to that of Gonja as Gonja also used preverbal particle to expressed negation in all forms of construction per the data gathered. Therefore, it is relevant in this study in order to help me ascertain how negation works in other languages to beef-up my work.

### 2.4.3 Review of Dagbani negation

Pazzack (2010) is of the view that, Dagbani expresses negation via one pattern, which is through preverbal means in a construction to mark negation. Pazzack further affirms that three varied types of preverbal negative markers, which are **Kù** as future negative marker, **Bə** as non-future negative marker and **Də** as an imperative marker. He added these three preverbal negative markers when distributed in negative construction appear in the same position. He further posits that these preverbal negative markers are

distributed in relation to tense, aspect and mood and other syntactic properties assigned to these markers. He again adds that, Dagbani has some lexical items that are used to express sentential negation which are as follows **ʒi**, **jɛ** and **kà**. Below are the illustration and their distribution considering their syntactic properties in a construction. The illustrations are stated below

(67) a.    **à'nə**        **ɲo`**    **kə`m?**  
                  2SG-FUT    drink    water  
                  ‘Will you drink water.’

b.        **à**        **kù**    **ɲo`**    **kə`m?**  
                  2SG    NEG    drink    water  
                  ‘Will you not drink water.?’

c.        **Tia**    **gbihí -ya**  
                  Tia    NEG sleep- PERF  
                  ‘Tia has slept.’

d.        **Tia**    **bə**    **gbihí-Ŏ**  
                  Tia    NEG    sleep- PERF  
                  ‘Tia has not slept.’

e. **Dì-mà!**

Eat-IMP

‘Eat!.’

f. **də di!**

NEG eat

‘Do not eat.’

g. **Tia m̀ Tamale**

Tia know Tamale

‘Tia knows Tamale.’

h. **Tia ʒi Tamale**

Tia know. Not Tamale

‘Tia does not know Tamale.’



(Pazzack, 2010: 47, 60)

He further argued based on the above future construction in (67b), where he stated emphatically that the standard future marker in Dagbani **nə is** use in future construction, to negate the construction in Dagbani, the future negative marker **kù** in (67a) replaces the future negative marker **nə** in (67b). This phenomenon also exists in Gonja on the structure of Gonja future negative markers. The information on the above data will be relevant in chapter four of this thesis.



## 2.4 Previous works on negation strategies in Guan languages

In this sub-section, I review literature on negation strategies representing data from the Guan languages. Here, I review various works by scholars on the negation strategies which include Abunya (2010) on Krachi, Casali (1995) on Nawuri, Ansah (2015) on Leteh.

### 2.4.1. Review of Krachi negation

Abunya, (2010) posits that Kaakyi or Krachi language contradicts simple proposition by the use of nasal prefixes. Abunya again outlines negative prefixes in Krachi language which are stated below

**m-** Future

**m̃-** Past

**m̄-** Progressive

**m̂-** Perfect

**an-** Imperative/optative

**àà-** Habitual



(Abunya, 2010: 109)

Looking at the above negative morpheme employed by Krachi to express negation are segmentally the same with regards to perfect, progressive and past negative morpheme but looks differently with regards to imperative and habitual negative morpheme via the use of tone as the modification tool for their functions or distribution in negative constructions. Considering the nature of negation strategies in Gonja, it differs from the Krachi based on the classifications made by Dahl, Krachi happens to fall within the

morphological category negation but relevant to this study based on how they are distributed in simple sentences.

Abunya (2010) affirms that, In Krachi language, the past tense is expressed by a high tone /é/ prefix. In the negative past, the past tense prefix is replaced by a high tone syllabic homorganic nasal, which is attached to the verb stem and also the future tense marker is ‘é’ and the future negative tense marker which is ‘mé’. Abunya further added that in affirmative, the progressive aspect is different from the past tense only by exhibiting a low tone instead of a high tone. Where in the negative progressive, a high tone bilabial nasal /m’/ is attached to the low tone /è/ progressive prefix. The example (68b and 68d), and (69b and 69d), below illustrate the above claims respectively.

- (68) a.     **àli-ké-yɔ obuase**  
           1PL.SUBJ-FUT-go house  
           ‘We will go home.’
- b.     **àli           mé-yɔ obuase**  
           1PL.SUBJ-NEG-FUT-go home.  
           ‘we will not go home.’
- c.     **Bè           ké-tensu**  
           3PL.SUBJ-FUT- forget  
           ‘They will forget.’

- d. **Bè- mé- tɛnsu**  
3PL.SUBJ- NEG-FUT-forget

‘They will not forget.’

- (69) a. **Ama ɛ-kpìsàŋ`**  
Ama PST-sneezed  
‘Ama sneezed.’

- b. **Ama ŋ'-kpísa'ŋ`**  
Ama NEG.PST-sneeze  
‘Ama did not sneeze.’

- c. **Gyoro wɔ' é-wɔ'**  
dog DET PST-die  
‘The dog died.’

- d. **Gyoro wɔ ń-wù**  
dog DET NEG.PST-die

‘the dog did not die.’ (Abunya, 2010:110)

In the affirmative, the progressive aspect in Krachi language is encoded by a similar prefix to the past tense and is characterized only by having a low tone instead of a high

tone. Negative progressive involves a high-tone bilabial nasal /**m̩**-/ prefixed to the low-pitched /**è**-/ progressive prefix.

(70) a. **Yaw e-fùkí**

Yaw PROG-jump

‘Yaw is jumping.’

b. **Yaw m-é-fùkí**

Yaw NEG-PROG-jump

‘Yaw is not jumping.’

(71) a. **Kegyifɔri wó ε-dídi**

child DET PROG-sleep

‘The child is sleeping.’

b. **Kegyifɔri wó m-é dí idi**

child DET NEG-PROG-sleep

‘The child is not sleeping.’

(Abunya, 2010:117-118)

Unlike the negative future, the negative past construction is simple, with the only difference being the replacement of the past marker with the negative past. One significant difference is that the negative past marker exhibits the same high tone as the

affirmative past marker and so the high tone of the negative replaces the low tone of the progressive marker. The structure of negative proposition looks similar as argued by Dolphyne & Dakubu's (1988) generalization that North Guan languages mark negation with an /**m-**/ prefix, often with a vowel but the noteworthy significant difference is tone playing a major role in Krachi negation, which is not appreciated in Gonja negation.

#### 2.4.2 Review of Nawuri negation

Casali (1995) is of the view that, Nawuri (Naw) as one of the North Guan languages has two preverbal negative morphemes which constantly appear at the initial position in the verb phrase. Casali further states that **maŋ** contradicts negation alone while **mɛɛ** is used to mark both negation and in-completive aspect within the structure of negative sentences. See the example (72) below:

- (72) a.    **ɔ    maŋ    bo    tɔ**  
           3SG NEG   be       there  
           ‘She isn’t there.’
- b.    **ɔ    mɛɛ       tɔwɪ**  
           3SG NEG.INCOMP speak  
           ‘He doesn’t speak.’

The phenomenon above in (72a) and (72b) is true in Gonja as Gonja consistently uses preverbal negative morphemes to express negation placing much emphasis on negative

marker being a particle and comes before a verb in negative sentences in Gonja than being prefix to a verb.

Ansah (2015) posits that Leteh, one of the south Guan languages, expresses negation through the use of negative verbal prefixes. Ansah further explained that the negative morpheme **bé/bé** is morphologically marked with a high tone represented as /bé/ or /bé/ and purely determined based on the Advanced Tongue Root (ATR) the negative morpheme adopt whenever the negative marker co-occurs with the tense/aspect marker, the negative marker comes before the tense/ aspect marker. The illustrations below support the above phenomenon explained:

(73) a. **éné bé-dé-sə` oburodwo**  
 1PL NEG-PROG-buy plantain.  
 ‘We are not buying plantain.’

b. **Kofi bé-gyí dɔkita**  
 Kofi NEG-be doctor

‘Kofi is not a doctor.’ (Ansah, 2015: 34-37)

The issue of negation strategies in Leteh looks similar to that of Gonja because it is seen as all Guan languages mark negation through preverbal means. However, considering the nature of negation strategies in Gonja, it differs from the Leteh based on the classifications made by Dahl (1979) where Leteh happens to fall within the morphological category of negation. Having appreciated the analysis and the

interpretation of how negation is expressed in Guan languages and the role they play in terms of their position, Gonja and Nawuri employ similar strategies in marking negative construction through syntactic means, the rest of the other Guan languages express negation through the use of morphological strategies and so therefore relevant to this study on the basis of how negation is encoded in Gonja.

## **2.5 Theoretical Framework**

In every research work, there is always a theoretical framework within which the research is modelled on. These theories guide researchers in the analysis of their data and its interpretations. Therefore, the data obtained in this study is analyzed using the Basic Linguistic Framework, an upgraded approach whose roots can be traced right back to the works of Ferdinand de Saussure. This approach was postulated by Dixon (2010) with the aim, as he puts it; “to provide an outline characterization of the structure of human language and to provide a guide for those who wish to pursue the central business of linguistics - describing and analyzing natural languages...” (Page 1). Through insights from this volume, we were able to not just describe, but also analyze the nature of negation strategies both structurally and their syntactic distribution. The pioneering work of Sanskrit and Greek Grammarians about 3000 and 2000 years ago is where this theory originates from and it continues to be enhanced in the description of new languages. Grammar is described as the central part of every language as the theory focuses on grammar writing. It provides a guide for linguists working on natural languages and shows that each language should be treated as unique.

According to Dryer (2006:201), Basic linguistic theory differs sharply from other contemporary theoretical frameworks in what might be described as its conservativeness: unlike many theoretical frameworks that assume previous ideas only to a limited extent and freely assume many novel concepts, basic linguistic theory takes as much as possible from earlier traditions and only as much as necessary from new traditions. It can thus be described as traditional grammar, minus its bad features (such as a tendency to describe all languages in terms of concepts motivated for European languages), plus necessary concepts from traditional grammar. It has supplemented traditional grammar with a variety of ideas from structuralism, generative grammar, and typology. Thus, BLT benefits from other theories directly and indirectly. The expression "basic linguistic theory" (following R. M. W. Dixon) refers to the theoretical framework that is most widely employed in language description, particularly grammatical descriptions of entire languages. It is also the framework assumed by most works in linguistic typology. The status of basic linguistic theory as a theoretical framework is not often recognized. People using basic linguistic theory often characterize their work as a theoretical, theory-neutral, or theoretically eclectic. However, there is no such thing as a theoretical or theory-neutral description, since one cannot describe anything without making some theoretical assumptions. The extent to which most descriptive work shares the same theoretical assumptions is actually rather striking, especially when one considers how much such work has in common in its assumptions compared to other theoretical frameworks.

Unlike many theoretical frameworks in linguistics, which are often ephemeral and pass quickly into obsolescence, basic linguistic theory is a cumulative framework that has



slowly developed over the past century as linguists have learned how to describe languages better. It is grounded in traditional grammar and can be seen as having evolved out of traditional grammar. It has also been heavily influenced by pre-generative structuralist traditions, particularly in emphasizing the need to describe each language in its own terms, rather than imposing on individual languages concepts whose primary motivation comes from other languages, in contrast to traditional grammar and many recent theoretical frameworks. It has taken analytic techniques from structuralist traditions, particularly in the areas of phonology and morphology. But it also contrasts with work that is more purely structuralist in attempting to describe languages in a more user-friendly fashion, including semantic considerations in its analyses, and in employing terminology that has been used for similar phenomena in other languages. Basic linguistic theory differs from many other theoretical frameworks in that it is not a formal theory but an informal theory. That is, many grammatical phenomena can generally be characterized with sufficient precision in English (or some other natural language), without the use of formalism. This discussion focuses on the morph syntactic side of basic linguistic theory (or what one might call "basic syntactic theory"), but one can also trace the historical influences on phonology in basic linguistic theory. The concept of the phoneme is probably the most central phonological concept in basic linguistic theory: identifying the phonemes in a language remains the most fundamental task in describing the phonology of a language. Nevertheless, generative phonology has also influenced basic linguistic theory: language descriptions often find the generative notion of phonological rule useful, and the descriptive tools of more recent phonological theories, especially auto segmental phonology, have proven useful for descriptive linguists.

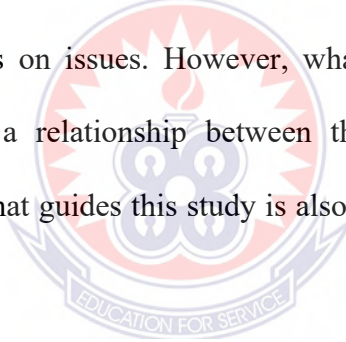
In using BLT to describe a language, the focus should be on how the language is organized and why languages are the way, they are. Dixon (2012a) explains that the grammar of any language is a network of collaborating structures and types, and calls for comparison of similar phenomena between languages before predictions are made. This means that each language is studied before it is related to what obtains across the languages of the world. Dixon (ibid) treats linguistics as a natural science and explains that being a science, linguistic analysis of a language must go through the scientific processes of describing, explaining, predicting, and evaluating. This is however not peculiar to BLT but occurs in other theories. The theory further gives a guide for grammar writers and explains that when commencing work, the linguist must record, transcribe and analyze texts so as to unearth the regular and irregular features in the language and these should be written in clear style “avoiding obscure prose” and the terminology used must also be clear and unambiguous. Dixon admonishes linguists never to depend on secondary sources but to go back to the primary sources for verification. This is to prevent misquoting scholars and avoiding errors. The standard orthography of the language must be adhered to and attention given to stress and intonation since these can bring about meaning differences. No two languages are the same (Dixon 2012a: 92) thus unlike other formal theories that have a framework that is used to match the elements of the theory to a language, BLT does not make universal claims but provide basic linguistic “features and parameters” that are common to be drawn on as correct in writing a language’s grammar.

Dixon (2012c) elaborated that data analysis in BLT is done by looking at similarities in structures through comparison. Because the theory views every language as a system that is unique and every part relates to the whole, the use of the theory provides feedback to the theory so that it can be refined and extended. Dixon added that any grammatical description must be grouped into “words” and clause. The word refers to “the interaction of syntax and morphology” and the clause refers to the description of some activity, state, or property and it is contained in a sentence. Thus, a simple sentence is made of a single clause. Structurally, there are two main clauses found in the languages of the world. These are intransitive and transitive clause. The clause has two functions, which are syntactic and pragmatic. The syntactic function deals with the structure, word ordering and clause combination while the pragmatic function is done by indicating the type of speech act that an utterance is. That is its mood. They include a statement that has a declarative mood, a command with an imperative mood, and a question with an interrogative mood. Clauses have internal structure made up of a predicate and a number of arguments, which should be stated or understood from context. The predicate is the nucleus of the clause and determines the type and number of arguments that the clause takes and the meaning of the predicate determines the kinds of nouns, which can fill a core argument slot. In using this theory, the typology works of negation of other languages will help me draw and analyze data on negation strategies in Gonja. In addition, the notion of word order is employed in describing how the arguments in the clause are encoded. That is the choice of the theory is meant to guide in providing an accurate description of negation strategies to ascertain how they behave both structurally

and syntactically, instead of trying to describe it in terms of concepts, which are motivated for European languages.

## **2.6 Summary of the Chapter**

This chapter discusses relevant related literature and the theoretical framework underpinning the topic under study. I examine the general review on negation, previous works on negation strategies in some non-Ghanaian languages, related literature in Kwa languages, related literature in Mabia languages and that of related literature in Guan languages. Different views by scholars on negation strategies in general have been discussed here. From this, one can conclude that scholars share different opinions and at one time share similarities on issues. However, what is of paramount interest to this research is that there is a relationship between the literature and the topic under investigation. The theory that guides this study is also looked at and finally the summary of the chapter.



## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

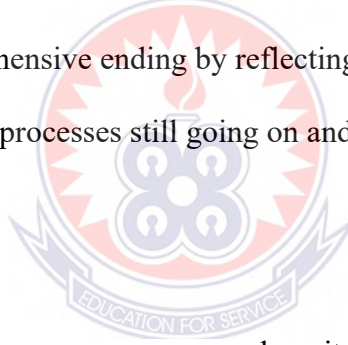
#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents methodological approach and techniques employed during the data collection stage of this study. The content of this chapter are the research design and approach discuss in section 3.1. I also discuss the population of the research in 3.2. Section 3.3 gives details about the sample techniques and seize for the study. I present the source of data used for this study in 3.4. Section 3.5 I talk about the setting of the research and fieldwork and 3.6 discusses the data collection strategies. In 3.7 I outline how the data for the study is presented and analyzed based on the objectives of the research whiles section 3.8 offers a summary of this chapter.

#### 3.1 Research design and Approach

This study is qualitative and descriptive in nature. It was selected because of its descriptive nature which improves the researcher's thoughtfulness of meanings essential of every human activity. In qualitative research, the data collection strategies very often include interviews, observation, and audiovisual materials (Creswell, 1998). In qualitative research, the researcher seeks to understand the people's interpretations of a phenomenon. Since this type of research is non-numerical, it involves detailed descriptions. Qualitative research design is; therefore, appropriate for the analysis of the negation strategies in Gonja. I consider the qualitative research method more appropriate for this study because the analyses will cast within the tenets of the Basic Linguistic

Theory by Dixon (2010). He added that the aim of qualitative research is to point to a holistic picture and depth of understanding but to render a non-numerical analysis of data. Qualitative research is preferred because the work will be based on the negation strategies and how they distributed in the language. It is descriptive because the researcher will gather systematic and factual information through observation and conduct the oral interview with the respondent. The researcher will choose this design because of the following reasons. It produces more in-depth comprehension information for the purpose the study will undertake. Another reason for the selection of qualitative for this study is that it is suitable for the study. This technique was preferred because of its interpretative and non-statistical nature that relates to asking, observing and analyzing data which made a comprehensive ending by reflecting on the practices that reveal beliefs that are ongoing as well as processes still going on and issues that are innovating.



### **3.2 Population**

Population is necessary because, as a researcher, it is not possible for me to include everyone in the study of this nature. This type of population contains all members of a real set of people, events or objects to which the researcher wishes to generalize the results of the study. Dörnyei (2007, p. 96) refers to population as ‘the group of people whom the study is about’. In other words, population is the group of persons the researcher intends to generalize the findings of his or her research to. The target population for this research should have been the entire Gonja speakers in East Gonja or any part of Ghana. Looking at the large nature of the Gonja speaking communities in East Gonja municipal which spread from Pru District in the Bono East region and beyond.

There is therefore, the need to get an accessible population for the study. Therefore, the research was based in Salaga and Kpembibi of East Gonja Municipal assembly in the Savannah region. Natives in these district are speakers of the East Gonja dialect.

### **3.3 Sampling and Sampling Technique**

The sampled population for this study was made up of five language consultants who are native speakers of the language. These language consultants are those that supported the researcher to gather data and do most of the work. For this reason, participants were selected to represent the entire population for this study. The elements for the study were chosen based on the purpose of the study; the sample is selected because they possess the knowledge and information the researcher needs. However, this does not produce a sample that is representative of a larger population, but provides the right source of information for researchers. In purposive sampling, participants are selected for a particular purpose. The towns, communities and the language consultants where data for this work came from were selected on the basis of geographical location, population size and devoid of dialectal differences. It is believed that informants from these places would give an adequate representation of the Gonja people. They were purposively chosen based on their knowledge and understanding of the grammar and rules of the language. The consultants have adequate knowledge of the culture and grammar of the language. The researcher found it necessary to make use of these language consultants as this helps to avoid any possibility of certain biases. Secondly, this help checks for the grammaticality of the sentences as it has been argued by Himmelmann (2006:4) that, native speakers have the tacit knowledge to provide interpretations and systematization

for linguistic units and events in their language, hence the need to involve them in the data collection process. I provide details of the language consultants sampled in the next sub-section.

### **3.4 Sources of Data**

The linguistic fieldwork is explained as the act of collecting data for the purposes of documentation and description of a language through interaction with speakers in situations where speakers are expected to use the language naturally (Chelliah and Reuse, 2011:373). These scholars emphasize that it is not only about data collection introspection or an examination of written documents neither it is about a collection of data through controlled lab experiments. For this reason, both primary and secondary sources of data is used for the study. To achieve this, several means were adopted to gather the data from both sources. Some of the data were obtained from a group of native speakers engaging in natural conversations. Others strategies employed to get data during the fieldwork were data elicitation, native speaker intuition and text from the literature. I discussed of each of these in the following sub-sections.

#### **3.4.1 Language Consultants**

The issue of linguistic competency is key in the study of the grammar of language. I selected my language consultants based on their competency in the language and devoid of dialectal differences in this study. The language consultants were made up of three (3) males and two (2) females. This selection was done out of the fact there was no available additional female at that material time who was ready to spend her time to help the



researcher and so this was not done because the researcher is bias in terms of gender. Total number of five participants with ages ranging from 40 to 80 years were chosen. All the consultants were native speakers of Gonja, and each of the consultants had a separate elicitation session with the researcher. Upon meeting with the language consultants, the researcher took notes of certain valid suggestions that were put up by the consultants. They were met at appropriate places which were agreed upon. During the conversations, diligent attention was given to the structure of negative markers, the strategies used as well as how they are distributed into negative construction in Gonja. The consultants also allowed the researcher to record certain portions of their explanations as and when it became necessary. The researcher also met some of the consultants in a group after the individual sessions to discuss the elicited data and for better and more elicitation. They were later organized into a group for deliberation on the same materials administered during my one-on-one appointment with them. This gave the researcher a deep insight into the different ways negative markers are distributed in sentences that can be expressed syntactically. The language consultants are all native speakers and are all educated, hence, they have a great deal of knowledge about the language and the research topic in question. The table 1 below shows the selected sample used for the study.

**Table 1: Selected sample**

<b>COMMUNITY</b>	<b>AGE</b>	<b>GENDER</b>	<b>AFFILIATION</b>
Kpembu	76	M	University of Education, Winneba
Kpembu	60	M	University of Education, Winneba
Salaga	55	F	Bureau of Ghanaian Languages,
Kulpi	50	M	T.I AMASS Salaga
Nkwanta	59	F	Ghana Education Service, Salaga
			<b>Grand total = 5</b>

The table above provides the summary of language consultant sampled for the study. The researcher selected one consultant from the Bureau of Ghanaian Languages, Tamale, one from East Gonja Municipal Education service, one from Salaga T.I AMASS Senior High School and two from university of Education Winneba, Ajumako, Department of Gur-Gonja (Gonja unit) who native speakers of Gonja. They were purposively chosen based on their knowledge and understanding of the grammar and rules of the language. The consultants have adequate knowledge of the culture and grammar of the language. The researcher found it necessary to make use of these language consultants as this helps to avoid any possibility of certain biases. Secondly, this help checks for the grammaticality of the sentences as it has been argued by Himmelmann (2006:4) that, native speakers have the tacit knowledge to provide interpretations and systematization for linguistic units and events in their language, hence the need to involve them in the data collection process. The above people have helped the researcher in diverse ways through elicitation and grammaticality checks to make this work a success, most importantly by helping me to checked for grammaticality and identify some changes in the language. The consent of

the consultants was sought after I explained to them what the purpose of the study was for the purposes of ethical issues as far as research is concern.

### **3.4.2 Natural data**

The data that was obtained through some of the natural means were recordings of one radio program each from the Kanyiti FM and Magyk FM in Gonja from local Radio Stations in Salaga. The programs: ‘Sa maŋ kini kanaŋ’ from Kanyiti FM which means ‘Do not reject your family’ and ‘Adaŋkareshɛŋ be tɔnɔ’ from Magyk FM which also means ‘The benefit of culture and tradition’ were purposively selected to avoid too much code switching into the English language after a verbal consent of the Management of the Station and the participants. The programs come once in a week. Each program was recorded once, which took me two weeks. Each of these recordings lasted for thirty (30) minutes. In all, I had two different recordings from the two FM stations, giving a total of 120 minutes’ conversation of the radio programs. The recordings were done inside the studios with the help of the various program hosts in all the FM stations. This helped to ensure quality sound and free from interruptions of all sorts of noise. The recordings of these discussions were all transcribed and cross-checked to pick out negative expressions by participants.

Also, field notes were taken during fieldwork by paying attention to daily conversations of native speakers and writing down negative expressions used in my notebook. These were later re-examined as far as negative expressions are concerned and added to my data for analysis.

### 3.4.3 Native speaker intuition

This is data gathering technique where linguists use their introspection to invent examples and make grammaticality judgment (Meyer and Nelson, 2006). In fact, this technique provided me with over sixty (60%) percent of the data used for this study. As already indicated earlier, I am a native speaker not just speaking but had training in this language right from basic education up to the tertiary level. As Börjars (2006) notes, this technique is of advantage to the researcher in the sense that the linguistically trained person is more likely to provide accurate data than the linguistically untrained native speaker is. Furthermore, the linguistically untrained native may not also be able to account for the grammaticality or ungrammaticality of certain constructions.

More importantly, this technique helped me so much in the identification of negative markers and how they are distributed syntactically in Gonja. The researcher was able to get more information about the various forms of negative markers during his conversation with other speakers in the language. In doing so, he always carries along with me a note book or android phone which aided me to record or take note of the negative constructions with much emphasis on the strategies used anytime I find myself in the midst of other native speakers. These data were later cross-checked with my consultants to reexamine their acceptability and grammaticality before adding them to my data.

#### **3.4.4 Textual data**

The data that are used in this work would also include data gathered based on textual data. This refers to a way of gathering data by picking information, which has not been subjected to linguistic analysis from the existing written documents. Tuckman (1999) opines that documents are information about an event or phenomenon which people have prepared. One of the major advantages of using documents is that; it is accessible at any time convenient to the researcher.

In respect of the secondary data, data were drawn from these books: *Alɔntorwor ne Ngbarbembra* by Afari-Twako (2015), and *kesheɲeba* by Sulemana (1980), where I obtained some information which was relevant to the study which were cross-checked with other native speakers to ensure validity. These data taken from written texts are relevant as they supplemented other data by providing some of the linguistic structures that never emerged during the elicitation session.

#### **3.5 Data presentation and Analysis**

The data was analyzed using the Basic Linguistics Theory (BLT) by Dixon. This theory is basically descriptive in nature. After the recordings, observation and data elicitation were completed, the next stage was the laborious task of transcribing, translating and analyzing the numerous data collected. For effective transcription, knowledge of the morphological and syntactic patterns of the language was necessary. The researcher has an appreciable level of this knowledge as a native speaker there. The data analysis is giving meaning to first impression as well as to final compilations. The qualitative coding

technique is what the researcher resorted to in the analysis of the data gathered. This helps in highlighting extracts of the data that has been transcribed and labeling it in such a way that it can easily be identified, retrieved and grouped. The researcher went through all the data in a systematic way and assigned easy identifiable codes to it. This was done in order to make the analysis of the data simpler and more accurate. The following codes are assigned to recorded to recorded data, textual data, data from native intuition and elicited data as it is seen below.

- (RD) Recorded data
- (TD) Textual data
- (NI) Native intuition
- (ED) Elicited data

### **3.6 Chapter Summary**

This chapter was focused on the methodological issues during data collecting and analysis of the study where I discussed the research design and approach for the study. I further outlined the population and geographical setting of the research. Furthermore, the various ways by which data for the study was sourced are presented in this chapter. I also provided more information about my language consultants and how the data is presented for discussions and analysis.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### NEGATION STRATEGIES IN GONJA

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the various particles that are used in marking negation in Gonja. I discuss both sentential and constituent negation strategies in the language. The chapter is structured as follows. Section 4.1 discusses basic analysis of clause structure of Gonja. Section 4.2 focuses on negation of declarative sentences in Gonja. Whereas section 4.4 discusses negation of imperatives and Section 4.5 discusses negation of constituent constructions. Finally, section 4.6 provides a summary of the chapter.

#### 4.1 Basic Clause Structure of Gonja

Having given how languages of the world use diverse strategies or means to negate their affirmative constructions, I now discuss the notion of basic clause structure in this section. The word order in the language is SVO. Thus, Gonja commonly displays an SVO word order where the subject precedes the verb and the direct or indirect object as well as adjuncts follows the verb in canonical sentence form. However, in as much as Gonja has a strict SVO word order, other words are also allowed in the language. These other orders may include SVC, SVOA and SVOO as its clause structure.

#### SVO

This variant has the subject occurring before the verb which in turn occurs before the object. Consider example (1a) where the subject NP (Masaluwe) occurs first followed by the verb to 'buy' which in turn precedes the direct object kelembi 'pen'.

(1) a. **Masaluwe tɔ kelembi**

Masaluwe buy.PFV pen

‘Masaluwe bought a pen.’

### SV

This structure consists of only the subject and the verb

b. **Masaluwe tɔ**

Masaluwe buy.PST

‘Masaluwe bought.’

(Afari-Twako, 2015: 26)

### SVA

This variant has the subject occurring before the verb which in turn occurs before the object. Consider example (1c) where the subject NP (Masaluwe) occurs first followed by the verb tɔ ‘buy’ which in turn precedes the direct object kelembi ‘pen’ and the adverb saŋɛko ‘lately’ which also come after the subject Masaluwe in the clause.

c. **Masaluwe tɔ klembi nna saŋɛko.**

Masaluwe bought pen lately

‘Masaluwe bought a pen lately.’

(Afari-Twako, 2015: 26)

However, it is not possible to have an OVS order in the language where in this example the object occurring before the verb which in turn occurs after the subject. Consider example (1d) where the direct object (klembi) occurs first followed by the verb tɔ ‘buy’



which in turn precedes the subject ‘Masaluwe’ which does not conform to the basic clause of Gonja which is basically SVO and other accepted variants in the language.

d. **\*Klembi tɔ Masaluwe**

pen bought Masaluwe

‘Masaluwe bought a pen.’

Gonja uses distinct syntactic elements to mark tense/aspect syntactically. Preverbal particles are the name given to these syntactic components in linguistic literature. The existence of pre-verbal particles has been briefly examined in the study of Afari-twako (2015: 19), who found the following pre-verbal particles as time markers for verbs: **kaŋ** ‘yesterday’, **didi** ‘earlier today’, **kpaleŋ** (just), **daa** (distant past), **kra** (still), and **naŋ** (yet). The use of some of these particles which appear before the verb are shown below in example (2b), (2c) and (2d).

(2) a. **Kache na kra yɔ ndɔto**

Kache DET still go farm

‘The woman is still going to the farm.’

b. **Kache na daa yɔ ndɔto**

Kache DEF PST-PROG go farm

‘The woman was going to farm.’

c.     **Damato     kaŋ     kur             kemaŋ     na     ndere.**  
Damato     PST     dig.PFV             hole             DET     yesterday

‘Damato dug the hole yesterday.’

d.     **Damato     kur     kemaŋ     na**  
Damato     dig     hole             DET

‘Damato has dug the hole.’

(Sulemana, 1980: 32)

## 4.2 Sentential Negation in Gonja

The preceding section provided an overview of the concept of negation and the various strategies that are employed by languages of the world to mark negation. This section focuses on sentential negation in Gonja by using independent syntactic particles or elements for negating declarative sentences. It is shown that both declaratives (section 4.3.1), imperatives (section 4.3.2) and constituent negation in (section 4.3.3) are negated via the use of distinct pre-verbal negative marker.

### 4.2.1 Negation in Gonja Declarative

After providing a brief overview of the language's clause structure and the tense/aspect marking particles that come before the verb, I shall discuss the idea of negating declarative clauses in Gonja, which falls under the general category of standard negation suggested by Miestamo (2007: 39) which has to do with negating the declarative main clause with verbal predicate. If the entire proposition is included by the negative operator,

the negation produces sentential, according to Zeijlstra (2004:47). Likewise, Klima (1964, 270-271), is also of the view that sentential negation concentrates on the entire sentence, whereas constituent negation narrows it to a specific sentence variable. In other words, if a negative operator, such as the French **ne... pas**, the English **not**, the Dutch **niet**, etc., is applicable to the sentence (the finite verb and its arguments), then it is a negative phrase. Also, Dahl (1979) in his typology studies of 240 languages made a clear case of how some languages use a syntactic means to express negation using a particle. This goes along to affirm what Dolphyne & Dakubu (1988:84) said about Guang languages consistently marking negation “by means of a prefix, or a separate word almost invariably consisting of **m** plus a vowel, that usually precedes the tense/aspect markers of which Gonja is not an exception”. Negation is formed or expressed in Gonja by the use of syntactic independent particles which reverse the entire construction or clause. Simply put, the whole clause is interpreted as negative in the end, not just the verb in this context. The item that licenses negation in such a construction is preverbal negation marker. The name is based on the fact that the particle is positioned in the verb phrase and precedes the finite verb in the construction. Gonja has five particles used for expressing sentential negation: **maa**, **maŋ**, **maŋŋ**, **saŋ** and **manɛ** according to the work of Afari-Twako (2015:34), and the data obtained from the fieldwork also confirm that Gonja has more than one preverbal negative marker to negate different forms constructions in the language.

The preverbal negative markers as seen above will be assigned to different forms of constructions and a wrong choice of preverbal negative marker will completely change

the tense and the meaning of the sentence together resulting in ungrammaticality of the sentence. Whereas **manɛ** and **saŋ** are used for constituent negation and negation of imperatives respectively; **maŋ**, **maa** and **maaŋ** are employed for negating declarative clauses. **Maŋ** is typically a perfective negative marker, **maa** doubles as a negative progressive and negative habitual marker whilst **maaŋ** encodes future negation. I shall discuss the distribution of these preverbal negative markers based on the tense and aspect of the clause in Gonja by elaborating on each of these preverbal negative particles or markers into various sub-section under section 4.3 of this chapter.

#### 4.2.1.1 The Progressive negative ‘maa’

The particle **maa** is a preverbal negative marker in Gonja, which fits in progressive constructions to express the idea that an action is not on-going at the time the speech was being made. Examples (3b, and 4b) show that only ‘**maa**’ can be used to negate progressive constructions in Gonja. The four other preverbal negative markers will yield wrong interpretation when substituted with **maa** in construction (3b, and 4b) above. However, in Gonja, the default progressive aspect marker is *bee*. Progressive aspect marker is morphologically not marked on the verb. In other words, a progressive marker is not an immediate constituent of the verb. It always precedes the verb. Consider the use of **maa** in the following illustrations (3b) and (4b) below:

- (3) a. **Koji bee daŋɛ ajibi**  
           Koji PROG cook food  
           ‘Koji is cooking food.’

b. **Koji maa daŋɛ ajibi**

Koji PROG.NEG cook food

‘Koji is not cooking food.’

ED

c. **\*Koji bee maa daŋɛ ajibi**

Koji PROG PROG.NEG cook food

‘Koji is not cooking food.’

d. **\*Koji bee maŋ daŋɛ ajibi**

Koji PROG.NEG cook food

‘Koji is not cooking food.’

(4)

a. **Kebia na bee di**

Child DET PROG sleep

‘The child is sleeping.’

b. **Kebia na maa di**

Child DET PROG.NEG sleep

‘The child is not sleeping.’ ED

c. **\*Kebia na bee maa di**

kebia DET PROG PROG.NEG sick

‘The child is not sick.’

The (b) versions of sentences (3), and (4) are examples of preverbal sentential negation and represent the (a) versions' contradiction semantically. The examples in the (b) versions also support the notion that **maa** is a negative progressive marker in Gonja, indicating that an action has started but was only terminated by **maa**. Showing the incompatibility between the progressive aspect marker **bee** and the progressive negation operator **maa** in example (3c-d) and (4c). In other words, the two markers cannot occur in a construction where **maa** will be functioning as a negative marker and **bee** will also be functioning as a progressive marker as we often see in English. **Maa** licenses negation and progressive at the same time. One of the central generalizations that needs more in-depth theoretical analysis is the assertion that the progressive tense head **bee** and the progressive negation marker **maa** do not co-occur in the clause structure, as it is outlined in the descriptive generalizations in (3c) and (4c) that need further formal exploration. I assert that the progressive marker **bee** is fused into the progressive negative marker **maa** in terms of its syntactic slot. Thus, the **maa** particle is seen as a portmanteau morpheme functioning as a progressive marker at the same time progressive negative marker in the language clause structure.

However, the particle **maa** which is progressive negative marker co-occur with **daa**, the past progressive maker to negate past progressive constructions based on the data exemplified below in (5b) and (6b) not (5c) and (6c).

- (5) a. **Bimonka daa kraŋ buuku**  
 Bimonka PROG.PST read book  
 'Bimonka was reading a book.'

b. **Bimonka daa maa kraŋ buuku**

Bimonka PROG.PST PROG.NEG read book

‘Bimonka was not reading a book.’

RD

c. **\*Bimonka maa daa kraŋ buuku**

Bimonka PROG.NEG PROG. PST read book

‘Bimonka was not reading a book.’

(6) a. **Koji daa yɔ ndɔtɔ**

Koji PROG.PST go farm

‘Koji was going to farm.’

b. **Koji daa maa yɔ ndɔtɔ**

Koji PROG.PST PROG.NEG go farm

‘Koji was not going to farm.’

RD

c. **\*Koji maa daa yɔ ndɔtɔ**

Koji PROG.NEG PROG.PST go farm

‘Koji was not going to farm.’

It is also worth pointing out that **daa** which is past progressive marker can co-occur with the progressive negative marker to negate past progressive construction in Gonja. The (b)

versions of the above illustrate an additional fact about the distribution of the negation marker: if the sentence contains a tense marker in the Gonja literature, such as the progressive past marker **daa**, it precedes the negation morpheme. Examples in (c) versions shows that placing the negative marker before the tense marker results in ungrammaticality.

#### 4.2.1.2 Habitual Negative particle ‘maa’

The negative progressive is the same as the habitual negative. Both constructs use the same particle, **maa**, to negate either a negative progressive or negative habitual are share similar forms and without the proper context, the habitual negative could be interpreted as a negative progressive.

Speakers frequently utilize time adverbs in conjunction with the customary negative marker to avoid this ambiguity and prevent conflict between the two paradigms. Think of these instances (7a-c) below:

(7) a. **Kache na bee nuu nsa kachekama**  
 Woman DEF HAB drink alcohol every day.  
 ‘The woman drinks alcohol everyday.’

b. **Kache na maa nuu nsa kachekama.**  
 Woman DEF HAB.NEG drink alcohol every day.  
 ‘The woman doesn’t drink alcohol everyday.’



- c. **Ketirbu ere bee bra kumu lubi nchɛnnyɔ ere.**  
well DEM HAB cause head bad these days DEM

‘This well causes accident these days.’

TD

- d. **Lori ere maa bra kumu lubi nchɛnnyɔ ere.**  
Car DEM HAB.NEG cause head bad these days DEM

‘This car doesn’t cause accident these days.’

TD

The examples (7b) and (7d) above show how the particle **maa** can be used to identify undesirable habits. While example (7) contradicts example (7a), example (7d) does the same to (7c). In (7b), the particle **maa** negates the construction to indicate that the woman does not regularly consume alcohol, while in (7d), the particle negates the construction to indicate that the well does not frequently cause accidents, as implied by the affirmative construction in (7b) and (7c). It is also important to notice that the particle **maa** replaces the affirmative habitual marker (**bee**) in constructs to show that an activity does not occur frequently as a habit, precisely like the particle **maa**.

#### 4.2.1.3 The Negative marker ‘maŋ’

Sentence negation which indicates past action implies denying the action of the verb that is anterior to the time of the utterance. The particle **maŋ** is a preverbal negative marker in Gonja that is used to negate perfect or completive construction in the language. This goes

a long way to affirm what Osam (2004:10) refers to the past tense as Completive aspect. According to him, ‘even though this morpheme has past time as part of its meaning, its primary function is not to mark past time but perfective events’ (pp. 1). His main motivation for calling the past tense as completive is that ‘it is found only on verbs which mark completed events’, but not imperfective. This phenomenon takes similar paradigm as to negate completive or perfect construction in the language as shown below:

- (8). a. **Amabaŋɛ fuwe.**  
Amabaŋɛ sweep.PERF  
‘Amabaŋɛ swept.’
- b. **Amabaŋɛ maŋ fuwe.**  
Amabaŋɛ NEG sweep.PERF..  
‘Amabaŋɛ did not sweep.’
- c. **Amabaŋɛ yɔ sukuru.**  
Amabaŋɛ go.PERF school  
‘Amabaŋɛ went to school.’
- d. **Amabaŋɛ maŋ yɔ sukuru.**  
Amabaŋɛ NEG go.PERF school  
‘Amabaŋɛ did go to school.’

NI

In (8b) and (8d), it is observed that the negative marker **maŋ** surfaces between the subject and the verb. **maŋ** has a fixed syntactic slot in the clause structure since it always precedes the verb. The negative marker denies the assertion of the verb in the sentence indicating that it is completed. This observation is similar to Bamgbose's (1967) claim with respect to Yoruba. He submits that in Yoruba sentences where a negator is followed by a verb in the positive constructions; that is, the negative marker in the sentence reflects the tense which is past irrespective of whether the verb is an "action" verb or not. However, the ungrammaticality of (8e) and (8f) is as a result of placing the verb before the negative marker **maŋ** in the sentences below.

e. \***Amabaŋɛ fuwe maŋ**

Amabaŋɛ sweep.PERF NEG

'Amabaŋɛ did not sweep.'

f. \***Amabaŋɛ yɔ maŋ sukuru.**

Amabaŋɛ go.PFV NEG School

'Amabaŋɛ did not go to school.'

#### 4.2.1.4 The future negative 'maaŋ'

The future negative marker in Gonja is **maaŋ**. However, the verb is not morphologically marked with the future aspect marker **bee**. In other words, the future aspect marker is not part of the verb's present tense. It always comes before the verb. Among the five preverbal negative markers in Gonja per the data collected, the choice of **maaŋ** to negate aspect is the most appropriate. **Maaŋ** licenses negation and future at the same time. As

can be seen in examples (9b), (10b) and (11b) below, though the default future marker has been substituted with **maan**, the aspect has not changed. This invariably demonstrates the function of **maan** in a sentence. Example (9c) and (10c) demonstrate that a future aspect marker **been** and the future negation marker **maan** are in complementary distribution. In other words, the presence of future negation marker, the absence of the future aspect marker while (11c) shows that a future construction cannot be negated using the non-future marker **maɲ**. I offer constructions for the future in Gonja in example (9a), (10a) and (11a) and their negative counterpart in example (9b), (10b) and (11b) respectively.

(9) a. **Kechaɲ na been too kefulɛ**

Guinea fowl DET FUT lay egg

‘The guinea fowl will lay an egg.’

(10) a. **Dari been yɔ ndɔtɔ echefo**

Dari FUT go farm tomorrow

‘Dari will go to farm tomorrow’

(11) a. **Anyɛ been ji kudɔɛ kachako**

1PL FUT eat TZ one day

‘We will eat TZ one day.’

NI

To negate future with the default marker **been** in Gonja, the future negative marker **maan** replaces the default future marker. The two markers cannot occur in a construction where **maan** will be functioning as future marker. This means that the future marker and the future negative marker are in a complementary distribution. Thus, the two are mutually exclusive. Below are the negated constructions in example (9b), (10b) and (11b) respectively, in the future tense.

(9) b. **Kechaj na maan too kefule**

Guinea fowl DET NEG.FUT lay egg

‘The guinea fowl will not lay an egg.’

(10) b. **Dari maan ya ndoto echefo**

Dari NEG.FUT go farm tomorrow

‘Dari will not go to farm tomorrow.’

(11) b. **Anye maan ji kudoe kachako**

1PL NEG.FUT eat TZ one day

‘We will not eat TZ one day.’

NI

Based on the claim of mutual exclusion between the future marker and future negative marker, sentence (9c), (10c) and (11c) are ungrammatical in the language. Below are the illustrations.

(9) c. \***Kechan na been maan too kefule**

Guinea fowl DET FUT NEG.FUT lay egg

‘The guinea fowl will not lay an egg.’

(10) c. \***Dari been maan yɔ ndɔtɔ echefo**

Dari FUT NEG.FUT go farm tomorrow

‘Dari will not go farm tomorrow.’

(11) c. \***Anye been man ji kudoe kachako**

1PL FUT NEG.FUT eat TZ one day

‘We will not eat TZ one day.’

Thus, the **maan** particle is seen as a future marker in portmanteau morpheme functioning as a future marker at the same time as future negative marker in the language. One of the central generalizations that needs more in-depth theoretical analysis is the assertion that the progressive tense head **been** and the progressive negation marker **maan** do not co-occur in the clause structure, as it is outlined in the descriptive generalizations in (9c) (10c) and (11c) that need further formal exploration. I assert that the progressive marker **been** is fused into the progressive negative marker **maan** in terms its syntactic slot. Thus, the **maan** particle is seen as a portmanteau morpheme functioning as a progressive marker at the same time progressive negative marker in the language clause structure.

This observation is not peculiar to Gonja alone, a similar situation is observed in Dagbani. As rightly observed in Issah (2023), in Dagbani future affirmative constructions are expressed via the use of the particle **ní**. However, in negating the future affirmative construction, the **ní** is replaced by the negative future particle **kù** in the language. Thus, this shows the mutual exclusiveness of the future tense marker **ní** and the negative future marker **kù** in expressing negation in future constructions in Dagbani, thus, in the presence of the future negative marker, the absence of the future marker. The distribution of these particles depends on the tense of the clause. Below are examples in support of the above claim in question.

- (12) a. **Mburidiba ní dá búkù-nì máá.**  
 M. FUT buy book-PL DEF  
 ‘Mburidiba will buy the books.’
- b. **Mburidiba kù dá búkù-nì máá.**  
 M. NEG.FUT buy book-PL DEF  
 ‘Mburidiba will not buy the books.’
- d. **\*Mburidiba ní kù dá búkù-nì máá.**  
 M. FUT NEG.FUT buy book-PL DEF  
 ‘Mburidiba will not buy the books.’

(Issah, 2023: 8)

The illustration above in (12) shows that the (b) version is an instance of preverbal negation and semantically contradicts the (a) version. While (12d) shows that the

introduction of the future tense marker **ní** and the future negative marker **kù** in the sentence makes the sentence ungrammatical indicating the incompatibility future tense marker **ní** and the future negative marker **kù** in the sentence. Thus, showing a descriptive generalization of on this phenomenon that needs theoretical scrutiny. The author posits that fusion occurs in that the future tense marker **ní** and the future negative marker **kù** in the sentence in that **kù** is specified for FUT and NEG.

Again, only **maan** works or fit in future negation and consistently co-occur with the past morpheme **daa** to express perfective and imperfective future constructions presented in (13) and (14) respectively.

(13) a. **Ndenyi daa been di**  
 Ndenyi PST FUT sleep-PERF  
 ‘Ndenyi will/would have slept.’

b. **Ndenyi daa maan di**  
 Ndenyi PST NEG.FUT sleep-PERF  
 ‘Ndenyi will/would not have slept.’

(14) a. **Ndenyi daa been baa di**  
 Ndenyi PROG.PST FUT PERF sleep  
 ‘Ndenyi will/would have been sleeping.’



b. **Ndenyinn daa maan baa di**

Ndenyi PROG.PST NEG.PROG PERF sleep

‘Ndenyi will/would not have been sleeping.’

RD

(13) c. **\*Ndenyi maan daa di**

Ndenyi NEG.FUT PROG.PST sleep-PERF

‘Ndenyi will/would not have slept.’

(14) c. **\*Ndenyinn maan daa baa di**

Ndenyi NEG.PROG PROG.PST PERF sleep

‘Ndenyi will/would not have been sleeping.’

The data above suggest that the distribution of **maan** is far much wider in the future perfective and imperfective domain than **maa** which marks progressive constructions in Gonja. Example (13c) and (14c) shows that placing the future negative marker **maan** before the past progressive marker **daa** results in ungrammaticality. Having elaborated on the distribution of the preverbal negative markers vis a-vis how they interact with tense/aspect in Gonja, I summarize the interaction between negation and tense/aspect and their order of pattern below.

**PROGRESSIVE/HABITUAL**

**AFFIRMATIVE**

**NEGATIVE**

(15) **E bee di**

**E maa di**

3SG PROG sleep

3SG NEG-PROG sleep

‘He/she is sleeping.’

‘He/she is not sleeping.’

**PERFECT/PAST**

**AFFIRMATIVE**

**NEGATIVE**

(16) **E di**

**E maŋ di**

3SG-sleep

3SG NEG sleep

‘He/she slept.’

‘He/she didn’t sleep.’

**FUTURE**

**AFFIRMATIVE**

**NEGATIVE**

(17) **E beeŋ di**

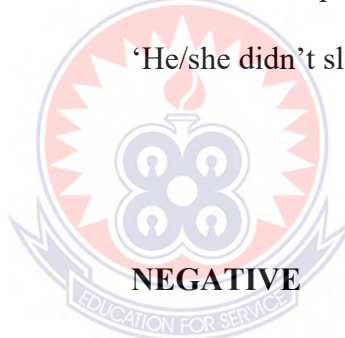
**E maan di**

3SG FUT sleep

3SG NEG-FUT sleep

‘He/she will sleep.’

‘He/she will not sleep.’



There are several aspectual forms verbs take in Gonja. These include progressive and habitual. In example (15) above, the progressive/habitual construction is marked by a particle **bee** in the affirmative which comes before the verb in the sentence. But only negated by the negative particle **maa** in which also comes before the verb the negative sentence. In example (16), the perfect (or completive) aspect is indicated by a bare verb

form, in other words, it is mark covertly in the affirmative construction in the language. But however, negated by the negative particle **maŋ** which also appear before the verb in the negative sentence. The future negative construction is also marked by a particle **maaŋ** which comes before the verb in the negative sentences. Based on the data available in the table above I identify the following patterns on how negation interacts with tense and aspect.

- (18)
- |                         |               |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| a. Negative progressive | [PROG.NEG]    |
| b. Negative past        | [NEG + PAST]  |
| c. Negative perfect     | [NEG. + PERF] |
| d. Negative future      | [FUT.NEG]     |

It was established that the three preverbal negative markers **maa**, **maŋ** and **maaŋ** are used to express negation in declarative sentences in Gonja literature. These preverbal negative markers also interact with tense/aspect in their grammatical relationship.

#### 4.3 Negation in imperative

After discussing how negation is expressed in declarative clauses, I will now focus on a syntactic explanation of how negation is realized in Gonja imperative sentences. According to König and Siemond (2007) and Siemond (2001), imperatives are frequently used when giving instructions for the addressee to execute certain tasks. According to Sweet (1960:111), "the subject of an imperative sentence must always be in the second person because the imperative can be used only in addressing someone." The imperative NP, it is further stated, "may be employed exclusively to talk TO the addressee not about

him or her," Rosengren and Platzack (1998:177). Adewole (1992) is of the view that in Yorùbá, the negative imperative may or may not have an overt grammatical subject and when it has a subject, it is always second person. Similarly argued by Obiamalu (2014) where he claims that, in Igbo language commands are only given to the addressee (second person). He further adds that when the subject is the second person singular, it is left unexpressed, but, when it is the second person plural there are two options in the imperative. The second person plural pronoun can occur in the subject position before the verb or as an enclitic after the verb. Imperative sentences in Úwù are negated with mè and this marker precedes the verb. According to Jary & Kissine's (2014) own perspective, defines imperative as a unique collection of semantic features that is well suited for directive usage, which is defined as giving an addressee a reason to act for an expansion of this definition to include giving a reason to reason in order to account for rhetorical imperatives while also allowing for non-directives uses. A clause must express a dynamic situation and have the following characteristics: (1) the subject must refer to an addressee; (2) the addressee must be the agent of what the clause describes; (3) the clause must express a dynamic situation; (4) it does not assert anything; and (5) it can only impart potential states of affairs (see Jary & Kissine 2014: 76–108).

#### **4.3.1 Morphology of Gonja Imperatives**

Before I offer an account of the structure of negation in Gonja imperatives, I deem it important to introduce the reader to the morphology of the Gonja imperative. In Gonja, affirmative imperatives are marked by a verb where the subject is inflected in the verb. Simply put affirmative imperative are marked covertly, which means that there is no

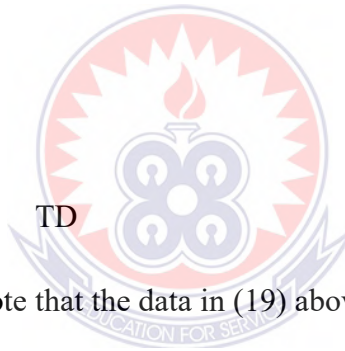
overt morpheme that are attached to a verb to show it is in an imperative mood. Thus, the imperative form occurs as the basic verb form, without any affix attached to the verb.

This is illustrated in example (19)

(19) a. **Ji!**  
‘Eat.IMP’  
‘Eat!’

b. **Nuu!**  
Drink.IMP  
‘Drink!’

c. **Shu!**  
Cry.IMP  
‘Cry!’



However, it is worthy to note that the data in (19) above illustrate singular imperatives. In cases that the affected NP in the command is plural, the plural morpheme precedes the verb as shown in (20)

(20) a. **Meeɲ ji!**  
You.PL eat  
‘You eat!’

b. **Meeɲ nu!**  
You.PL drink  
‘You drink!’      TD

Thus, Gonja makes a distinction between singular and plural imperative. This distinction is based on the presence of the morpheme **meen**, which is a plural form of the second person pronoun in Gonja.

#### 4.3.2 Structure of Gonja Imperatives Negation

The affirmative constructions can be with object in the forms stated above. These are illustrated in (21) below. In sentence (21a-c), the verb is followed by the object.

(21) a. **Nuu nchu na!**

drink-IMP water DET

‘Drink the water!’

b. **Bri kebia na!**

beat.IMP child. DET

‘Beat the child!’

c. **Mɔ kechaŋ na!**

kill.IMP guinea fowl. DET

‘Kill the guinea fowl!’

NI

As we have seen in (21), imperative clauses in Gonja come in two forms: one with an overtly expressed object argument (21a-c). Regarding the manifestation of negation in imperative constructions, the Gonja word **saŋ** is a negative imperative marker that is used

to stop an event or situation that is already underway or to stop an event or situation that is about to begin replacing **maŋ**, **maa** and **maaŋ**, which occur in declarative sentences. To negate the imperative form in Gonja, the negative particle **saŋ** ‘do not/don’t’ is introduced at the preverbal position of the imperative construction. This is similar in the case of Dagaare and Gurene languages where the negative imperative is also formed by placing the particle **ta/tɔ** and **da** in a preverbal position (Saanchi, 2008: 5-6) and (Nsoh, 2022: 80) illustrated below respectively.

(22) a. **tɔ zoro**

NEG-IMP run-IMPERF

‘Do not run!’

b. **Ta nyuuro a zrnn**

NEG-IMP drink-IMPERF DEF soup

‘Do not drink the soup!’

(Saanchi, 2008: 5)

(23) a. **Da da’!**

NEG-IMP buy-IMPERF

‘Do not buy!’

- b. Da kula!  
 NEG-IMP go  
 ‘Do not go!’

(Nsoh, 2022: 80)

Similarly, in Gonja **saŋ** ‘don’t’ particle is used only in negative forms of the imperative and the form of the verb no longer incorporates the imperative marker in Gonja. As demonstrated in examples (21a-b), (22a-b) and (23a-b) above, the same imperative negation marker is employed whether the verb is sentence-final or preceded by a complement, neutralizing the contrast observed in positive imperatives shown in examples (24) and (25). See **saŋ** in the example (24a-c) and (25a-f)

- (24) a. **Saŋ ji ajibi na!**  
 NEG.IMP eat food DET  
 ‘Don’t eat the food!’
- b. **Saŋ yɔ sukuru!**  
 NEG.IMP go school  
 ‘Don’t go to school!’
- c. **Saŋ ta kalebuuso na!**  
 NEG.IMP take dress DET  
 ‘Don’t take the dress!’

NI



However, sentence (25a-f) below shows that negative imperatives cannot be expressed using a combination of declarative negation markers (**maa**, **maŋ**, and **maan**) and positive imperative (**saŋ**).

a. \***Maŋ Saŋ ji ajibi na !**

NEG.PFV NEG.IMP eat food DET

‘Don’t eat the food!’

b. \***Maa Saŋ yɔ sukuru to!**

NEG.IMPF NEG.IMP go school

‘Don’t go to school!’

c. \***Maan Saŋ ta kalebso na !**

NEG.FUT NEG.IMP take dress DET

‘Don’t take the dress!’

d. \* **Maŋ Saŋ shile!**

NEG.PFV NEG.IMP run

‘Don’t run!’

e. \***Maa saŋ nu!**

NEG.IMPF NEG.IMP drink

‘Don’t drink!’

- f. **\*Maɔŋ saŋ ji**  
NEG.FUT NEG.IMP eat  
'Don't eat!'

Based on the data available, imperative marker **saŋ** is also used in the imperative to command an addressee to put a stop to an act. We use the examples in (26a-d) to explain this.

- (26). a. **Bri kebia na!**  
beat.IMP child.DET  
'Beat the child!'

- b. **Saŋ bri kebia na!**  
NEG.IMP beat child.DET  
'Don't beat the child!'

- c. **Mɔ kechaŋ na!**  
kill.IMP guinea fowl. DET  
'Kill the guinea fowl!'

- d. **Saŋ mɔ kechaŋ na!**  
NEG.IMP kill guinea fowl DET  
'Don't kill the guinea fowl!'

NI

Both (26a) and (26c) are commands that require that the addressee performs an action. In (26a) the speaker instructs the addressee to beat the child, and in (26c) the speaker instructs the addressee to kill the guinea fowl. (26b) and (26d), the negative forms of (26a) and (26c) respectively, are commands that require that the addressee does not perform the actions. As the English glosses show, the particle **Saŋ**, is a negative imperative marker that is used to instruct an addressee to cease the performance of an action. Gonja makes a distinction between different imperative constructions depending on whether the covert subject argument is singular or plural, which is worth mentioning. **Meeŋ** is the morpheme that denotes that there are multiple individuals making up the imperative's subtly articulated subject.

Below are examples (27) and (28) of imperatives in Gonja, both positive and negative. Sentences (27a) and (28a) show that, regardless of whether the positive imperative is followed by a complement or object, the form of the imperative morpheme remains unaltered or modified when **meeŋ**, which occurs before the verb, is added. Sentences (27c-d) and (28c-d) demonstrate the parity between the negative imperative and the positive imperative in singular imperatives and plural imperatives by using the same marker (**saŋ**) in both instances.

- (27) a. **Meeŋ buse afitiri na**  
 IMP-PL weed grass DET  
 ‘Weed the grass.’

- b. **Meeŋ yɔ sukuru**  
IMP.PL go school  
'Go to school.'
- c. **Meeŋ saŋ buse afitiri na**  
IMP.PL NEG.IMP weed grass DET  
'Don't weed the grasses!'
- d. **Meeŋ saŋ yɔ sukuru**  
IMP.PL NEG.IMP go school  
'Don't go to school!'

NI

- (28) a. **Meeŋ ba!**  
IMP-PL come  
'Come!'
- b. **Meeŋ yɔ!**  
IMP-PL go  
'Go!'
- c. **Meeŋ saŋ ba!**  
IMP-PL NEG.IMP come  
'Don't come!'
- d. **Meeŋ saŋ yɔ!**  
IMP-PL NEG.IMP go  
'Don't go'



NI

From the data presented in (27c-d) and (28c-d), it is worthy of note that, the plural subject co-occur with the imperative marker **saŋ** in the negative imperative marker and the sentence will be grammatical. The above sub-section examines the negation of Gonja imperatives, demonstrates the singular and plural imperative forms, and contrasts the imperative construction with and without an object. The declarative negation markers **maa**, **maŋ**, and **maaŋ** cannot be used to negate an imperative. I also discussed **saŋ** as an imperative marker above and shown how it is identical to the form without an object or complement. I once more show how, in negative imperative constructions, the subject plural **meeŋ** and the imperative marker **saŋ** can coexist. In Gonja, **meeŋ** and **saŋ** can co-occur in negative construction, to put it simply. I came to the conclusion that negative imperatives differ from other negative clause formulations in a number of ways.

#### 4.4 Constituent Negation

Having outlined the various negative strategies in imperative constructions, I now discuss various forms of constituent negation in Gonja. Constituent negation implies negating the emphasized constituent in a sentence. The negated constituent could either be the subject, object, verb, adverb, or adjective in a sentence (Adeoye 2018). In Gonja, the focused constituent negated is always preceded by the negative morpheme **manɛ**. Dakubu and Saanchi (1997:158) distinguish between broad focus and narrow focus. According to them, broad focus means either the subject or the predicate is in focus and narrow focus means a phrasal constituent of the predicate is in focus. It appears that constituent negation in Gonja uses a cleft construction, which is defined as: a grammatically distinct construction whose members are typically derived from more basic clauses by dividing

("cleaving") into two parts, one of which is highlighted while the other is subordinated in the form of a relative clause having the highlighted element as antecedent. The highlighted component frequently acts as a complement to the verb "be" (as in English) (Huddleston, 1988:185). It must be noted, that Gonja has two focus markers which occur in complementary distribution, while 'e' focuses only subject NP, 'ne' focuses any other constituents in constituent negation in sentences. In dialogue, the front-shifted element can occur with **manɛ** if emphasis is on the front-shifted element. In example (29c-d) **manɛ** is used to negate a construction with e as its focus maker.

#### 4.4.1 Subject constituent

Negative marker man (NEG) comes before the subject NP constituent negation, which involves moving the subject NP to the beginning of the phrase, and the focus marker in Gonja comes after. Examples (29) below show positive and negative subject NP negation. Sentence (29a-b) show that the subject constituent is encoded by the use the focus marker 'e'. Sentence (29c-d) show that the subject constituent is negated via the use of a particle **manɛ** in the sentence. Sentence (29e) illustrate that the sentence is ungrammatical when **manɛ** is placed at the sentence initial position in non-focused construction.

- (29) a. **Shamuyɛ e yɔ kibɛ na**  
 Shamuyɛ FOC go market DET  
 'It was Shamuyɛ who went to the market.'

- b. Dari e tɔ buuku na**  
 Dari FOC buy book DET  
 ‘It was Dari who bought the book.’
- c. Manɛ Shamuyɛ e yɔ kibɛ na**  
 NEG.FOC Shamuyɛ FOC go market DET  
 ‘It wasn’t Shamuyɛ who went to the market.’
- d. Manɛ Dari e tɔ buuku na**  
 NEG.FOC Dari FOC buy book DET  
 ‘It wasn’t Dari who bought the book.’

ED

- e. \*Manɛ Shamuyɛ yɔ kibɛ na**  
 NEG.FOC Shamuyɛ go market DET  
 ‘it wasn’t shamuyɛ who went to the market.’

From the data presented in (29a-d), it is worthy to note that the focus marker **e** in the affirmative subject constituent construction (29a-b) licensed the negative focus marker in negated subject constituent construction in (29c-d) as discussed earlier on at the introductory stage of sub-section of this chapter. The sentence becomes ungrammatical when the focus marker ‘**e**’ gets deleted in example (29e) illustrated above.

#### 4.4.2 Object constituent

Object NP focus negation presupposes that the object of the verb is moved within the inflectional projection (IP) to sentence initial position and it is preceded by the focus negative marker and followed by the focus marker. Sentence (30a-b) shows the focused

object constituent is encoded by the use the focus marker ‘**nɛ**’. Sentence (30c-d) show that the object constituent is negated via the use of a particle **manɛ** in the sentence. Sentence (30e) illustrate that the sentence is ungrammatical when **manɛ** is placed at the sentence initial position in non-focused construction.

- (30) a. **Kibɛ na nɛ Shamuyɛ yɔ**  
 market DET FOC Shamuyɛ go  
 ‘It was the market Shamuyɛ went.’
- b. **Buuku na nɛ Dari tɔ**  
 book DET FOC Dari buy  
 ‘It was the book Dari bought’
- c. **Manɛ kibɛ na nɛ Shamuyɛ yɔ**  
 NEG.FOC market DET FOC Shamuyɛ go  
 ‘It wasn’t the market that Shamuyɛ went to.’
- d. **Manɛ buuku na nɛ Dari tɔ**  
 NEG.FOC book DET FOC Dari buy  
 ‘It wasn’t the book Dari that bought.’
- ED
- e. **\*Manɛ kibɛ na Shamuyɛ yɔ**  
 NEG.FOC market DET Shamuyɛ go  
 ‘It wasn’t the market that shamuyɛ went to.’

From the data presented in (30a-d), it is worthy to note that the focus marker **nɛ** in the affirmative object constituent construction (30a-b) licensed the negative focus marker in



negated object constituent construction in (30c-d) as discussed earlier on at the introductory stage of sub-section of this chapter. The sentence becomes ungrammatical when the focus marker ‘**ne**’ gets deleted in example (30e) illustrated above.

#### **4.5 Interrogative Negation**

Dakubu (2003) proposes that, typically, a speaker utters a question to elicit information needed to complete an expression, to an interlocutor who is expected to provide that information. She therefore concludes that the choice of what is commonly called interrogative mood is a pragmatic one. Interrogative sentences are essential components of the speech acts that exist in languages. The main difference between interrogatives and declaratives is that whilst declaratives are typically used for asserting, claiming, stating, accusing, criticizing, promising and guaranteeing, interrogatives are conventionally associated with the speech act of requesting information (König and Siemund, 2007; Siemund, 2001). According to Dixon (2012), an utterance may be interrogative in structure but may function pragmatically as a command with or without non-verbal cues such as smile.

According to König and Siemund (2007: 291), ‘polar interrogatives are typically used to enquire about the true or falsity of a proposition they express’. They also however, point out that it is possible for answers to polar interrogatives to assume any answer which is within the scale of ‘true’ and false’ as in such words as ‘perhaps’, ‘possibly’, and also ‘quite likely’. Accordingly, alternative questions also differ in terms of the response required as they do not simply demand a yes or no answer, but rather, they require an

alternative, out of the alternatives that may be stated for the listener. An alternative question presents two or more possible answers and presupposes that only one of the presented alternatives is true. In the study of information structure, it has been argued that these types of questions generally present an exclusive disjunction, that is, a pair of alternatives of which only one is acceptable. When asking an alternative question, therefore, the speaker is simply in search of the answer as to whether say q or p (or even r) holds. Notwithstanding the fact that interrogatives form a central aspect of human languages, languages differ in the strategies that they employ in the formation of interrogatives. These strategies, typologically, may be phonological, syntactic, or lexical. I do not intend to discuss interrogatives into details but however, how negation is marked on interrogative constructions in Gonja.

#### 4.5.1 Morphology of Gonja Interrogatives

Before I offer an account of the structure of negation in Gonja interrogatives, I deem it important to introduce the reader to the morphology of the Gonja interrogatives. In Gonja interrogatives formed or marked via the use of falling intonation for polar questions, **nko** for forming alternative questions and **manɛ** ‘what’, **manɛso** ‘why’, **nnɛ** ‘where’, **kumo** ‘which’, **nuso** ‘how’ **wanɛ** ‘who’ for forming or marking content questions. Thus, in alternative questions **nko** occurs between the two coordinated structures since there is no truncation while in content questions **e** and **nɛ** is recognized as focus markers, and that **nɛ** occurs where the focus is on the object and **e** occurs where the focus is on the subject. The observation that these particles, **nɛ** and **e** occur in content questions suggests that the pragmatic notion of focus is relevant in the discussion of

content questions. In the Examples (31b), (32b) and (33b) I demonstrate the use of intonation as a question strategy in the formation of polar questions.

31 a. **E sha kebia na**  
3SG.NOM want.IMPERF child DEF  
'S/he does not want the child.'

b. **E sha kebia na**  
3SG.NOM want.IMPERF child DEF.INTO  
'Does s/he want the child?'

NI

32 a. **Fo kaŋ tɔ lorry na.**  
2PL.NOM TRM buy.PERF lorry DEF  
'You did not bought the lorry (yesterday).'

b. **Fo kaŋ tɔ lorry na.INTO**  
2PL.NOM TRM buy.PERF lorry DEF  
'Did you bought the lorry (yesterday)?'

33 a. **Koji been firgi.**  
Koji FUT fly  
'Koji will fly.'

b. **Koji been firgi.INTO**

Koji FUT fly

‘Will Koji fly?’

NI

It is to be recalled from the analysis put forth in this work that sentences (31a), (32a) and (33a) are declarative sentences. They, however, have their interrogative counterparts in (31b, 32b) signaled by falling intonation. In (33a) a simple declarative sentence is changed to a polar interrogative as in (33b), also via falling intonation.

Accordingly, while the syntactic forms of alternative questions contain nothing more than a coordinate structure, their semantic component will be analyzed as including an alternative operator **nko**. Considering the structure of alternative and polar questions, I contend that the particle **nko** is analyzable as the equivalent of the English conjunction ‘or’. This is shown in the data in (34a-b).

34 a. **Baɔɔ nuu nchu nko bu maɔ**

3PL.NOM drink.IMPERF water INT 3PL.NOM NEG

**nuu**

drink.IMPERF

‘Do they drink water or they do not drink?’

- b. **Abu beɛŋ kaŋɛ fanɛ e bee- sha ebu**  
 Abu FUT say that 3SG.NOM want.IMPERF room  
**nko e maŋ kaŋɛ**  
 INT 3SG.NOM NEG.FUT say

‘Will Abu say (that) he wants a room or he will not say?’

NI

However, in content questions **e** and **nɛ** is recognized *as* focus markers, and that **nɛ** occurs where the focus is on the object and **e** occurs where the focus is on the subject. The observation that these particles, **nɛ** and **e** occur in content questions suggests that the pragmatic notion of focus is relevant in the discussion of content questions. The formation of content questions is illustrated in (35) and (36).

35. **Manɛso nɛ mbia na maŋ yɔ**  
 Why FOC children DEF NEG go.PERF  
 ‘Why are the children not gone?’

36. **Wanɛ e daŋ mɔ baasa na lan na to.**  
 Who FOC TRM kill. PERF people DEF house DEF LOC  
 ‘Who killed the people in the house (more than two days ago).’

NI

Considering the data in (35) through (36), it becomes clear that the focus particles **nɛ** and **e** are not required in the formation of content questions in Gonja if the interrogative word remains in-situ (the end of the sentence). However, when the interrogative word is

dislocated to the clause initial position, then the introduction of the focus particles becomes obligatory.

#### 4.5.2 Structure of Interrogative negation

Interrogative constructions or statements are marked negatively via the use of any of the following preverbal particles **maa**, **maŋ**, **maaŋ** in Gonja. The use of **maa**, **maŋ**, and **maaŋ** in negating interrogative constructions are exemplified in (31), (32), (33), (34) and (35).

37 a. **E maa sha kebia na**  
 3SG.NOM NEG want.IMPERF child DEF  
 ‘S/he does not want the child.’

b. **E maa sha kebia na**  
 3SG.NOM NEG want.IMPERF child DEF.INTO  
 ‘Does s/he not want the child?’

38 a. **Fo kaŋ maŋ tɔ lorry na.**  
 2PL.NOM TRM NEG buy.PERF lorry DEF  
 ‘You did not bought the lorry (yesterday).’

b. **Fo kaŋ maŋ tɔ lorry na.INTO**  
 2PL.NOM TRM NEG buy.PERF lorry DEF  
 ‘Did you not bought the lorry (yesterday)?’

- 39 a. **Koji maan firgi.**  
 Koji NEG.FUT fly  
 ‘Koji will not fly.’
- b. **Koji maan firgi.INTO**  
 Koji NEG.FUT fly  
 ‘Will Koji not fly?’
- NI
- 40 a. **Baan nuu nchu nko bu maan**  
 3PL.NOM drink.IMPERF water INT 3PL.NOM NEG  
**nuu**  
 drink.IMPERF  
 ‘Do they drink water or they do not drink?’
- b. **Abu been kaɛ fanɛ e bee- sha ebu**  
 Abu FUT say that 3SG.NOM want.IMPERF room  
**nko e maan kaɛ**  
 INT 3SG.NOM NEG.FUT say  
 ‘Will Abu say (that) he wants a room or he will not say?’
41. **Maneso ne mbia na maan yo**  
 Why FOC children DEF NEG go.PERF  
 ‘Why are the children not gone?’

42.           Wanɛ e     daŋ maŋ mɔ           baasa na lan na to.

Who FOC TRM NEG kill. PERF people DEF house DEF LOC

‘Who did not kill the people in the house (more than two days ago).

NI

#### 4.6 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have discussed the various preverbal particles or morpheme used for marking negation in Gonja. I first discussed the typology of negation strategies in other languages to have a fair knowledge of how other languages express negation. I also discussed the structure of Gonja clause illustrating the basic structure of Gonja clauses and how they are negated. I discussed the syntactic distribution of these preverbal negative markers in various forms of construction in testing their positions and function in declarative sentences. I discussed how these preverbal markers interact with aspect in Gonja. I also examined the incompatibility of the progressive and future aspectual and Gonja negation indicating the grounds that necessitated that in Gonja negation. I further discussed the imperative negation indicating how an imperative marker is expressed covertly and overtly in both singular and plural subject. I examined the constituent negation with emphasis on both the subject and the object constituent is negated using the focus marker in the language and finally how interrogative constructions are negated in Gonja.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter, being the final chapter of the thesis, presents the summary, findings, conclusion and recommendation of the study. The main purpose of this study is to look at the negation strategies in Gonja. This chapter therefore brings to light the following sections; section 5.1 gives a general summary of the study, 5.2 provides the summary of the findings of the study already discussed, 5.3 provides the relevant conclusion of this present study and 5.5 recommend other research areas that this study has not covered for future researchers.

#### 5.1 Summary

In summary, the whole thesis is structured into five chapters with each chapter providing a vivid analysis that is related to the study under discussion. The following are some of the summary from each chapter.

Chapter 1 serves as the general overview of the whole thesis with hint that, it will investigate into the selected language (Gonja) the negation strategies. The chapter also provides a short historical background of the language that is, the name of the language, the language group (Guans), the region where the language is spoken and the three main dialects of the language. It further states the problem that necessitated the study, aims of the research and the questions that guide the researcher; what are the various particles that are used in expressing Gonja negation? How are the negative particles distributed in

Gonja? How are the progressive aspectual and future markers incompatible with Gonja negation? Also, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, limitations and delimitations are briefly discussed.

In chapter 2, I reviewed some relevant related literature posited by earlier researchers on negation strategies and the analysis was mainly descriptive and module within the Basic Linguistic Theory (BLT). Area covered in this chapter are grouped into four main sections, the first section looked at the general notion of negation; previous works on negation strategies in Guan, previous researched of negation strategies in Kwa, works on negation strategies in Mabilia languages, works on negation strategies of Some related literature in non-Ghanaian languages of the World. I reviewed the following; Abunya (2010), Casali (1995), Ansah (2015), Ameka & Dakubu (2008), Agbedor (1994), Abakah (2015), Campbell (1988), Osam (2004), Musah (2018), Saanchi (2008), Pazzack (2010), Ngonyani (2001), Ilori (2010), Adewole (1992), Akumbu (2016), Dahl (1979), Honda (1996), Miestamo (2000, 2003, 2005), Greenberg (1966), Gleason (2001), Dryer (1988, 1992), Dryer (2013), Van der Auwera & Lejeune (2013), Campbell (2017) which are structured in the following themes; review works on negation strategies in Guan languages, review works on negation strategies in Kwa languages, review works on negation strategies in Mabilia languages and finally review works on negation strategies in Non-languages. The works were reviewed to get full understanding of the concept of negation strategies.

In chapter 3, the methodology used to gather data for this study is discussed. The chapter presents the research design used, that is, qualitative design. Purposive sampling technique is used. The population comprised five (5) language consultant from the research sites in Kpembi, Salaga, Kulpi and Nkwanta. Both primary and secondary sources of data were used. How the data is presented and the summary of the chapter were all outline in chapter 3.

Chapter 4 discusses the negation strategies in Gonja. This chapter provides the various particles used in expressing negation in Gonja. The chapter further looked at the distribution of these particles and their analysis with regards to how they interact with tense and aspect in Gonja. The chapter further look at the imperative negation into detail in the language which established that the structure of imperative construction differs from the negation of declarative of sentences. Also, the chapter discusses the constituent negation and its types and sub-categories are identified and analyzed.

Chapter 5, being the final chapter of the study, presents the findings, summary of the study, and it outlines the general contribution and the conclusion of the study. It also presents the recommendations for future researchers.

## **5.2 Findings**

In this section, I discuss the major findings of the study based on the data analyzed in chapter four (4) of this thesis. The findings are as follows.

Firstly, it has been established in this study that negation is marked using a syntactic strategy in Gonja. Dahl (1979) opines that syntactic strategy is expressed via the use of an independent particle in negating a clause or sentence with regards to Indonesian languages.

This juxtaposes the assertion of what Dahl (1979) said about syntactic strategy as one of the main strategy in negating a clause in a natural language. The overtly expressed negative particles are **maa**, **maŋ**, **maŋŋ**, **saŋ manɛ** used for negating declarative, imperative and constituent respectively.

Secondly, it also established that these negative markers are preverbal in the language in terms of their position in the sentence. This confirms the assertion of Greenberg (1966), Jespersen (1917) and Dryer (2013) that languages with strict SVO are commonly SNegVO. In other word, SVO languages place their negative markers pre-verbally, occurring at the position before the main verb. They also discuss the various syntactic positions occupied by the negative markers in some natural languages.

It also shows clearly in the language that the preverbal negative markers strictly work based on tense and aspect and marking a marker to interact with a wrong aspect result in getting wrong sentences in the language. This particular finding is also in line with Saanchi (2008) position on how negative particle interact with tense in negating a clause in Dagaare.

Again, in analyzing data in the study, types of negation were identified, based on syntactic strategy. This included sentential and constituent types of negation. Sentential negation refers to negating an entire clause or proposition in the clause. In negating a clause in Gonja, the negative marker comes before the verb. One can also negate just the constituent in a clause. This is termed as constituent negation. In Gonja, certain strategies are adopted to negate a constituent. A strategy identified in the thesis was either the subject is focused or the object focused in a clause. This phenomenon is also supported by the work of Agbedor (1994: 55) on constituent negation in Ewe.

The findings also show that there is an incompatibility between the progressive aspectual marker and future marker with Gonja negation where the progressive negative marker and future negative marker functioning as both aspectual markers and also negative markers in negative constructions. Other words, they serve as a portmanteau morpheme in the language. This is also supported by the argument of Issah (2023) with regards to how future aspect marker and the negative future marker are incompatible in Dagbani language.

### **5.3 Summary**

I came to the conclusion that whether in declarative, imperative and constituent construction in Gonja the negative markers come before the verb in the language clause structure. None comes after the verb in the sentence. Again, aspect plays a role in terms of these negative markers' distributions in the language.

#### **5.4 Recommendation**

The linguistic and literature development of every language rest on the amount of research carried out by linguists and scholars into its study and documentation. In the course of conducting this study, though the study has provided insights into the concept of negation. This work serves as a starting pointing for further investigations into the negation strategies in Gonja. Based on the findings and the scope of this study, I provide some recommendations for future studies.

Firstly, I do not claim that the list of pre-verbal negative particles provided here is exhaustive, although about 5 pre-verbal particles have been identified and discussed in this study. Therefore, there is the need for future studies to consider identifying and discussing the functions of other pre- verbal negative particles (if they are).

Secondly, since this work focused on negation strategies in Gonja using a descriptive theoretical framework as an informal theory in its analyses, related research on negation can be conducted in same language using a formal theory.

Also, a cross linguistic analysis of this concept would be more efficient. It would help us come up with a theory that can account for the various preverbal negative markers and their distributions.

Finally, related research on negation strategies can be done in other languages.

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