A Comparative Study of Bilingual Verb Phrases in Ewe-English and Gengbe-French Codeswitching

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Abstract

This article describes contact phenomena between two closely related varieties of the Gbe language cluster Ewe and Gengbe each with a Germanic and a Romance language. The focus is on a comparison of verb phrases in Ewe-English codeswitching, spoken in Ghana, and Gengbe-French codeswitching, spoken in Togo. It is the first qualitative comparative study of this kind although quite a number of local (West African) languages are in contact with English and French. It finds that because the two varieties of Gbe are morphosyntactically similar, there are remarkable morphosyntactic similarities between bilingual clauses containing English verbs and those containing French verbs. English/French verbs with the same transitivity value which assign the same set of thematic roles to their arguments occur in slots in Ewe/Gengbe-based clauses where Ewe/Gengbe verbs with those subcategorization features also occur. The explanation for this pattern, from the perspective of the Matrix Language Frame model, is that during codeswitching English and French verbs are treated as if they belong to the class of Ewe and Gengbe verbs which share their subcategorization features. Assuming language production to be modular (in the sense of Myers-Scotton 1993, 2002), it is argued that the pattern is illustrative of a kind of composite codeswitching (Amuzu 2005a, 2010, and in print) by which abstract grammatical information from one language about verbs from that language—here English or French—is consistently mapped onto surface structure through the grammatical resources of another language, here Ewe or Gengbe.

Keywords

bilingual verb phrases – composite codeswitching – matrix language – language production – Ewe
1 Introduction

This is a qualitative comparative study of the distribution of English verbs in Ewe-English codeswitching (cs) spoken in Ghana and the distribution of French verbs in Gengbe-French cs spoken in Togo. The significance of the paper lies in the contact scenarios that it studies, where two varieties of one language (specifically Gbe\(^1\)) are in intensive cs grammatical contact with two different languages, the colonial languages English and French.\(^2\) Each previous comparative study dwelled either on cross-linguistic data in which English is in cs contact with various West African languages or on cross-linguistic data in which French is in contact with the various West African languages.\(^3\) The key insight in those works relates to how they explained similarities and/or differences between analogous grammatical outcomes of the English/French related cs. In studies concerned with English related cs, for example, the similarities and/or differences are traced ultimately to grammatical similarities and/or differences among the distinct West African languages.\(^4\) In the light

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1 Some scholars (e.g. Kozelka 1984, Capo 1991, and Essizewa 2007) have seen Gengbe, also known as Mina, as a dialect of Ewe ostensibly because it is grammatically and lexically similar to Ewe, a fact that is by no means accidental: Gengbe evolved initially as a second language variety among groups of non-native speakers of Ewe. However, some other scholars (e.g. Aboh and Essegbey, 2010) do not see Gengbe as a dialect of Ewe and so name it among the Gbe cluster of languages, which beside Ewe includes Aja, Gungbe and Fon. In Amuzu (2013a and 2013b), I followed the former perspective, but in this paper I shift to the latter view because it seems to be gaining currency.

2 There are many other cross-border West African languages/varieties of West African languages that are also in separate codeswitching contact with at least two colonial or non-African languages, notably English and French: Akan and Nzema (English in Ghana, French in Côte d’Ivoire), Hausa (English in Nigeria, French in Niger), Wolof (English in Gambia, French in Senegal), Yoruba (English in Nigeria, French in Benin), Fula/Pulaar (English in Gambia, French in Senegal and Guinea), Kru (English in Liberia, French in Côte d’Ivoire), Susu (English in Sierra Leone, French in Guinea, Portuguese in Guinea Bissau), Kanuri (English in Nigeria, French in Chad), etc. None of these other scenarios has as yet been investigated.


4 For example, Amuzu (2009a) reports a sharp contrast between Ewe-English cs on the one hand and Akan-English and Ga-English cs on the other hand with regard to the marking of
of this insight, the principal research questions addressed in this article are the following:

a. How much of the grammatical similarities and/or differences between Ewe-English cs and Gengbe-French cs may be traced to Gbe (i.e. to Ewe and Gengbe)?

b. How much of the similarities and/or differences may be traced instead to similarities and differences between English (Germanic) and French (Romance)?

The focus is bilingual verb phrases.

The paper is a sequel to Amuzu (2005a, 2005b[2010]) and in print. In those works, the claim is made that Ewe-English cs is a case of ‘composite cs’ contra Myers-Scotton’s claim in her 1993 and 2002 works that Ewe-English cs is ‘Classic cs’. In 2005b[2010] especially, it is also demonstrated with illustrations from Akan-English, Ga-English, Dangme-English, and Fongbe-French cs that Ewe-English cs is not a unique case of composite cs in the West African subregion. This study expands the scope of illustrations with Gengbe-French cs data.

Unless otherwise acknowledged, the examples of bilingual verb phrases discussed in the paper come from recordings made between April 2009 and October 2011 by a team of researchers whom I led on a project called “Ewe Contact Research Project”, which was sponsored by the Office of Research, Innovation and Development (ORID) of the University of Ghana.6 The Ewe-English cs data, totalling twenty six hours of conversation, were recorded in Accra, Ho, Keta, and Akatsi (all in Ghana) while the Gengbe-French cs data, totalling twenty five hours of conversation, were recorded in Lome and Avepozo in Togo. The same methodology was used in collecting both sets of data. Speakers (never more than six per recording session) were organized into a focus group to discuss various topics (including marriage ceremonies, marital life, domestic and religious issues, current affairs—especially political
and economic—and the relevance of science and technology in human lives). Members of each group were native speakers of Ewe who are fluent in English (Ghana) and speakers who are fluent in Gengbe and French (Togo). Each session was moderated by a research assistant who is competent in Ewe and English or in Gengbe/Ewe and French. Each session lasted at least one hour. The general format was for a moderator to introduce a topic and to then ask a series of general questions that stimulate a debate. As the various speakers take turn to address the questions (an event that is often characterised by rebuttals, overlaps and reformulation of the questions and answers by the speakers), the moderator’s major mandate was to ensure that everyone gets an equal opportunity to speak. Speakers are not instructed to speak any particular variety of language (Ewe or English; or Gengbe or French; or Codeswitching) although the recordings show that most of the moderators used monolingual Ewe/Gengbe predominantly. All the conversations recorded have been transcribed and typed out, making it easy to pick out the examples of bilingual verb phrases discussed in the paper.

The monolingual Ewe and Gengbe sentences discussed in the paper do not come from the database; they are used for the purpose of deepening our understanding of CS structures encountered in the bilingual data.

2 Theoretical Framework and the Background Literature

2.1 The Matrix Language Frame Model

The central claim in the Matrix Language Frame/MLF model (Myers-Scotton, 1993, 2002) is that there is a matrix language (ML) in all bilingual intra-sentential constructions and that this ML is the source of the abstract grammatical frame for the constructions. The model distinguishes two types of ML: an ML informed by the abstract grammatical structure of only one of the languages in CS contact and an ML informed by a composite of abstract grammatical structures from the languages involved. Myers-Scotton refers to CS involving the one-language ML as “Classic CS” and to the CS involving the composite ML as “Composite CS.” However, it is argued in Amuzu (2005a, 2005b[2010]) that a

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7 The other language involved in Classic CS, called the Embedded Language (EL), plays a restricted role.

8 Unlike Classic CS users who are supposed to be competent in at least the grammar of their Li (=ML), e.g. Swahili-English bilinguals in Kenya, speakers of Composite CS are often found to be migrants who lack full grammatical competence in at least their Li (see e.g. Bolonyai 1998 and Schmitt 2000).
different kind of Composite cs from the one Myers-Scotton has outlined occurs in Ewe-English cs and other cases of cs in West Africa. In this paper, the original composite cs is referred to as “Composite-1 cs” and the second type is referred to as “Composite-2 cs”.

In order to distinguish the three types of cs, it is necessary to be acquainted with assumptions that underpin the MLF model: assumptions concerning types of morphemes in human languages and assumptions about the nature of lexical structure and of language production.

The assumptions concerning types of morphemes are spelt out in Myers-Scotton’s 4-M model, which stipulates the existence of four types of morphemes in each human language (cf. Myers-Scotton and Jake, 2000: 3ff and Myers-Scotton, 2002: 72ff). They are:

- **content morphemes**: nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and some prepositions.
- **early system morphemes**: grammatical elements that have conceptual affinity with their content morpheme heads, e.g. verb satellites (e.g. INTO in LOOK INTO meaning ‘to consider’), noun plural markers, demonstratives, intensifiers.
- **late bridge system morphemes**: elements that provide grammatical links between two units, e.g. copulas and possessive linkers.
- **late outsider system morphemes**: critical grammatical or functional elements, e.g. tense, modal, and aspect (TMA) markers, agreement inflections, case markers.

The assumptions concerning lexical structure, expressed in the Abstract Level model (Myers-Scotton and Jake, 1995, 2001 and Myers-Scotton, 2002), stem from the view that the basis of syntax is the abstract representations underlying lexical items. They are called “lemmas”. Briefly put, a lemma is the non-phonological set of information about a lexical item which informs the lexical item’s distribution as a surface-level element. It is stored in speakers’ mental lexicon of a language. It consists of three subparts:

- **lexical-conceptual structure**, i.e. details about the lexeme’s semantic and pragmatic properties (e.g. does a noun encode Agent, Patient, or Experiencer?; does a verb encode Action, State, or Process?)
- **predicate-argument structure**, i.e. details about the lexeme’s syntactic properties (namely details about its thematic structure to be mapped on to grammatical relations), e.g. whether a noun conceptualized as Patient is to be expressed as Subject or as Object.
• morphological realization pattern, i.e., specifications about language-specific devices, like word order restrictions, agreement, tense/aspect marking system, etc., for realizing the lexeme’s grammatical relations with other lexemes in surface configurations, e.g., Must a Subject come before its verb or may it occur elsewhere? Are case-markers required on the Subject? Etc.

The assumptions about types of morpheme and about their underlying lemmas characterize how language production is conceptualized. Language production is perceived as being modular, involving four stages or levels of operation: the conceptual, lemma, functional, and surface/positional levels. See Table 1 below; it is adapted from Myers-Scotton and Jake (2001), Myers-Scotton (2002), and Amuzu (2005a).

### Table 1  The language production model in bilingual cs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual Level</td>
<td>At this level, speakers make selections encapsulating the conceptual structures they wish to convey. In other words, pre-verbally speakers make decisions regarding their intentions. Such pre-verbal speaker-intentions (which consist of universally available semantic and pragmatic information) are conflated as specific semantic/pragmatic (Sp) feature bundles, which are necessarily language-specific. Speaker goes into “BILINGUAL MODE” (Grosjean, 2001). Information is sent to the Lemma Level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemma Level</td>
<td>The language-specific Sp feature bundles activate entries in the mental lexicon called lemmas, which support the realization of actual surface-level lexemes. For a bilingual construction to result later at surface structure, the Sp feature bundles should trigger the activation of lemmas supporting content morphemes from both languages. The content-morpheme lemmas may also point to lemmas supporting early system morphemes. The lexical-conceptual structure of each content morpheme becomes salient at this level.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9 The codeswitcher is supposed to enter what Grosjean (2001) calls “bilingual mode” at this level because the social setting motivates—a la Myers-Scotton 1993—their interchangeable use of two or more languages. Cs is likely to be inhibited if the codeswitcher is in “monolingual mode” because his addressee speaks only one of his languages.
Information is sent to the Functional Level where a control centre known as *Formulator* operates.

**Functional Level**

The formulator interprets the language-specific lemma information about each content morpheme, which comprises the already salient lexical-conceptual structure and the two other sub-parts of lemma information: the predicate-argument structure and morphological realization pattern.

Concerning predicate-argument structure, the formulator maps thematic structure onto grammatical relations. For instance, it detects how many arguments a verb takes and what thematic role the verb assigns each argument; it then maps the grammatical relations among all these elements.

Concerning the morphological realization pattern, the formulator detects what language-specific devices for word-order, agreement, tense/aspect/mood marking, case marking, negation, etc., are suitable for expressing the content morpheme’s grammatical relations with one another.

Appropriate language-specific morphosyntactic processes are activated to direct how the content morphemes from both languages are to co-occur in surface structure.

Information on the processes is forwarded to the final level.

**Positional/Surface Level**

Phonological and morphological realizations take place.

Since conceptual level processes are pre-linguistic, they can be assumed to be similar in all three types of cs, i.e. Classic cs, Composite-1 cs, and Composite-2 cs. The differences among them appear at the lemma level and later.

For Classic cs, it is assumed that two inter-connected actions take place at the lemma level: (i) EL specific SP feature bundles activate lemmas in the EL mental lexicon that support given EL content morphemes and (ii) processes are automatically triggered for the activation of lemmas in the ML mental lexicon that support ML counterparts of the EL content morphemes. The essence of the co-activation of the cross-linguistic lemmas is to “match” them for congruence across the three subparts of lemma (cf. Myers-Scotton and Jake, 1995). The outcome of the matching of lemmas determines the morphosyntactic environment in which the EL content morpheme is realized. If the EL and ML content morphemes are determined to be sufficiently congruent, the EL content morpheme is expected to be directed into a slot which its ML counterpart projects.
Two principles of the MLF model, the System Morpheme Principle (SMP) and the Morpheme Order Principle (MOP), are activated to direct the EL content morpheme into the slot of its ML equivalent. The SMP states:

In ML + EL constituents, all system morphemes which have grammatical relations external to their head constituent (i.e., which participate in the sentence’s thematic role grid) will come from the ML.

Myers-Scotton, 1993: 82

And the MOP states:

In ML + EL constituents consisting of singly-occurring EL lexemes and any number of ML morphemes, surface morpheme order (reflecting surface relations) will be that of the ML.

Myers-Scotton, 1993: 82.

The occurrence of *COME* in (1) below, from Swahili-English cs in which English is the EL, illustrates how the two principles are supposed to determine that sufficiently congruent EL content morphemes occur in the slots that their respective ML counterparts project. *COME* is analyzed as having been inserted into a slot projected by the Swahili verb counterpart -j- ‘come’ (Myers-Scotton and Jake 2001: 106):

(1) Leo si-ku- COME ma o- BOOK-S  z-angu
today 1 s/NEG-PST/NEG-come with CL10/PL-book-PL CL/PL-my
“Today I didn’t come with my books”
Myers-Scotton and Jake, 2001: 106

According to Myers-Scotton and Jake (2001: 106),

...English *COME* occurs because it is projected from an EL (English) lemma in the mental lexicon that matches with an ML counterpart (Swahili -j- ‘come’) **sufficiently at all three levels of abstract lexical structure** (Italics added).

If the EL content morpheme is not sufficiently congruent with its ML counterpart, it is expected to be blocked from being integrated into a slot that its ML counterpart projects. A compromise strategy is instead used for the realization of that EL content morpheme. Either it occurs as a “bare form” (a form that lacks required ML late system morphemes in its occurrence in a bilingual construction) or it occurs as part of an “EL island” (a multiword EL construction that is placed in a larger ML construction).
In the Composite-2 CS proposed for Ewe-English CS and related cases in West Africa, no stipulations are made to the effect that it is ML equivalents of fully integrated EL content morphemes that project CS slots. Also, no lemma matching is assumed to take place before EL content morphemes are integrated fully into ML-based structures. Rather, it is stipulated that on the basis of their underlying lemma information EL content morphemes project their own slots in the ML-based structures. This stipulation is formalized as follows:

(i) The donor language provides, from the lemma level, all lemma information (lexical-conceptual structure, predicate-argument structure and morphological realization pattern information) about this language's content morpheme, while

(ii) The recipient language provides, at the functional level, the morphosyntactic means (i.e. morpheme order and late system morphemes) by which a grammatical frame is created to satisfy the lemma requirements of the content morpheme from the donor language.

The SMP and MOP jointly ensure that recipient language morphosyntactic frames are used in bilingual constructions. In order not to give the impression that only one of the languages plays the role of ML as happens in Classic CS, the labels ML and EL are avoided in the hypothesis. Emphasis is placed instead on the notion that abstract grammatical information from one language about content morphemes from that language is mapped onto surface structure through the grammatical resources of another language. We shall return to this hypothesis with illustrations from previous works in section 2.2 below.

As observed, the label “Composite CS” being used here to describe Ewe-English CS conflicts with Myers-Scotton’s (original, e.g. 1993, 2002) use of it to designate another kind of CS. That is why we have referred to the kind Myers-Scotton describes as “Composite-1 CS”. Composite-1 CS is characterized by a “splitting” of abstract grammatical roles by the languages during bilingual language production. Ultimately, the two languages exert semantic as well as morphosyntactic influences on the distribution of donor language (=EL) content morphemes. For one thing, the SMP and the MOP are not observed strictly in favour of the recipient language (=ML) in the manner stipulated for Composite-2 CS. Example (3) below, from Bolonyai (1998), cited in Myers-Scotton (2001), illustrates the said splitting of grammatical responsibilities. It was produced by “a Hungarian child whose L1 is Hungarian, but who is growing up in the United States, with English becoming her dominant language” (Myers-Scotton 2001: 52).

10 The composite ML hypothesis (adapted from Amuzu (2005b: 40 [Amuzu 2010: 50]).
The monolingual Hungarian equivalent of the child’s cs expression appears in (4) and the adult Hungarian-English cs version appears in (5), which has been analyzed as Classic cs:

(3)  játész-ok  SCHOOL-ot  (Child’s Composite-1 cs)
     play-1sg/Pres/Sub.Conj -Acc
     I’m playing school.’

(4)  iskolá-s-at játész-ok  (Standard Hungarian)

(5)  SCHOOL-os-at játész-ok  (Adult Hungarian-English cs)
     (Myers-Scotton, 2001: 53; Bolonyai, 1998: 34)

In (3), according to Bolonyai, the child mapped the English argument structure of SCHOOL (=Locative) onto Hungarian instead of conceptualizing it as Actor, i.e. in terms of its Hungarian equivalent, iskolás (‘schooler’ Bolonyai, 1998). The result is that two things happened in (3): (i) verb placement is in accordance with English, not Hungarian (see the Hungarian model in example 4), and (ii) the Hungarian suffix for Actor –s is missing before the accusative marker on the codeswitched form SCHOOL. Note that in the adult cs version in (5), SCHOOL is duly conceptualized as Actor and carries the suffix -s and precedes the verb and subject in accordance with Hungarian grammar. As will become clear in section 2.2 and especially in section 3 below, the kind of composite cs which this child has produced is not the kind that one finds in Ewe-English and Gengbe-French cs.

2.2  Related Literature
This section summarizes some earlier works by Amuzu in which it is argued that Ewe-English cs is a case of Composite-2 cs rather than Classic cs contra Myers-Scotton (1993 and 2002). Amuzu (2005a) focuses on bilingual non-verbal predication (mixed copula constructions) and the issue of theoretical interest is the consistent occurrence of English predicative adjectives in the complement slot of the Ewe ascriptive copula le ‘be.at’.11 The expectation from the point of view of Classic cs is for Ewe equivalents to project the complement of le slot for the English predicative adjectives found in that slot.

11 There is a debate in the literature on Ewe linguistics about whether le is a copula or not. For example, while Amuzu (2005a, 2010) argues that it is an ascriptive copula that is in opposition with an equative copula nye, Essegbey (1999) argues that it is a locative verb. Details of the debate are beyond the scope of this paper.
In Ewe, this slot is associated with adverbialized adjectives that are used predicatively, so the slot can be said to be projected by them for their respective English equivalents; e.g. IMPORTANT in (6a) may be said to occur in a slot which is projected for it by vevi-e ‘important-AdvS’ in (6b):

(6a) eyata AS FOR asige lae, e-le IMPORTANT
    so as for ring TOP, 3sg-be.atPRES important
    ‘So, as for the ring, it is important’ (Amuzu, 2005a: 136)

(6b) eyata AS FOR asige lae, e-le vevi-e
    so as for ring TOP, 3sg-be.atPRES important-AdvS
    ‘So, as or the ring, it is important’ (Amuzu, 2005a: 136)

However, many Ewe equivalents of English predicative adjectives are not adverbialized adjectives; they are either inchoative verbs or lexicalized verbal predicates which cannot occur in the complement of le slot. For example, the closest equivalent of NECESSARY in (7a) is the verb hai ‘to need’ in (7b) which cannot be associated with the slot in which NECESSARY occurs:

(7a) Mé le NECESSARY be…
    3sg.NEG be.atPRES COMP
    ‘It is not necessary that…’ (Amuzu, 2005a: 131)

(7b) Mé hai be…
    3sg.NEG need COMP
    ‘It is not necessary that…’

So, as pointed out in Amuzu (2005a), while the Classic cs account can explain how an English predicative adjective like IMPORTANT enters the slot, it cannot explain how another one like NECESSARY also occurs in it. Myers-Scotton (1993) acknowledges this situation when she states that,

[... in those cases where the pattern including be + Adjective...is unique to cs utterances, then, the pattern is outside the grammar of the ml. That is, it cannot be argued that the ml morphosyntactic procedures are at work. (151, emphasis added)]

12 For example, the attributive adjective vevi ‘important’ in nya vevi ‘an important issue’ occurs predicatively when it is adverbialized by the derivational suffix -e/-qe as in nya-a le vevi-e ‘the issue is important’. 

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The Composite-2 CS account does not have this kind of deficiency. It holds that irrespective of what their Ewe counterparts may be, the English predicate adjectives project their complement of le slot on the basis of their English-origin lemma requirement for a copula to link them to their subject. The SMP ensures that the Ewe form le is used consistently instead of the English copula BE.13

Further evidence of the adequacy of the Composite-2 CS account of Ewe-English CS is provided in Amuzu (2005b[2010] and 2009b) with illustrations from bilingual VPs. Amuzu (2010: 169) summarizes what is expected from the perspective of Composite-2 CS thus:

[... ] we expect the lemma supporting an English verb to inform the formulator regarding requirements that need to be met in its environment in an Ewe-based mixed VP structure. In particular, we expect the English verb to occur in the type of V-slot where Ewe verbs that share its abstract lexical structure features occur, i.e. regardless of the fact that its direct Ewe counterpart is or is not among them. Emphasis added

The highlighted part of the statement draws attention to the kind of data that separates the Classic CS and Composite-2 CS accounts and shows that the Composite-2 CS account explains the patterns found in the data better. One illustration of that kind of data is the occurrence of STAB in (8) below:

(8) Sydney nyɔnu aɖe STAB é-fe ahiavi kple BREADKNIFE.
   Sydney woman INDEF stab 3sg-poss lover with
   ‘A Sydney woman stabbed her lover with a bread knife.’
   (Amuzu, 2010: 173)

STAB is a change-of-state verb that takes one object argument and permits an Instrumental adjunct. It assigns the role of Agent to the subject (i.e. Sydney nyɔnu aɖe ‘a Sydney woman’) and the role of Patient to the lone object (é-fe ahiavi ‘her lover’). However, in the construction above a preposition, kple ‘with’, introduces an object (BREADKNIFE) to which it assigns the thematic role of Instrumental, and the prepositional phrase itself functions as an adverbial adjunct which provides information about the instrument used to carry out the action encoded by STAB.

13 Amuzu (2005b[2010] and, especially, in print) also discussed bilingual possessive constructions and showed further how the Composite-2 CS account is more explanatory of the CS patterns than the Classic CS account.
As pointed out in Amuzu (2010: 173), the Classic cs account breaks down in respect to (8) because it cannot describe \( STAB \)'s slot in terms of an Ewe verb with which it is fully congruent. \( STAB \)'s nearest equivalent is the double object inherent complement verb \( tɔ \) in (9) below. In the case of \( tɔ \) the Instrumental object is an internal argument, so it is not equivalent to the Instrumental object in (8), which, as noted, is expressed as a part of an adverbal adjunct:

(9) \( Kofi \ tɔ \ hɛ \ Ama \)
    Kofi ICV knife Ama
    ‘Kofi stabbed Ama with a knife.’
    (Essegbey, 1999: 174)

The incompatibility of \( STAB \) and \( tɔ \) is inconsequential in a Composite-2 cs account for the occurrence of \( STAB \) in (8). \( STAB \) is seen as having projected its monotransitive slot in the manner it does in monolingual English and, also, it permits \( kple \) ‘with’ to introduce the Instrumental object the same way it would permit \( WITH \) to do same in an English sentence. In Amuzu (2009b: 225), it is explained that the \( kple-pp \) is used in (8) because Ewe also has \( STAB \)-like verbs which allow for the Instrumental adjunct function it (this pp type) performs; in other words, there is a syntactic model parallel to the \( WITH \)-pp in Ewe. Examples of such verbs are \( lã \) ‘cut’ and \( ŋɔ \) ‘pierce’ in (10):

(10) \( Kofi \ lã/ŋɔ \ te-a \ ) \( (kple \ hɛ) \)
    Kofi cut/pierce yam-DEF (with knife)
    ‘Kofi cut/pierced the yam (with knife).’

The significance of the Composite-2 cs account of \( STAB \)'s occurrence in (8) is clearer when we consider how \( STAB \) fares in Akan-English cs, for instance. As in Ewe, the closest equivalent of \( STAB \) is the double object \( wɔ \), which like \( tɔ \), cannot project a slot for \( STAB \). But unlike Ewe, Akan does not have verbs like \( lã \) ‘cut’ and \( ŋɔ \) ‘pierce’ and Akan consequently does not have a preposition that can be used to introduce an Instrumental object like \( BREADKNIFE \) in a bilingual clause containing \( STAB \). Thus, example (8) cannot be replicated in Akan-English cs unless there is no pp with instrumental adjunct function:

(11a) \( Syd ney-nii \ baa \ ) \( bi \ ) \( STAB-o \ ne \ mp\)\( ena \ ) \( (*WITH \ BREADKNIFE) \)
    Syd ney-sg woman INDEF stab- PV 1sg_poss lover
    ‘A Sydney woman stabbed her lover.’
What Akan speakers would do if they need to express the Instrument used in carrying out the action encoded by STAB is to produce a serial verb construction. This is shown in (11b) where a handling verb (dt ‘take’) takes BREADKNIFE as its object:

(11b) Sydney-nii baa bi dt1 BREADKNIFE a-STAB2-o ne mpena no
    Sydney-sg woman indef take perf-stab-PV 1sg_poss lover DET
    ‘A Sydney woman stabbed her lover with breadknife.’

STAB may similarly enter svc with an Ewe handling verb (e.g. tsɔ ‘take’or zã ‘use’) in Ewe-English CS:

(11c) Sydney nyɔnu aɖe tsɔ1 BREADKNIFE STAB2 ḍ-e-ʃe ahiavi
    Sydney woman indef take 3sg_poss lover
    (Ewe-English)

What this comparison of Ewe-English and Akan-English cs highlights is that although English verbs may project slots in Ewe/Akan-based constructions, they may only do so if there is a syntactic model in Ewe/Akan.

The section sought to summarize previous works that have underscored the adequacy of the Composite-2 cs account, the analytic framework to be employed in section 4 to explain similarities and differences in patterns of verb distribution in Ewe-English CS and Gengbe-French CS. However, the patterns of verb distribution will be discussed thoroughly first, in the following section.

3 Presentation of the Data

In this section, we compare the distribution of English verbs in Ewe-English CS with those of French verbs in Gengbe-French CS and show that their distribution conforms to predictions of the Composite-2 cs mechanism: i.e. English and French verbs with the same transitivity value which assign the same set of thematic roles to arguments occur in slots in Ewe-based clauses where Ewe verbs with those subcategorization features occur.

A preliminary section (i.e. 3.1) is devoted to providing background information on Ewe/Gengbe verbal morphology and how it applies in mixed VPs. The distribution of English and French monotransitive verbs is discussed first, in section 3.2, and that of intransitive verbs is discussed in 3.3. The cs distribution of other lexical classes of English and French verbs (ditransitive verbs,
complex transitive verbs, prepositional verbs, phrasal predicates, and verbs that require obligatory complements) is considered in section 3.4; the distribution of verbs in bilingual serial verb constructions is not discussed in this paper as it is the exclusive subject matter of another paper, Amuzu (2013a).

3.1 **Ewe vs. Gengbe Verbal Morphology: Application in Bilingual VPs**

According to Ameka (2006: 125), Ewe "[v]erbs belong to a closed class of about 600 items". The verbs may be intransitive, monotransitive, ditransitive, or complex transitive. Ameka observes that there are no productive morphological processes for the production of new verbs and that speakers achieve maximum use of their minimum verb stock through the use of such structures as verb—verb combinations, serial verb constructions, verb-plus-clause complements, multiverb constructions (consecutive, overlapping), verb-plus-satellite constructions, among others (cf. Ameka, 2006: 125). All of the above observation is true of Gengbe too. We can add that codeswitchers use English or French verbs in a bid to increase their verb stock while speaking Ewe or Gengbe.

It is important to note right away that the category of tense—which in languages like English and French locates the time of an event expressed by a verb with reference to the moment of speaking or writing—is *not* expressed with Ewe and Gengbe verbs (Ameka, 2006; Ameka and Kropp Dakubu, 2008; Aboh and Essegbey, 2010). Consequently, tense is not expressed with English and French verbs in bilingual verb phrases in Ewe-English and Gengbe-French cs. It is aspect and modality categories that are expressed in Ewe and Gengbe. Aspect "views the event referred to by the verb with respect to inception, completion, duration, etc., and modality... states the event's relationship to truth, possibility, necessity, etc" (Johansson and Lysvåg, 1987: 116). Modality categories are expressed similarly, i.e. by similar pre-verbs, in Ewe and Gengbe. They include the potential mood marker *(l)*a, the subjunctive *(n)*a, the auxiliary te *(ŋu)* 'can', the counter-expectation marker kpɔ among others. Aspectual categories that are also expressed similarly in the two languages include the repetitive ga, the aorist, and the habitual *(n)*a. There are, however, some differences

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14 There is an exception though. There is an auxiliary pre-verb le 'be.at' in some dialects of Ewe that indicates tense (or direction) on behalf of verbs which carry either of two aspectual categories, the progressive -*m*, and the prospective *ge*. Le has two forms: le (present) and nɔ (non-present if singly-occurring and otherwise inflection-bearing form of le).

15 Verbs that are unmarked are said to be in the aorist. The interpretation of aorist in relation to English and French verbs in bilingual clauses is consistent with what Ameka (2006: 138) says is its function in Ewe. Thus, if an English/French verb in the aorist is an inchoative verb, "the aorist indicates that the change of state it [the verb] encodes has occurred before now and the post state is current; hence, it is translated as present in...
as well between the two varieties with respect to the expression of aspect. One, for example, is with respect to progressive aspect. In Ewe, the progressive is expressed as the post-verb –m but in Gengbe it is the pre-verb le (and there are also structural differences between clauses containing the two forms to be discussed in the next section). Another difference relates to the fact that Ewe has a prospective marker (the post-verb ge) which Gengbe does not have. According to Ameka and Kropp Dakubu (2008), the form la that appears in Gengbe counterparts of Ewe clauses containing ge is the potential marker that Gengbe shares with Ewe. There is also qo (INTENT), a Gengbe modal marker which normally combines with Gengbe potential la when used (see a Gengbe-French CS use of it in 25 below); it is not used in Ewe and is not found in the Ewe-English CS data either.

Given that Ewe and Gengbe share modality and aspectual forms, we shall be referring to the forms as Ewe/Gengbe (E/G) morphemes in order to constantly draw attention to why Ewe-English and Gengbe-French CS share verbal morphology. This E/G label will also be used to point out any other shared grammatical morphemes, e.g. the topic marker (l) a, which appears below in (12a-12c: Ewe-English and 14b: Gengbe-French) and the bipartite negation marker which is pronounced as me...o in (12c: Ewe-English) and as mu...o (14b and 15: Gengbe-French), and several prepositions, e.g. na (DATIVE), to be discussed later in the paper. We shall only depart from this convention of using E/G to label grammatical morphemes in Ewe and Gengbe if we intend to draw attention to a sharp difference between the two languages; this will apply, for instance, to language-unique morphemes like the Ewe prospective ge and the Gengbe modal qo (INTENT).

In bilingual clauses, the E/G modality and aspectual forms occur with English and French infinitive verbs, a pattern predicted by Myers-Scotton and Jake in some recent stipulations; Myers-Scotton and Jake (2011) stipulate quite insightfully that in intrasentential CS, it is EL infinitive verbs (not their finite counterparts) which take ML finite inflections.16 In Ewe-English CS, it is English bare infinitive forms that take the E/G modality and aspectual markers, as illustrated in (12a) where the infinitive HAVE occurs twice, in the aorist

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16 Myers-Scotton and Jake discussed this issue generally in this presentation. The article version of the presentation is due to appear in Bilingualism: Language and Cognition.
and with the potential. Inflecting the finite forms *HAS* and *HAD* is not possible.

(12a) **CHURCH** *si* **HAVE CHOIR la** *a-* **HAVE DRUMMERS hâ godo.**  
Church REL have choir TOP 3sg.POT-have drummers too by.all.means  
‘A church that *has* a choir *would have* drummers as well.’

English *TO*-infinitive verbs do occur too, but as expected they do not carry E/G finite inflections and are consequently not integrated into Ewe-based VPs. As illustrated with *TO CURB* in (12b) and *TO AVOID* in (12c), they only appear in well-formed English non-finite sub-clauses (of reason/purpose). Such clauses obligatorily end with the E/G topic marker (*l*) which indicates that they are adjuncts. These finite clauses are placed in bracket here to show that as adjuncts they are optional:

(12b) *(TO CURB THOSE THINGS la) mi iCT fia-m le BASIC SCHOOLS-wô hâ.*  
TOP 1PL teach-PROG at -PL too  
‘(To curb those things) we are teaching ICT in basic schools too.’

(12c) **Ta me susu be** *(TO AVOID THAT a) me ga tsê-é na wô o.*  
So 1sg think COMP TOP 2sg.NEGREP take-3sg give 3PL NEG  
‘So I think that *(to avoid that)* don’t give it to them.’

Let us now turn to Gengbe-French CS. Because the pronunciation of French infinitive verbs with *-ER* ending could be the same as for a number of French finite verb forms, and because several French verbs showing E/G morphology that are discussed in this paper are from this category, it is regularly not obvious that they are indeed infinitive forms. For example, *PRÊTER* ‘to lend’ (13a), which is in the aorist following E/G morphology, has the same pronunciation as its past tense form *PRÊTÉ* ‘lent’.

(13a) **Me PRÊTER ATTENTION be ye- la SUIVRE COURS o.**  
NEG-2SG lend attention COP 2SG POT follow course NEG  
‘You don’t pay attention so that you can follow the course’.

Overt evidence that the inflected French verbs in bilingual VPs are indeed infinitive comes from CS examples in which French verbs with *-RE, -IR* or *-OIR* ending occur because such verbs are pronounced differently from their finite counterparts. The *-RE* verb *SUIVRE* ‘to follow’ in (13a) above, which occurs with the E/G potential *la*, cannot be replaced by any of its finite counterparts.
That is, CONÇOIS/T, CONÇU, and CONCEV ANT.

Likewise, the infinitive REJOINDRE 'to rejoin' (13b) below cannot be replaced by any of its finite forms (e.g. REJOINDS, REJOIN, REJOIGNANT).

(13b) wo la te REJOINDRE ame-a kaba.
    2sg POT can get.back person-DET quickly
    'You can rejoin the person quickly.'

In (14), it is infinitive verb forms with -IR ending that take E/G modality and/or aspect markers. None of their finite forms—COUVRE, COUVERT and COUVRANT in the case of COUVRIR ‘to cover’ and DÉFINIS/T, DÉFINI, DÉFINISSANT in the case of DÉFINIR ‘to define, interpret’—may take an E/G finite inflection. The same thing applies to finite forms of the -OIR verb CONCEVOIR ‘to imagine’ (15), 17 which is in the aorist.

(14a) wo la va COUVRIR sr3-wo DE FAÇON be...
    2sg POT come cover spouse-2sg in a way that
    'You can cover/protect your husband in a way that....'

(14b) Nyaa, nya nga ne-bia-a, nye mu nga leke ma- DÉFINIR-e ɖo-o.
    1sg.TOP word that 2sg-ask-TOP 1sg NEG know how NEG-POT define-3sg SAT-NEG.
    'As for me, that question you have asked, I don’t know how to interpret it.'

(15) wo mu CONCEVOIR be nuɖe tsa e-la te S’ACCOMPAGNER
    3PL NEG imagine that something too 3sg-P OT can REFL.accompany
    'they don’t imagine that something else can accompany it.'

3.2 Transitive English and French verbs in bilingual clauses
The basic constituent order in transitive clauses in Ewe and Gengbe is the subject-verb-object (svo) structure. For instance, this is the structure of Ewe and Gengbe clauses in which the verb carries the habitual (as in 16a and 16b) or is in the aorist (as in 17a and 17b):

(16a) daa-nye dzra-na avo kple af5kpa
    mother-1sg sell-HAB cloth and footwear
    'My mother sells cloth and footwear.'
(16b) \( nɔ-nye \ sa-na \ avɔ \ kudo \ afɔkpa \)
    mother-1sg sell-HAB cloth and footwear
    'My mother sells cloth and footwear.'

(17a) \( daa-nye \ dzra \ avɔ \ kple \ afɔkpa \)
    mother-1sg sell cloth and footwear
    'My mother sold cloth and footwear.'

(17b) \( nɔ-nye \ sa \ avɔ \ kudo \ afɔkpa \)
    mother-1sg sell cloth and footwear
    'My mother sold cloth and footwear.'

As with Ewe vs. Gengbe, there is no structural difference between Ewe-English cs and Gengbe-French cs with respect to transitive clauses in which English and French verbs are in the aorist or carry any of the E/G grammatical morphemes, e.g. the habitual and the subjunctive. This is illustrated with examples (18a) and (18b) in which the verbs are in the aorist and with examples (19a) and (19b) in which the verbs take the E/G subjunctive. The clauses are all svo.

(18a) \( ŋusu-a \ DROGUER nyɔnu-a \)
    man-DEF drug woman-DEF
    'the man has drugged the woman.'
    (Gengbe-French: svo)

(18b) \( wo-CANCEL ɖevi-wo fe dodokpɔ \)
    3PL-cancel child-PL poss examination
    'they cancelled the children's examination.'
    (Ewe-English: svo)

(19a) \( é -dze \ be \ na- \ GÉRER \ ga \ vi-vi \ ɖesiaɖe \ ke \ ne \ kpɔ. \)
    3sg settle COMP 2sg_SUBJV manage money REDU-small every REL 2sg see
    'you have to manage every little sums of money you get.'
    (Gengbe-French: SVO)

(19b) \( gake ɖevi-wo ŋutɔ na- HANDLE-e \)
    but child-PL self SUBJV-handle-3sg
    'but the children should handle it themselves.'
    (Ewe-English: SVO)

There are, however, some morphosyntactic distinctions between Ewe and Gengbe, and one such distinction has to do with clauses in which progressive aspect has been expressed. In Gengbe (see Ameka and Kropp Dakubu 2008: 249), the uniquely-Gengbe progressive \( le \) occurs as an auxiliary in the default
clause structure [S Aux VO Other]18, which is illustrated in (20a) where the transitive verb kplɔ̀ ‘sweep’ occurs:

(20a) Aku  le  kplɔ̀  xɔ  la  me  nuuife  (Gengbe: [S Aux VO Other])  
A. PROG sweep building DEF INSIDE well  
‘Aku is sweeping the room carefully.’

A different kind of structure is used in Ewe. In Anlo, the variety of Ewe that is involved in much of the Ewe-English cs recordings, the verb kplɔ̀ ‘sweep’ and its internal argument xɔ la me ‘the room’ would have been nominalised by permutation and the resulting nominalised VP selected by the progressive aspect marker –m, as in:

(20b) Aku  {xɔ-a  me  kplɔ̀-m}  nuuie  (Anlo: [S AspP Other])  
A. building-DEF INSIDE sweep-PROG well  
‘Aku {is sweeping the room} carefully.’

Ameka and Kropp Dakubu (2008) refer to the unit which comprises the nominalised VP and the aspect marker, as “Aspect Phrase”; it is what we have marked off in (20b) above with a curly bracket. They depict the clause containing this Aspect Phrase as having an [S AspP Other] structure. The Anlo structure in (20b) is, in fact, without the verb le ‘be.at’ that one finds preceding an AspP in similar clauses in Inland varieties of Ewe: see example (20c). (The progressive is marked on verbs by only high tone in the Inland varieties.)

(20c) Aku  {le  xɔ-a  me  kplɔ̀}  nuuie  (Inland Ewe: [S V AspP Other])  
A. be.at:PRES building-DEF INSIDE sweep-PROG well  
‘Aku {is sweeping the room} carefully.’19

18 Where ‘Other’ may be another Object, an Object Complement, or an Adjunct (e.g. nuuife/nuuie ‘well’ in 20a and 20b respectively).

19 Ameka and Kropp Dakubu (2008: 250) observe that the [S V AspP Other] structure is actually used in Gengbe as well, where an aspectual particle ɔ expresses the progressive. They illustrate this structure with (21d) but note that it is rarely used:

Mu le   nu ɗu ɔ  
1sg be.at:PRES thing eat PRT  
‘I am eating.’ (Ameka and Kropp Dakubu 2008: 250)  
Not surprisingly, I have not seen it attested in my data.
In addition to the above morphosyntactic distinction between (varieties of) Ewe and Gengbe, there is another distinction which has to do with the fact that Ewe has a prospective aspect marker (the post-verb ge) whose near-equivalent in Gengbe (cf. Ameka and Kropp Dakubu 2008: 249) is the E/G potential la. Ewe clauses with the prospective –m aspect have the [S (V) AspP Other] structure (as illustrated in 21a below) while in Gengbe the regular [S Aux V O Other] structure is used with the potential la in auxiliary position (as illustrated in 21b).

\[(21a)\] Aku \{xɔ-a me kplɔ-ge\} nyuie
\[\text{A. building-DEF INSIDE sweep-PROSP well}\]
\[\text{‘Aku will sweep the room carefully.’}\]

\[(21a)\] Aku la kplɔ xɔ la me nyuîde
\[\text{A. POT sweep building DEF INSIDE well}\]
\[\text{‘Aku is sweeping the room carefully.’}\]

These morphosyntactic differences between Ewe and Gengbe differentiate Ewe-English cs from Gengbe-French cs. For example, whereas it is the Ewe=Anlo [S AspP Other] structure that is used in bilingual transitive clauses that express either the progressive or the prospective in Ewe=Anlo-English cs, it is the Gengbe [S Aux V O Other] structure that is used in Gengbe-French counterpart (=potential) clauses. This contrast is demonstrated in (22a and 22b) vs. (23a and 23b):

\[(22a)\] Margaret be \{wó {SIX MONTH OLD BABY-wo RAPE-m}.\] (Anlo-English: [S AspP])
Margaret say 3PL -PL rape-PROG
\[\text{‘According to Margaret, [they are raping six month olds].’}\]

\[(22b)\] é \{ame ade-wo AFFECT-ge\} (Anlo-English: [S AspP])
3sg person INDEF-PL affect-PROSP
\[\text{‘it will affect some people.’}\]

\[(23a)\] é le POSER PROBLEM (Gengbe-French: [S aux VO])
3sg PROG pose problem
\[\text{‘it poses a problem.’}\]

\[(23b)\] éfe nudodo la te ATTIRER ŋusu-wo (Gengbe-French: [S aux VO])
3sg-poss dressing POT can attract man-PL
\[\text{‘her mode of dressing may attract men, but…’}\]
True transitive English and French verbs behave like STAB in example (8) above in that they permit an optional element, an adverbial adjunct, to express certain auxiliary information about their predicate-argument structure. In the case of STAB, as observed, the optional element is a prepositional phrase that encodes information about the instrument used. That is, the preposition kple ‘with’ introduces an Instrumental object, and the kple–pp goes on to function as an Instrumental adjunct. In the case of SPEND (24a) below, the allative qe ‘to, toward’ introduces an optional Goal object and in the case of RUN (24b), the dative ná ‘to, for’ introduces an optional Beneficiary object.

(24a) ne wó SPEND qa qe wó ŋutsi a...
    if 3PL spend money ALL 3PL skin TOP
    ‘if they spend money on them...’

(24b) ye RUN-na PETTY ERRAND ma-wo na mi
    3sg_FOC run-HAB petty errand DEM-PL DAT 1PL
    ‘it is he who runs all those petty errands for us.’

Similar patterns obtain in Gengbe-French: kple is appropriately used in (25) to introduce the Instrumental adjunct for PROTÉGER ‘protect’ just as ná is used to introduce a Dative adjunct for both DÉFINIR ‘define’ in (26a) and ÉCRIRE ‘to write’ in (26b):

(25) ne e-hiã wo qo la PROTÉGER srɔ̃-wo kple bo
    if 3sg-need 2sg INTENT POT protect spouse-2sg with sorcery
    ‘if it becomes necessary, you have to protect your husband with sorcery.’

(26a) nye ma te DÉFINIR l5l5 na wo o.
    1sg NEG_POT can define love DAT 2sg NEG
    ‘I can’t define love for you.’

(26b) ye ÉCRIRE-na agbalɛ na efetɔ.
    3sg.FOC write-HAB book DAT 3sg.master
    ‘It is he who writes for/to his master.’

It is instructive to note that some English and French verbs occur in slots which match the ones in which their Ewe and Gengbe counterparts occur whereas others do not. SPEND (24a) and ÉCRIRE ‘to write’ (26b) are examples of English
and French verbs respectively whose slots match those in which their Ewe or Gengbe counterparts occur: ű̀ (27a) may replace SPEND and ŋlɔ (27b) may replace ÉCRIRE.

(27a) ne wó ű̀ ga ḍe wó ŋutsì a...
if 3PL spend money ALL 3PL skin TOP
‘if they spend money on them...’

(27b) ye ŋl5-na agbalè na efeto.
3sg.FOC write-HAB book DAT 3sg.master
‘It is he who writes for/to his master.’

However, the cs verb-slots of many English/French verbs do not match the slots of their Ewe/Gengbe equivalents, which are multiword expressions. Among these verbs are BELIEVE in (28a), whose equivalent is the verb-verb compound xɔ se ‘get hear’ in (28b). Although the slot of BELIEVE matches that of xɔ ‘get’, the two slots are not compatible because xɔ is in collocation with se in (28b) and BELIEVE cannot collocate with se. In addition, notice that the object of xɔ is followed by a mandatory postposition dzi ‘top of’, which is absent in (28a):

(28a) nye me BELIEVE-na nu ya-wo tɔgbui o
1sg NEG believe-HAB thing this-PL type NEG
‘I don’t believe this kind of things.’

(28b) nye me xɔ-na nu ya-wo tɔgbui *(dzi) se-na o
1sg NEG get-HAB thing this-PL type TOP hear-HAB NEG
‘I don’t believe this kind of things.’

Similarly, the Gengbe equivalent of the French verb ATTIRER ‘to attract’ (23b) is not a single-word verb that may occur in its verb-slot; rather its Gengbe equivalent is the long multiword construction trɔ Xje ṣku ḍe Yŋu “turn X’s eye toward Y’s skin” as used in (28c) below:

(28c) [e-je ṣu-wo je ṣku ḍe e-ŋu], ṣe a...
3sg-poss dressing POT can turn man-PL poss eye ALL 3sg-skin but TOP
‘[her mode of dressing may attract men]...’

That English and French verbs in bilingual VPs do not have to occur in the same slots as their semantic equivalents in Ewe and Gengbe, is a crucial
theoretical issue in the debate on whether it is the Composite-2 CS account or the Classic CS account which best explains the verbs’ distribution. We shall turn to that debate in section 4.

3.3 **Intransitive English and French Verbs in Bilingual Clauses**

English and French verbs used intransitively in bilingual clauses may be placed in four categories: ambitransitive verbs, ergative verbs, unergative verbs, and unaccusative verbs.

Ambitransitive verbs used intransitively are in fact true transitive verbs whose object is ellipted. The ellipted object is normally recoverable either from the previous clause or from the discourse context. The object of **FORCE** (29a), i.e. *nyi* ‘cow’, is recoverable from the first clause, but the object of **PASS** (29b) and that of **RESPECTER** ‘to respect’ (29c), are deducible from the topic under discussion (an ellipted topic is placed in bracket in the translations):

(29a) wó be na-te a-kplɔ nyi a-ko yi ts to lo gake
3PL say 2sg_SUBJV-can POT-escort cow POT-take go river edge EMPH but
me FORCE-ge be ne no tsi o.
2sg_NEG force-PROSP COMP 2sg drink water NEG
‘they say you may take a cow to the river but you can’t force [it] to drink water.’

(29b) ᱞevi-wo me tɛŋu PASS o
Child-DEF NEG can pass NEG
‘the children did not pass [the examination].’

(29c) [Funu ne mu va le RESPECTER o a] é la nyi PROBLÈME
there if 3sg.NEG ITIVE PROG respect NEG TOP 3sg POT COP problem
‘There, if she does not respect [the spouse], then it becomes a problem.’

There are two other interrelated classes of French verbs which are ambitransitive. These are reflexive/pronominal verbs and reciprocal verbs. They are introduced by the clitic particle *se*, which evolved from the reflexive pronoun *se*. While the presence of *se* with a verb may signal that an Agent, expressed by the subject, performs an action on itself (i.e. the action is reflexive, as in 30a), its presence with a verb may signal that multiple Agents perform a mutual action on one another (i.e. the action is reciprocal, as in 30b):
(30a) mi te se PRESENTER wo a-xlê se-wo na mì 2PL can REFL present 3PL POT-read rule-PL DATV 2PL
‘you may present yourselves [to the authorities] for them to read the rules to you.’

(30b) wó ðe srõ kpo-a ñkeke eve etɔ kpo-a wó SE SÉPARER 3PL redeem spouse only-TOP day two three only-TOP 3PL REFL separate
‘they get married for a couple of days then they separate [from each other].’

English has similar reflexive/reciprocal uses of ambitransitive verbs, but they do not occur along with a particle like se. An example is SHAVE in (31):

(31) nye YOUNGER BROTHERS-wo katã [wó SHAVE-na] gake...
1sg PL all 3PL shave – HAB but
‘All my younger brothers shave but...’ (Amuzu 1998:72)

English verbs in the second category are ergative verbs. Like the ambitransitive verbs, they are truly transitive but differ in that they assign the role of Patient to their subject. Because the subject of such a verb is not an Agent, it is not seen as being responsible for the action attributed to it. The English verb CRACK is an example of this type of verbs:

(32) ...sigbeðo SEPTIC TANK-a hâ CRACK.
not.knowing -DEF too crack
‘...not knowing that the septic tank has also cracked.’

French verbs in this category are pseudo-reflexive verbs. They are called pseudo-reflexive verbs because they are signalled like reflexive and pronominal verbs although they do not have reflexive meaning:

(33) é-be afɔ SE CASSER ta mu dza fo bɔlu-a egbe o
3sg-poss foot REFL break so 3sg_NEG POT play ball-DEF today NEG
‘his foot broke so he won’t play football today.’

English and French verbs in the third category, unergative verbs, are true intransitive verbs. They assign the thematic role of Agent to their subject. PRETEND (English) and MARCHER ‘to operate’ (French) illustrate this type in (34a) and (34b) respectively:
(34a) *nyɔnu-wo PRETEND-na paa*
woman-PL pretent-HAB exceedingly
‘women pretend very much.’

(34b) *sukulu-* a ŋutɔ be RESTAURANT mu gba le MARCHER o*
school-DEF self poss restaurant NEG REP PROG operate NEG
‘the school’s own restaurant is no longer operating.’

Verbs in the last category, unaccusative verbs, are also true intransitive verbs. However, unlike unergative verbs, they assign the thematic role of Patient to their subject. Examples are the English verb *ROT* (35a) and the French pseudo-reflexive verb *SE REPENTIR* ‘to repent’ (35b):

(35a) *kaka wó a-kpɔ-e a, ye ame-a ROT kenkenken.*
by.the.time 3PL POT-see-3sg TOP 3sg_FOC person-DEF rot completely
‘by the time they found him, he [i.e. his body] was rotten completely.’

(35b) *wo-kpɔ-e bena ne ye SE REPENTIR la...*
2sg-see-3sg COMP if LOGO REFL repent TOP
‘you see that if you repent (of your sins)...’

It is instructive to note that like their transitive counterparts the intransitive English and French verbs may or may not occur in slots that correspond to those in which their Ewe equivalents occur. For instance, the Ewe verb *vo* may replace *ROT* in (35a) just as the Gengbe idiomatic expression *trɔ dzime* ‘turn one’s back’ may replace *SE REPENTIR* “to repent of one’s sins” in (35b). However, the equivalent of *PRETEND* (34a), i.e. *wɔ aye* ‘do trick’ (36), is a verb-object expression.

(36) *nyɔnu-wo wo-na aye paa*
woman-PL do-HAB trick exceedingly
‘women pretend very much.’

The same picture emerges with the distribution of *de asi aghalẽ te* ‘put hand under book/paper’(37b), the equivalent of *SIGNER* ‘to sign’ (37a):

(37a) *é-dze be mi a-SIGNER é le ÉTAT gho hafi....*
3sg-settle COMP 2PL POT-sign 3sg at state SIDE before
‘you have to sign it at the state (institution concerned) before...’

20 *Aghalẽ ‘book/paper’ has been pronominalized as é ‘it’ in (37a) and (37b).*
3.4 Other Categories of English and French Verbs in the Bilingual Clauses

Other categories of, especially English, and also French, verbs occur in bilingual clauses. They include ditransitive verbs, complex transitive verbs, prepositional verbs, phrasal predicates, and verbs that require obligatory complements. They are taken in turn in the following sub-sections.

3.4.1 Ditransitive Verbs

Ditransitive verbs (verbs with two internal object arguments) are attested in the Ewe-English cs data but not in the Gengbe-French cs data; they are missing from the Gengbe-French cs data simply because French as a Romance language does not have double object verbs. The English ditransitive verbs appear in bilingual [svoo] clauses, i.e. their indirect object always comes before their direct object as shown in (38) where the direct object is the second object, SO MUCH LIBERTY:

(38) ne e GRANT srɔ̃-wo SO MUCH LIBERTY la...
      if 2sg grant spouse-2sg TOP
      ‘if you grant your spouse so much liberty...

Ewe has two ditransitive structures, the [SVOiOd] structure in (39a) and the [SVOdOi] structure in (39b):

(39a) Ama na Kofi nu tɔxe aɖe  (39b) Ama na nu txɛ aɖɛ Kofi
      Ama give K. thing special INDEF Ama give thing special INDEF Kofi
      ‘Ama gave Kofi something special.’ ‘Ama gave something special to
      [SVOiOd] Kofi.’ [SVOdOi]

Incidentally, English verbs are used in only the [SVOiOd] structure, and the probable reason for this is that it corresponds to the basic structure of English ditransitive clauses. It is possible that the English verbs do not participate in the [SVOdOi] structure because this distribution pattern is not characteristic of their English-origin subcategorization; in English the dative preposition TO is needed to introduce the indirect object/Oi that occurs as the second object.

It needs to be observed, however, that the [SVOiOd] structure is used only when the progressive or the prospective is not expressed with the English verb.
When either of these aspctual categories is expressed, the Ewe [S(V)AspP Other] structure observed in examples (20)—(22) above is used instead. Thus, note that inside the AspP shown in curly bracket in (40) below, the direct object of the English verb *OFFER* (i.e. *POSITION ma*) precedes the verb and the indirect object *BLACK MAN* occurs as ‘Other’ in the clause structure. The verb *le ‘be. at:PRES’* that would have expressed the V in the [S(V)AspP Other] structure is missing in (40) because it is routinely dropped in Anlo, the variety involved.

(40) \[ \text{ame ma-wo a, [wo me \{ POSITION ma OFFER-gé BLACK MAN\} o]} \]
\[ \text{person DEM-PL TP 3PL NEG position-DEM offer-PROSP black man NEG} \]
\[ \text{‘those people, [they won’t offer that position to a black man].’} \]

3.4.2 English Complex Transitive Verbs
Like ditransitive verbs, complex transitive verbs are three-place verbs. But unlike ditransitive verbs they do not take two objects. They take a direct object and a complement of the object. They therefore occur in an SVOC structure. Specifically, the complex transitive verb is a change-of-state verb whose object—to which it assigns the thematic role of Patient—undergoes a change of state. The object complement expresses the result or current state of the object. As with ditransitive verbs, complex transitive verbs appear only in the Ewe-English Cs data. The SVOC structure is illustrated in (41a). The monolingual example in (41b) shows that this structure exists in Ewe and arguably serves as the syntactic model for *CONFIRM* in (41a).

(41a) \[ \text{wó va CONFIRM Mr. Abledu AS THE SUBSTANTIVE HEAD.} \]
\[ \text{3PL come confirm} \]
\[ \text{‘they have (finally) confirmed Mr. Abledu as the substantive head.’} \]

(41b) \[ \text{Ama kpɔ srɔ-a gatɔ-e} \]
\[ \text{Ama see spouse-DEF money-owner-ADV} \]
\[ \text{‘Ama saw her husband as a rich person.’ (Amuzu, 1993: 61)} \]

However, in tune with the pattern explained elsewhere in connection with transitive verbs carrying the progressive or the prospective (see the discussion of examples 20–22 and 40), the verb *ORDAIN* distributes differently in (41c). It is preceded by its object NP *wo* (2sg) inside what we have, following Ameka and Kropp Dakubu (2008), called “Aspect Phrase” (i.e. the unit in the curly bracket below).

\[ \]
These prepositions are different from the ones we discussed in section 3.2. Those prepositions are content morphemes, because it is they, not the verbs, which assign thematic role to the object they introduce. The prepositions we are about to discuss are late system morphemes whose function is to case-mark the object of their verb in order to clarify the thematic role that the verbs assign to the object.

3.4.3. English and French Prepositional Verbs

Prepositional verbs consist of a transitive verb and a preposition closely associated with the verb which case-marks the verb’s object. This verb type is attested in both data sets. When English and French prepositional verbs occur in bilingual clauses, their object is introduced by the Ewe equivalent preposition instead of the English/French preposition with which it is associated. This is the case in the following examples:

\[(42a)\]  
\`é DEPEND qe INDIVIDUAL a ŋutɔ dzi\`  
3sg-depend on DEF self TOP  
‘it depends on the individual himself/herself.’ (Ewe-English)

\[(42b)\]  
\`é- dze be na COOPERATE kple srɔ-wo. THAT IS THE ONLY WAY.\`  
1sg-settle COMP 2sg.SUBJV cooperate with spouse-2sg.  
‘you have to cooperate with your spouse. That is the only way.’ (Ewe-English)

\[(42c)\]  
enya ke wo le gbbɔ a, e le BASER do ÉDUCATION dzi\`  
word which 2sg PROG say TOP 2sg PROG base ALL education TOP  
‘what you are saying, you are basing it on (level of) education.’ (Gengbe-French)

\[(42d)\]  
nya PERSONNELLEMENT ne ma-OPTER a,  
1sg_TOP personally if 1sg_POT-opt TOP  
ma-OPTER na MONOGAMIE  
1sg_POT-opt DAT monogamy  
‘as for me, personally if I have to choose, I will opt for monogamy.’ (Gengbe-French)

However, we find in Ewe-English cs (and this may apply to Gengbe-French cs as well, although there are no examples of it in the data) that when

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22 These prepositions are different from the ones we discussed in section 3.2. Those prepositions are content morphemes, because it is they, not the verbs, which assign thematic role to the object they introduce. The prepositions we are about to discuss are late system morphemes whose function is to case-mark the object of their verb in order to clarify the thematic role that the verbs assign to the object.
the entire object NP is in English, then the object may be introduced by the English case-marking preposition associated with the verb, as with ON in:

\[(43)\]  
\[
\text{nu ma-wo katå DEPEND-na \ ON THE TRAINING \ THE TEACHER RECEIVES} \\
\text{thing DEM-PL all \ depend-HAB on...} \\
\text{AT COLLEGE} \\
\text{‘all those things depend on the training the teacher receives at college.’}
\]

3.4.4 English and French Phrasal Predicates/Lexicalized Expressions

There is a wide range of types of English and French phrasal predicates/lexicalized expressions in bilingual clauses. They include intransitive verb-plus-preposition constructions (e.g. \text{MOVE FORWARD} in 44), and verb—noun collocations (e.g. \text{POSER PROBLÈME} ‘pose problem’ in 23a above, \text{REGULATE ACTIVITIES} in 45a and \text{RÉSOUDRE PROBLÈME} ‘solve problem’ in 45b), some of which are newly coined (e.g. \text{DELETE MESSAGE} in 45c):

\[(44)\]  
\[
\text{nuyike hiå no wo-e bena mì a-MOVE FORWARD.} \\
\text{what necessary 3PL.SUBJ do-3sg so that 1PL POT-move forward} \\
\text{‘what is necessary, they should do it so that we move forward.’}
\]

\[(45a)\]  
\[
\text{é dze be wó a-REGULATE wó fe ACTIVITIES-wo.} \\
\text{3sg-settle COMP 3PL POT-regulate 3PL-poss activities-PL} \\
\text{‘it is in order that they regulate their activities.’}
\]

\[(45b)\]  
\[
\text{wo kpɔ be ye tsa a-ta RÉSOUDRE PROBLÈME a?} \\
\text{2sg see COMP 1sg too POT-can solve problem Q} \\
\text{‘you see that this can also solve the problem?’}
\]

\[(45c)\]  
\[
\text{ame-a a-ta HAVE EASY ACCESS TO yi be PHONE ta} \\
\text{Person-DEF POT-can 3sg poss phone so} \\
\text{é-DELETE MESSAGE-a.} \\
\text{3sg -DEF} \\
\text{‘the person can have access to her phone so she deleted the message.’}
\]

Some others involve longer expressions, e.g. \text{HAVE ACCESS TO...} (45c) above and \text{PUT ... IN PLACE} (46):

\[(46)\]  
\[
\text{ɖeko wo dze be wó a-PUT SOME MECHANISM IN PLACE} \\
\text{only 3sg settle COMP 3PL POT-put...} \\
\text{‘they only have to put some mechanisms in place.’}
\]
It is not uncommon in both Ewe-English and Gengbe-French cs to find partial translations of such expressions into the local language. This is the case respectively with yi ɖe RETIREMENT (from go on retirement) and wɔ RECHERCHE (from faire de la recherche ‘to do research’):

(47a) vɔ TEACHER ya fia nu FOR THIRTY YEARS, ne yi ɖe RETIREMENT a yet teacher REL teach thing if_3sg go on TOP ‘however, this teacher who taught for thirty years, if he/she goes on retirement…’

(47b) wó qa la wɔ RECHERCHE vɔ-a internet me li o. 3PL should POT do research yet-TOP internet NEG exist NEG ‘they ought to do research but there is no internet (connectivity).’

3.5 **Verbs Requiring Obligatory Adverbial Complements**

Certain verbs (e.g. caused motion verbs like TO PLACE) require an obligatory adverbial complement and thus occur in an SVOA structure. The adverbial complement is ‘obligatorily tied to the verb in the Predicator in much the same way as the obligatory object of a two-place verb’ (Enkvist, 1976: 54, cited in Johansson and Lysvåd, 1987: 230). The deletion of this adverbial would render the sentence ungrammatical and meaningless. In the Ewe-English cs example below, the adverbial complement may not be deleted:

(48a) Fifia ya la, Blackstar PLACE mi FIRMLY *(ON THE MAP OF WORLD SOCCER). Now EMPH TOP, Blackstars place 1PL ‘now the Blackstars have placed us firmly on the map of world soccer.’

Of course, Ewe has the syntactic model for this mixed construction type, i.e. in the distribution of verbs like da ‘to put, to place’ and zyiɔ ‘to lean’. Consider da in (48b):

(48b) Kofi da atukpa *(ɖe kplɔ-a dzi) Kofi put bottle on table-DEF TOP ‘Kofi put (the) bottle on the table.’

4 **Theoretical Discussion**

4.1 **Summary of Verb Distribution Patterns**

In section 3, we explored bilingual clauses in which English and French verbs occur and it is evident that the verbs consistently occur with E/G (i.e. Ewe/
Gengbe) grammatical morphemes; e.g. aspectual markers (e.g. the progressive, the prospective, and the habitual) as well as modality markers (e.g. the potential, the subjunctive, and the auxiliary *te ŋu* ‘can’). Even unmarked English/French verbs are interpreted consistently as being in the aorist in accordance with E/G morphology (see e.g. 12 and 15), a morphological feature found in neither English nor French. It is also the E/G bipartite negation marker *me/mu*…o that is used consistently in the bilingual clauses (e.g. 13a, 14b, and 15) just as it is E/G case-marking prepositions that are used to introduce the object of English/French prepositional verbs (see e.g. 42a-d in section 3.4.3). All these trends are anticipated in the system morpheme principle (SMP) of the MLF model—recall that it anticipates that only Ewe or Gengbe late system/grammatical morphemes may be used in the mixed VPs by the composite ML hypothesis described in section 2.1.

However, a question has to be asked concerning why the reflexive particle *SE*, for instance, is found with at least five French verbs in the data discussed in section 3 (see 15, 30a, 30b, 33, and 35b). The answer is that *SE* is an early system morpheme that has a semantic rather than grammatical connection to its verb. For example, it is *SE* which makes lexical distinction between *SE SOUMETTRE* in (49a) and *SOUMETTRE* in (49b). While the former means ‘to submit/subject oneself to someone’, the latter means ‘to subdue/subjugate someone’:

\[
\begin{align*}
(49a) \quad & mî \ gba \ le \ dzi \ la \ SE \ SOUMETTRE \ na \ mia \ be \ PARENTS-wo \ o \\
& 1PL \ REP \ PROG \ want \ POT \ submit \ to \ 1PL \ poss \ parents-PL \ NEG \\
& ‘we no longer want to submit to our parents.’
\end{align*}
\]
\[
\begin{align*}
(49b) \quad & mî \ gba \ le \ dzi1 \ SOUMETTRE2 \ (*na) \ mia \ be \ PARENTS-wo \ o \\
& 1PL \ REP \ PROG \ want \ POT \ subjugate \ to \ 1PL \ poss \ parents-PL \ NEG \\
& ‘we no longer want to subjugate our parents.’
\end{align*}
\]

Note that because aspectual markers and case-marking prepositions are late system morphemes, they are expressed in (49a) using E/G morphemes; *la* (Gengbe: potential) occurs with *SE SOUMETTRE* while *na* (dative) introduces the Recipient object *mia be PARENTS-wo* ‘our parents’. The potential is duly present in (49b) but the dative is unacceptable there, and the reason is that *SOUMETTRE* assigns the thematic role of Patient, not Recipient, to its object (no case-marking is required on a Patient object).

Let us now turn to morpheme/constituent order in the bilingual clauses. The E/G aspectual and modality markers occur with English/French verbs as they would if they occur with E/G verbs. Regarding constituent order, it is E/G
morphosyntactic procedures that prevail in the bilingual clauses. As in the Anlo variety of Ewe, which is what is in contact with English is the Ghana data, the object of an English transitive verb marked with progressive/prospective aspect is placed before it (instead of after it) in what has been called Aspect Phrase (cf. Ameka and Kropp Dakubu 2008). We saw this pattern in monotransitive clauses (e.g. 22a and 22b), in ditransitive clauses (e.g. 40), and in complex transitive clauses (e.g. 41c). As expected, we did not see evidence of the permutation of the verb and its object argument in Gengbe-French cs because it does not apply in Gengbe, the language in contact with French in Lome, Togo: see, for instance, (23a) and (23b).

4.2 Why the Composite-2 cs Account is More Appropriate for Ewe-English and Gengbe-French cs than the Classic cs Account

A Classic cs account (see sections 2.1 and 2.2) of Ewe-English and Gengbe-French verbal predication would be that the cs slot of each fully integrated English/French verb is projected for it by its Ewe/Gengbe equivalent. This seems to be the case with the following verbs which share verb-slot with their Ewe/Gengbe equivalents:

- **Spend** (24a), which occurs where ɔ̀ to use/spend’ may occur
- **Écrire** ‘to write’, which occurs in (26b) where ɲɔ (27b) occurs
- **Respecter** ‘to respect’ (29a), which occurs where bu ‘to respect’ may occur
- **Se Casser** ‘to be broken’ (33), which occurs where ɲé ‘to break/be broken’ may occur.
- **Rot** (35a), which occurs where vo ‘to rot’ may occur

However, we have also seen cases where the cs verb-slots of many English/French verbs cannot be associated with the slots in which their Ewe/Gengbe equivalents, which are multiword expressions, occur. Among the verbs we discussed are

- **Stab** (8), a monotransitive verb whose Ewe equivalent tɔ (9) is an inherent complement verb which takes two objects
- **Believe** (28a) whose Ewe equivalent is the verb—verb compound xɔ se ‘get hear’ (28b) that distribute differently
- **Attrire** ‘to attract’ (23b), the Ewe equivalent of which is not a single-word verb that may occur in its verb-slot but rather the long multiword construction ọrẹ amewo ẹ Luká ły X ɲyu “turn people’s eye toward X’s skin” (28c).
- **Pretend** (34a) whose Ewe equivalent is wʊ eye ‘do trick’ (36)
- **Signer** ‘to sign’ (37a) whose Gengbe equivalent is de asi agbalé te ‘put hand under book’ (37b)
Obviously, the Ewe/Gengbe equivalents of such English and French verbs cannot be credited for projecting the cs verb-slots, and it is therefore argued that these verbs in particular constitute a problem for the Classic cs account.

That problem does not apply to the Composite-2 cs account. As soon as Ewe-English and Gengbe-French cs are seen as cases of Composite-2 cs, English and French verbs are no longer expected to occur in verb-slots projected for them by their Ewe and Gengbe equivalents. Each English and French verb, irrespective of the distribution of its Ewe or Gengbe equivalent, should be expected to project its own slot on the basis of its English/French-origin lemma information, i.e. on the basis of information about its transitivity value, its thematic role-assigning properties, and its case-marking requirements (if any). In other words, each English and French verb should be expected to occur in verb-slots where Ewe/Gengbe verbs with their transitivity value, thematic role-assigning properties, and case-marking requirements occur. For instance, although the Ewe equivalent of the English verb *PRETEND* (34a) and the Gengbe equivalent of the French verb *SIGNER* ‘to sign’ (37a) are multiverb constructions which have no bearing on their distribution, they are treated as if they belong to the class of Ewe and Gengbe transitive verbs which share their respective subcategorization features.

5 Concluding Remarks

As mentioned previously, although quite a number of local (West African) languages are in contact with English and French, no previous study has appeared in which cs involving a local language and English is compared to cs involving that local language and French. The primary significance of this paper therefore lies in the novel comparison it makes of grammatical outcomes of the cs contact of English and French each with one of two closely related lects of the Gbe language cluster, Ewe and Gengbe. It is, indeed, hoped that the study will spark investigations into various scenarios involving a cross-border language in contact with two different European languages, e.g. Yoruba-French in Benin compared to Yoruba-English in Nigeria; Hausa-English in Nigeria compared to Hausa-French in Niger, Akan-English in Ghana compared to Akan-French in Côte d’Ivoire, etc.

The previous comparative studies have focused on the independent intrasentential cs contact of either English or French with several typologically-different local languages. Given this limitation, they tended to trace cross-linguistic cs variations to variations among the local languages and to explained the similarities in terms of similarities among the local languages. The current study affirmed such correlations. It is clear that:
(i) Ewe and Gengbe play pertinent roles as the primary languages of CS grammar in Ewe-English and Gengbe-French CS respectively.

(ii) The striking similarities that exists between the two cases of CS are traceable to the similarities between the two languages, which, as noted, are closely related lects of Gbe.

(iii) Notable differences between the two cases of CS—e.g. constituent order in transitive clauses with progressive aspect—are attributable to differences between Ewe and Gengbe.

However, the study went further than these findings. It is now clear (in ways that previous studies could not show) that English and French also play very sensitive roles in determining the CS slots in which their verbs occur. English and French actually point to which Ewe/Gengbe grammatical structures their verbs may enter and to which ones they may not enter. This was demonstrated, for example, in the fact that bilingual double object constructions are missing in Gengbe-French CS but are present in Ewe-English CS; as noted, French does not have double object verbs while English has them. Also, although there are two ditransitive clause patterns in Ewe (i.e. [SVOiOd] shown in 39a and [SVOdOi] shown in 39b) it is only the [SVOiOd] structure that is attested in Ewe-English CS (see example 40); as explained, the English verbs do not participate in the [SVOdOi] structure because this distribution pattern is not characteristic of their English-origin subcategorization, which typically includes a requirement for the dative preposition to introduce the Oi that occurs as the second object. We also saw in e.g. (49a) vs. (49b) that whether an Ewe/Gengbe case-marking preposition appears in a bilingual VP or not depends directly on the lemma information about the English/French verb that occurs in that VP.

An important theoretical claim is made in the paper (i.e. in view of the contributions that Ewe/Gengbe and English/French make toward the determination of slots for English and French verbs in bilingual clauses) that Ewe-English and Gengbe-French are cases of Composite-2 CS instead of the Classic CS that one would have expected them to be following stipulations in Myers-Scotton (1993, 2002). In other words, the CS patterns are illustrative of the kind of CS discussed in Amuzu (2005a, 2010, and in print) by which abstract grammatical information from one language about content morpheme from that language—here English/French—is consistently mapped onto surface structure through the grammatical resources of another language, here Ewe/Gengbe. One foresees this to be the kind of process that underpins CS involving other local languages and each of these colonial languages.
Acknowledgement

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List of grammatical abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aFOC = comp</td>
<td>Argument focus</td>
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<td>afoc = def</td>
<td>Complementizer</td>
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<td>NEG = def</td>
<td>Negative</td>
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<td>Third-Persons.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(*x) = indef</td>
<td>unacceptable if x included</td>
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References


