



Topic: **Ghanaian Language Perception among Students Offering Akan Language at CoDEL, UEW, Techiman Campus.**

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**Abstract**

Language learning is premised in attitude or motivation that triggers interest in intrinsic and extrinsic motivation which translates into a learner's perception towards that language. Language learning performance is enshrined with learner's world view of such language. Ghana language policy embraced by Ghana Education Service takes cognizance of Ghanaian language learning from early grade to lower primary as a medium of instruction and switch to English then Ghanaian language as a course of study from upper primary. This is because Ghana is dominated with indigenous languages. Hence Ghanaian languages are read as a program in some traditional universities in Ghana to boost its development. With all these efforts, it is observed from Ghanaian language classrooms that students have diverse perception towards Ghanaian language study. The paper aims at investigating Ghanaian language perception among students of Akan language at CoDEL, University of Education, Winneba. The study adopted mixed method as an approach targeting 190 students offering Akan language as a course at CoDEL, UEW, Techiman Campus as sample size for the study. Both close ended and open-ended questionnaires were used as data collection instruments to gather data for the study. The study concluded that greater percentile of the students offering Akan language have positive perception toward the language, because they feel Akan language has lot of advantages even though there are challenges associated with the study of Akan language at the tertiary level.

**Keywords:** *Ghanaian language, Akan language, language perception, language ideology, motivation*

## **Introduction**

Language plays a vital role in shaping identities, cultures, and social interactions. In Ghana, the richness of its linguistic diversity is marked by a variety of languages spoken by its different ethnic groups. Among these languages, Akan a language under Kwa language groupings, stands out as one of the most widely spoken languages in Ghana (Abakah, 2016). It is spoken predominantly in the southern and central regions of the country and serves as an important tool for communication, cultural expression, and education. In the context of the nation's educational system, particularly at the College of Distance Education (CoDEL), the study of the Akan language has emerged as a critical subject, aimed at fostering the understanding and preservation of the language, culture, and traditions of the Akan-speaking people.

Despite the significant role that Akan plays in the daily lives of many Ghanaians, there is a noticeable gap in the academic literature on how students perceive the language, especially in formal educational settings like CoDEL. Perception in this context refers to the attitudes, beliefs, and values students hold about the language, as well as the broader societal and cultural implications these perceptions may have on language learning and use. Given that language perception can influence language acquisition, retention, and proficiency, understanding students' perceptions of Akan is crucial for enhancing language instruction and promoting greater engagement in its study.

The College of Distance Education (CoDEL), which offers flexible learning opportunities to students across Ghana, provides an ideal setting to explore how Akan language is perceived by students. These students, often from diverse backgrounds, may have varying degrees of familiarity with the language, influencing their perceptions and attitudes towards it. While some may view the language as a vital part of their heritage, others might regard it as less important compared to

global languages like English. These perceptions, whether positive or negative, may have impact on students' engagement and success in learning the language.

This study seeks to explore the perceptions of Akan among students enrolled in the Akan language program at CoDEL UEW, Techiman Campus. By investigating their attitudes towards the language, this research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the factors that influence language learning and its role in the Ghanaian educational system. Additionally, the findings could offer valuable insights into how Akan language instruction can be improved to foster a stronger connection between students and their linguistic heritage, ultimately enhancing both language proficiency and cultural identity.

The study seeks to address the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of students towards the Akan language in a distance education setting?
2. How do these perceptions influence their motivation and engagement in the Akan language program?
3. What factors shape these perceptions, including cultural, societal, and personal influences?

The insights gained from this study will be valuable for educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers seeking to improve Akan language education in Ghana, particularly in distance learning contexts like CoDEL. Furthermore, this research will contribute to the broader discourse on language education in multilingual and multicultural societies, highlighting the importance of understanding language perception in shaping effective language learning strategies.

### **Literature Review**

This literature review examines three inter-related strands relevant to the topic of how students perceive the Ghanaian language (Akan) in tertiary-distance education contexts such as CoDEL: (1) the status, use and identity-role of Akan in Ghana; (2) students' attitudes and perceptions

toward Ghanaian/indigenous languages in education; (3) factors influencing these perceptions and implications for language learning.

### **Status and Identity Role of Akan in Ghana**

The Akan language is one of the most widely spoken indigenous languages in Ghana, belonging to the Kwa branch of the Niger-Congo family (Essuman, 2025). It embodies several dialects such as Mfantse/Fante, Twi and Bono and is used as a mother tongue and second language by many Ghanaian citizens. From a sociolinguistic perspective, research reveals that Akan has a strong cultural identity role. For example, the work of Abakah (2016) argues that the ethnographic “Akan” people share common cultural traits rooted in their language family and dialect continuum. There is also work on linguistic change and “decay” in Akan, demonstrating media, urbanization and code-mixing pressures. In the educational field, there is recognition that using indigenous languages can enhance academic achievement, especially in the early years of instruction. For instance, research on language policy in Ghana (2020) suggests that indigenous languages including Akan must be used as medium of instruction in the early kindergarten and the lower primary. This policy was officially announced by the Minister of Education on 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2025 with emphasis that “teaching in indigenous language is compulsory in Ghana” The minister’s reaction to the strict adherence of the existed language policy practiced by Ghana Education service is intended to improve foundational learning by having children taught in their own mother tongue. This body of literature sets the background for understanding the larger place of Akan within Ghanaian society, its association with identity and culture, and its educational significance.

### **Students’ Attitudes and Perceptions of Indigenous Languages (including Akan)**

A considerable number of studies have focused on how students and tutors perceive Ghana-indigenous languages including Akan as courses of study, especially at colleges of education and universities.

In the study conducted by Twumasi (2021) on students at University of Cape Coast, results revealed that students hold positive attitudes towards the study of Ghanaian indigenous languages, albeit with primarily instrumental motivations. In another study by Quaicoe (2015), which investigated perceptions of students and tutors in Colleges of Education in Ghana, findings indicated that some students ask, “why should one study Ghanaian Language as a course while there are other better courses.” The study documented perceptions of lesser prestige associated with indigenous-language studies. More recently, research on attitudes toward the study of Ghanaian language in private basic schools (Adomako & Akrobotu, 2023) found negative attitudes among upper primary students toward indigenous language study, with contributing factors including school culture, inadequate resources, and parental/societal attitudes.

A study conducted by Fosu (2024) on Ghanaian language pedagogy (Integrated Approach Pedagogy) in Ghanaian language classrooms, found that students generally exhibited more positive attitudes when teaching methods were interactive and culturally relevant which are language tokens embedded in their language.

Collectively, these studies outline a spectrum of attitudes toward Akan and other Ghanaian languages: from positive especially when linked to identity, culture or practical gain to negative or ambivalent especially when educational context, resources or societal valuation is weak.

### **Factors Influencing Language Perceptions & Implications for Learning**

Understanding students’ perceptions of Akan or indigenous language study involves recognising multiple interacting factors. Literature identifies several key influences:

#### **Societal and cultural ideology**

A pervasive ideology in many multilingual and post-colonial contexts is that global or former colonial languages provide more prestige and opportunity than indigenous languages. This undermines attitudes toward indigenous language study. For example, the study conducted by Quaicoe (2015) reported that students questioned the value of studying Ghanaian languages.

The “decay” of usage of Akan at the media level has been pointed out as contributing to perceptions of Akan as less modern or less relevant.

### **Educational policy, resources and teaching context**

While Ghana’s language policy mandates local language instruction in early grades, implementation is weak; also, tertiary contexts may lack strong support for indigenous-language courses (Ankrah, 2015).

Twumasi (2021) argues that inadequate of textbooks, professional indigenous-language teachers, and adequate pedagogical methods weaken students’ motivation. The Adomako & Akrobotu (2023) study identified these factors among basic-school students.

Pedagogy matters: the study of integrated approach pedagogy in Ghanaian-language classrooms shows that when teaching is participatory and culturally situated, attitudes improve.

### **Personal motivation, attitudes and identity**

Students’ own attitudes toward their linguistic identity, whether they see value in Akan for personal, vocational or cultural reasons, affects engagement. Twumasi’s (2021) study showed positive attitudes when students saw instrumental benefits.

Quaicoe (2015) states that where indigenous language is perceived as “less useful” or secondary to English, motivation may decline.

### **d) Institutional and peer influences**

The institutional status of the indigenous-language program whether it’s core or elective, respected or not influences how students perceive it. Quaicoe (2015) showed that students and tutors perceive Ghanaian languages as electives rather than other valued core courses hence less attention is given to the study of Ghanaian language.

Adomako and Akrobotu (2023) reiterate that “Peer and family attitudes matter” This means if parents and peers devalue indigenous languages, learners of such may adopt negative perceptions which would demotivate students from achieving their expected learning goals.

## **Implications for Learning**

From the literature, we derive several implications relevant to the study of Akan perception among CoDEL students. Students' perceptions be it positive or negative are likely to influence their motivation, engagement, persistence and proficiency in Akan. Improving perceptions may involve addressing the factors above: elevating the status/prestige of Akan in the institution, ensuring better pedagogy and resources, linking language study to identity and vocational relevance. Understanding specific perceptions in a distance-education context such as CoDEL is important because student profiles, motivations and contexts may differ from traditional campus-based institutions. There is a gap in the literature regarding how distance-education students at tertiary level perceive Akan language study: most studies focus on Colleges of Education or basic schools, not distance-education tertiary programmes.

## **Gap in Literature and Relevance to the Current Study**

While the literature provides a useful foundation, several gaps remain that justify the present study on “Ghanaian language (Akan) perception among students of Akan language at CoDEL”:

Most existing research deals with campus-based tertiary institutions such as University of Cape Coast, Colleges of Education, basic schools and secondary schools. Few examine distance-education matured learners. It is observed that the context of distance education introduces unique factors such self-directed learning, remote engagement, possibly different motivation profiles that may shape language perceptions differently.

There is limited focus specifically on the Akan language programme in distance education, and how students' perceptions may vary according to demographics age and employment status, language background example native vs. non-native Akan speakers, and distance-learning modality.

Few studies link perceptions explicitly to outcomes that is motivation, engagement and achievement in the context of Akan language learning in tertiary distance settings.

Thus, the current study aims to fill this gap by investigating the perceptions of students enrolled in the Akan language programme at CoDEL, exploring how their attitudes, motivations and contextual factors influence their engagement with the language and what implications this holds for language instruction and policy in distance-education settings in Ghana.

### **Methodology**

The study adopts a convergent parallel mixed-method design. This design allows for the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously, with equal emphasis on both types of data. The quantitative component focuses on measuring students' attitudes toward Akan, while the qualitative component seeks to explore deeper insights into their perceptions and motivations behind those attitudes. By combining these approaches, the study aims to generate a more holistic understanding of the factors influencing students' views on the Akan language in a distance education setting.

The study focused on students currently enrolled in the Akan language program at CoDEL, University of Education, Winneba- Techiman Campus. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select a sample size of 190 participants for the study across different age groups, academic backgrounds, and employment statuses to ensure diversity in the sample. This number is considered representative enough to ensure statistical power for the quantitative data while also allowing for rich qualitative insights from the interviews. Only students currently enrolled in the Akan language program at CoDEL UEW, Techiman Campus was included in the study. Also, participants must be at least 18 years old and have completed at least one semester of Akan language courses. The study used two main data collection instruments, that is questionnaire for quantitative surveys and semi-structured interviews for qualitative. These instruments were used concurrently to collect data to provide a well-rounded view of students' perceptions. The questionnaire and interview guide were administered online to all participants via the CoDEL student WhatsApp platforms to ensure convenience for distance learners. The survey took

approximately 15–20 minutes to complete. To ensure the validity and reliability of the study, a pre-test was conducted by administering the questionnaire and interview guide to ten (10) CoDEL students who helped to refine all ambiguous or unclear questions. The use of both quantitative and qualitative data enhanced the validity of the findings through triangulation. The study adhered to ethical guidelines ensuring that participants' rights are protected by seeking their consent through the explanation of the nature of the study and their involvement and assurance that personal information and responses will be anonymised. The study also encouraged voluntarily participation in that students can withdraw at any time without any consequences.

### **Analysis and Discussion of Results**

This section presents the results of the study. The findings explore how students view the relevance, usefulness, and status of Akan, as well as the factors that shape these perceptions in a distance learning environment. The results are organised around the research questions and supported by quantitative tables and qualitative comments from respondents.

#### **Demographic data of respondents**

The majority of respondents were female (73.2%), while male respondents made up 26.8% of the sample. The results show that most respondents were between 31–35 years (43.2%), followed by those aged 26–30 years (20.0%). Respondents aged above 35 years accounted for 19.5%, while 20–25 years made up 14.7%. The smallest group was those below 20 years (2.6%). Half of the respondents were in Level 400 (50.0%), followed by Level 300 (27.9%). Those in Level 200 represented 12.6%, and Level 100 constituted 9.5% of the respondents.

Table 1: Demographic data of respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent
Age	Below 20	5	2.6%
	20–25	28	14.7%

	26–30	38	20.0%
	31–35	82	43.2%
	Above 35	37	19.5%
Gender	Female	139	73.2%
	Male	51	26.8%
Level in Akan Programme	Level 100	18	9.5%
	Level 200	24	12.6%
	Level 300	53	27.9%
	Level 400	95	50.0%
Total Respondents	-	190	100%

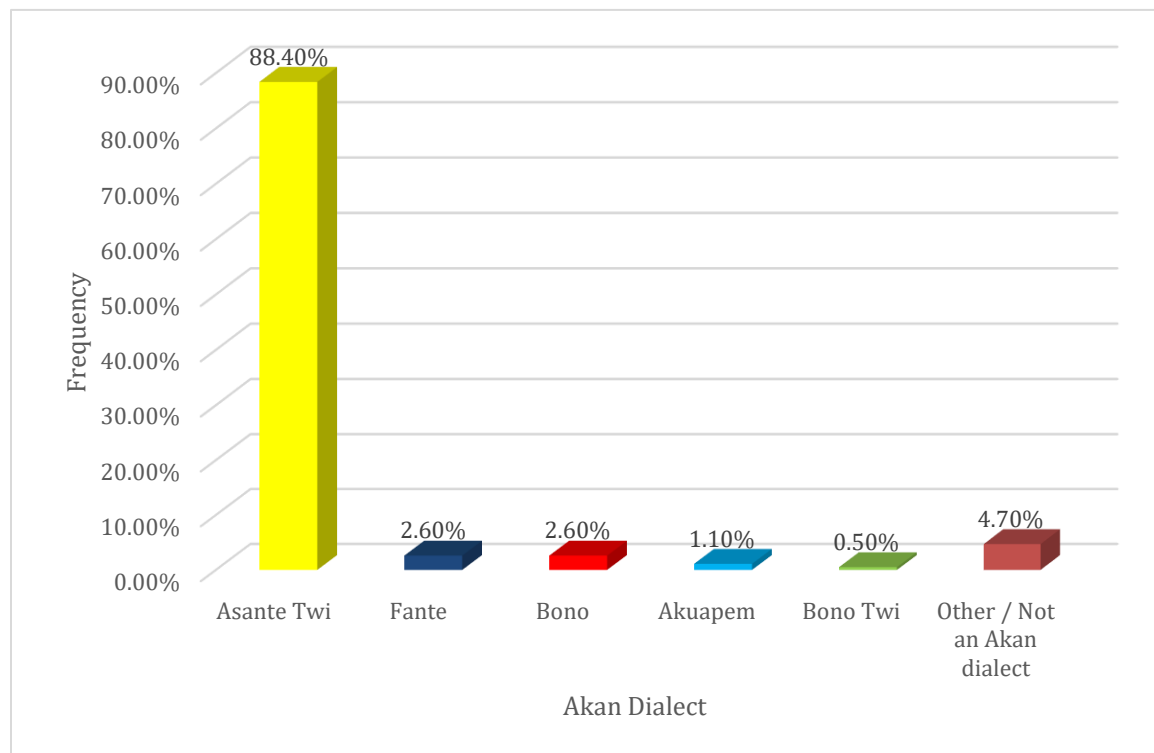
### **What are the perceptions of students towards the Akan language in a distance education setting?**

This research question examined how students perceive the Akan language within a distance education environment. It examines their attitudes, levels of confidence, and overall experiences studying Akan through the CoDEL programme. A total of 190 students responded to the question, “Do you speak Akan as a mother tongue?” Out of this number, 137 students (72.1%) indicated that Akan is their mother tongue, showing that the majority of respondents come from Akan-speaking backgrounds. In contrast, 53 students (27.9%) reported that Akan is not their mother tongue, reflecting a significant minority who speak other Ghanaian languages at home. This group includes all respondents who wrote alternative languages such as Ewe, Gurene, Kusaal, Hausa, Frafra, Kasim, Sisala, Dagaare, Chumburu, Dangbe, and others.

Next, respondents were asked, “Which Akan dialect do you speak best?” The findings show that a very large majority, 168 students (88.4%), reported Asante Twi as the dialect they speak best. This is followed by Fante and Bono, each spoken best by 5 students (2.6%), while Akuapem was selected by 2 students (1.1%). Smaller proportions indicated Bono Twi (0.5%). In addition, 9 students (4.7%) listed languages that are not Akan dialects, meaning they do not speak any Akan

dialect proficiently. The results suggest that Asante Twi overwhelmingly dominates as the most widely spoken Akan dialect among the respondents.

Figure 1: Akan Dialect Spoken Best



Furthermore, respondents were asked, “How often do you speak Akan in your daily life?” The majority, 143 students (75.3%), indicated that they always speak Akan in their daily interactions, suggesting that Akan is the dominant language for most respondents. Additionally, 17 students (8.9%) reported speaking Akan often, while 26 students (13.7%) said they speak it sometimes. Very few students reported limited use of Akan, with 2 students (1.1%) speaking it rarely and another 2 students (1.1%) indicating that they never speak Akan. Overall, the results show a very high level of daily Akan usage among the students, reinforcing the language’s strong presence in their everyday communication.

Table 2: Frequency of Speaking Akan in Daily Life

Response Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Always	143	75.3%
Often	17	8.9%
Sometimes	26	13.7%
Rarely	2	1.1%
Never	2	1.1%
Total	190	100.0%

Respondents also responded to the question on how confident they are in their ability to speak Akan fluently. The results show that 143 students (75.3%) described themselves as very confident, while 37 students (19.5%) selected confident neutral. A small number, 6 students (3.2%), reported that they are not confident in speaking Akan fluently. Additionally, 4 students (2.1%) selected a combined response of “Very Confident, Confident Neutral.”



Table 3: Confidence in Speaking Akan Fluently

Response Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
Confident Neutral	37	19.5%
Not Confident	6	3.2%
Very Confident	143	75.3%
Very Confident, Confident Neutral	4	2.1%
Total	190	100.0%

Most students expressed high levels of confidence in their ability to read Akan texts. Over half of the respondents (108 students, 56.8%) described themselves as very confident, showing strong reading proficiency in the language. Another 55 students (28.9%) reported feeling confident neutral, suggesting a moderate level of comfort with reading Akan. However, 25 students (13.2%)

indicated that they were not confident, highlighting a smaller group that struggles with reading skills. In addition, 2 students (1.1%) selected a combined response of “Very Confident, Confident Neutral.” Overall, the pattern reflects generally high reading confidence among the students, with only a minority reporting difficulties.

Table 4: Confidence in Reading Akan Texts

Response Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
Confident Neutral	55	28.9%
Not Confident	25	13.2%
Very Confident	108	56.8%
Very Confident, Confident Neutral	2	1.1%
Total	190	100.0%

Confidence levels in writing Akan show a mixed pattern among the respondents. A little over half of the students (101 students, 53.2%) indicated that they are very confident in their writing ability. Another 52 students (27.4%) described themselves as confident neutral, suggesting that they feel moderately comfortable writing in Akan. On the other hand, 34 students (17.9%) reported being not confident, pointing to a notable group that struggles with written Akan. Additionally, 3 students (1.6%) selected the combined response of “Very Confident, Confident Neutral.” These results highlight that while many students write Akan with ease, a significant minority require more support to strengthen their writing skills.

Table 5: Confidence in Writing Akan

Response Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
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Confident Neutral	52	27.4%
Not Confident	34	17.9%
Very Confident	101	53.2%
Very Confident, Confident Neutral	3	1.6%
Total	190	100.0%

Understanding Akan grammar appears to be an area of strong confidence for most respondents. Most of the students (113 students, 59.5%) described themselves as very confident, showing that many feel comfortable with the grammatical aspects of the language. Another 60 students (31.6%) reported being confident or neutral, indicating moderate familiarity with Akan grammar. In contrast, 17 students (8.9%) stated that they were not confident, representing a small group that experiences difficulty with grammar. Overall, the results point to generally high grammatical confidence among the students, with only a minority expressing uncertainty.

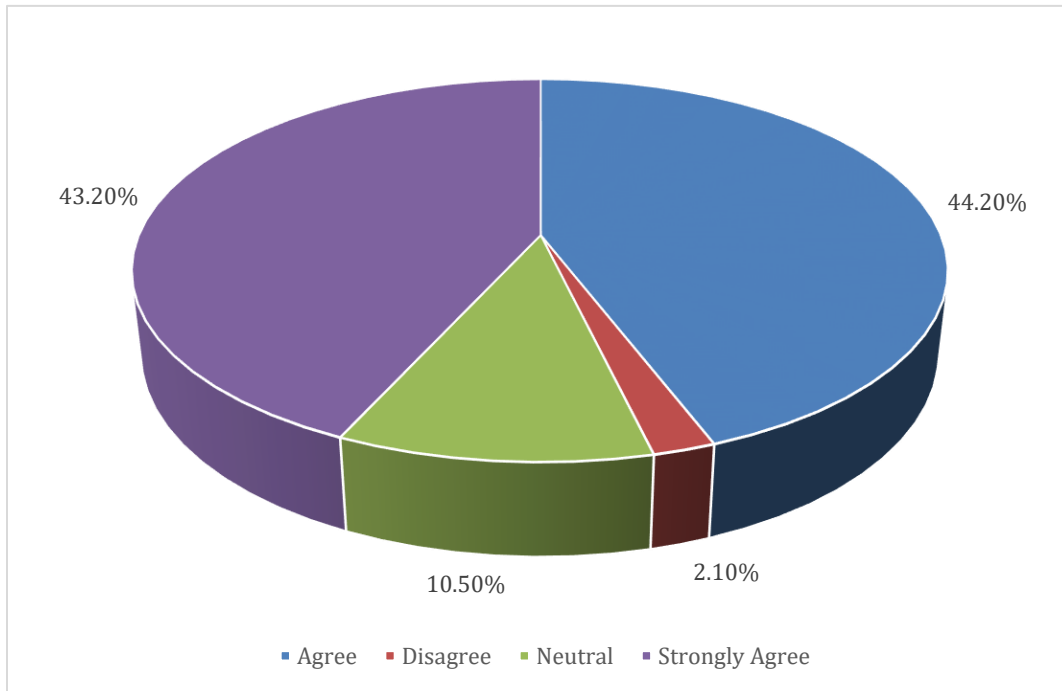
Table 6: Confidence in Understanding Akan Grammar

Confidence Level	Frequency	Percent (%)
Very Confident	113	59.5%
Confident / Neutral	60	31.6%
Not Confident	17	8.9%
Total	190	100.0%

Responses show strong support for using Akan as a medium of instruction in higher education. Eighty-four students (44.2%) agreed with the idea, while 82 students (43.2%) strongly agreed, making positive responses the overwhelming majority. A smaller group of 20 students (10.5%)

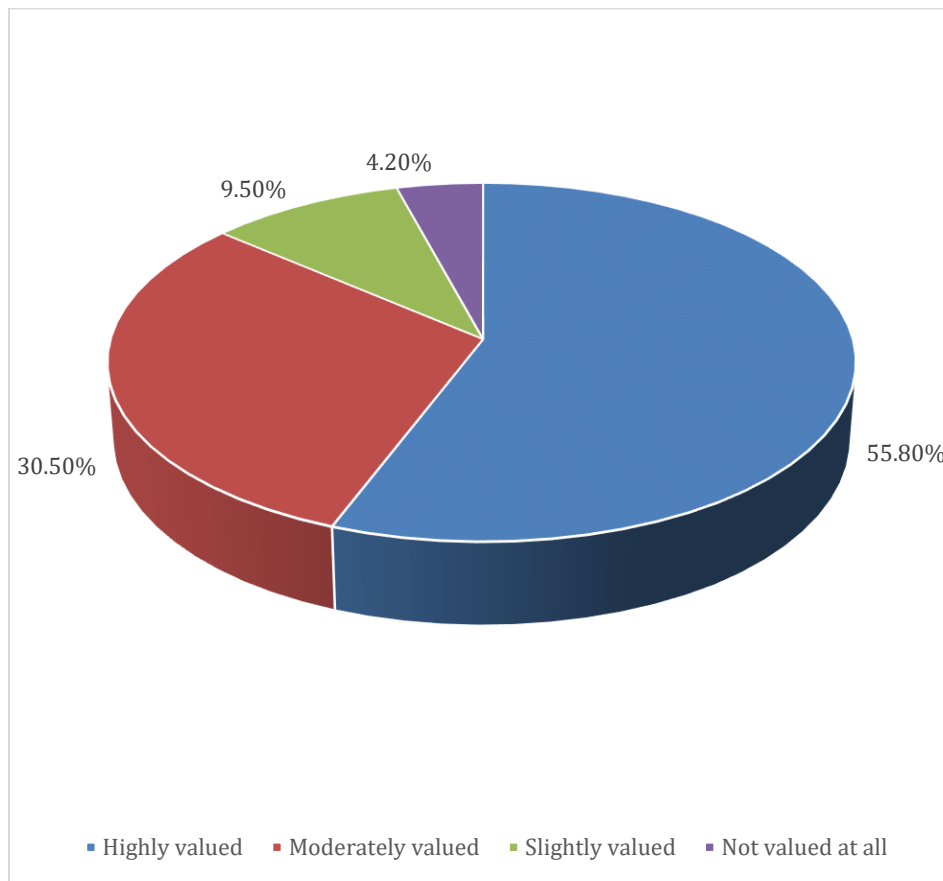
remained neutral, and only 4 students (2.1%) disagreed. Overall, the findings suggest that students are highly receptive to the possibility of adopting Akan as a language of instruction at the tertiary level.

Figure 2: Perception of Akan as a Medium of Instruction in Higher Education



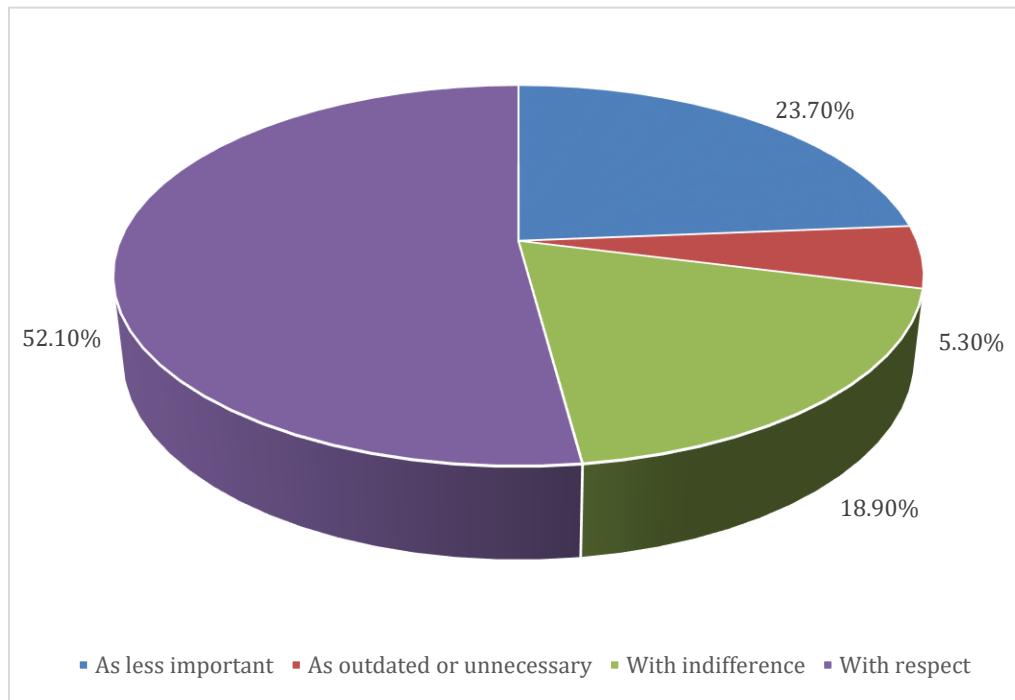
Most respondents view the status of Akan in Ghana's education system positively. A majority of 106 students (55.8%) believe the language is highly valued, while another 58 students (30.5%) feel it is moderately valued. Smaller proportions expressed less favourable views: 18 students (9.5%) thought Akan is only slightly valued, and 8 students (4.2%) felt it is not valued at all. These results indicate that students generally perceive Akan as holding a significant place within the national education system, although a minority still question the extent of its recognition.

Figure 3: Perceived Status of Akan in Ghana's Education System



Students' perceptions of how non-Akan majors view the Akan language vary, but the dominant view is positive. Ninety-nine respondents (52.1%) believe that non-Akan majors perceive the language with respect, suggesting a generally favourable attitude. Meanwhile, 45 students (23.7%) think others view Akan as less important, and 36 students (18.9%) feel that non-Akan majors respond with indifference. A smaller group of 10 students (5.3%) perceive that others see the language as outdated or unnecessary.

Figure 4: Perceived Views of Non-Akan Majors Toward the Akan Language



### **How do these perceptions influence their motivation and engagement in the Akan language program?**

This section examined how students' perceptions of Akan influence their motivation and engagement in the programme. The findings highlight the key factors that encourage learners to enroll and stay committed. Students selected a wide range of reasons for choosing to study Akan at CODEL, often combining more than one motivation. The most frequently mentioned reason was career opportunities, chosen by 58 students (30.5%), indicating that many respondents see Akan as a pathway to jobs such as teaching or translation. Another strong motivation was the desire to preserve culture and tradition, reported by 40 students (21.1%), showing that cultural identity plays a significant role in the choice of the programme. Personal interest also featured prominently, with 25 students (13.2%) selecting it as their main reason.

Smaller proportions of respondents combined multiple motivations, for example, linking personal interest with career opportunities, cultural preservation, or ease of learning. A few students indicated reasons such as having no alternative option or being in Early Grade education, where

Akan was required. Overall, the results show that choices are shaped by a blend of professional aspirations, cultural values, and personal enthusiasm for the language.

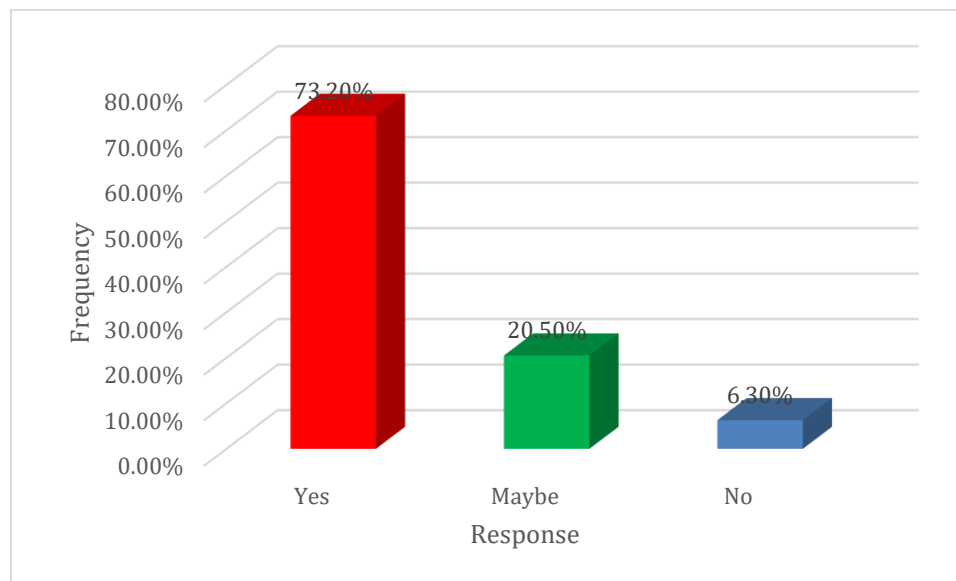
Table 7: Reasons for Choosing to Study Akan at CODEL

Response Category (Multiple Selections Allowed)	Frequency	Percent (%)
Career opportunities (e.g., teaching, translation)	58	30.5%
Career opportunities & Ease of learning	1	0.5%
Ease of learning (familiarity)	8	4.2%
Early Grade-no option	1	0.5%
Personal interest	25	13.2%
Personal interest (standalone entry)	1	0.5%
Personal interest & Career opportunities	5	2.6%
Personal interest, Career opportunities & Ease of learning	2	1.1%
Personal interest & Ease of learning	2	1.1%
Personal interest & “I don’t speak Akan”	1	0.5%
Personal interest & To preserve culture and tradition	7	3.7%
Personal interest, To preserve culture & Career opportunities	5	2.6%
Personal interest, Culture preservation, Career opportunities & Ease of learning	5	2.6%
Personal interest, Culture preservation & Ease of learning	3	1.6%
No option available	1	0.5%
To preserve culture and tradition	40	21.1%
Culture preservation & Career opportunities	19	10.0%
Culture preservation, Career opportunities & Ease of learning	4	2.1%
Culture preservation & Ease of learning	2	1.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Most students believe that studying Akan provides strong career advantages. A large majority of 139 respondents (73.2%) answered “Yes,” indicating that they see clear professional pathways-

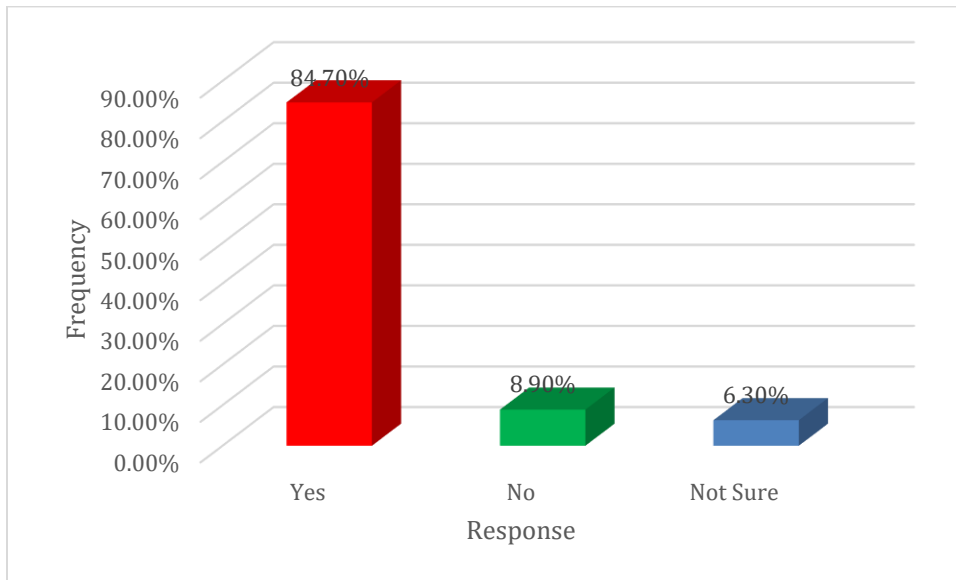
such as teaching, translation, or cultural work-linked to the language. Another 39 students (20.5%) responded “Maybe,” reflecting uncertainty but suggesting that they still see some potential value. Only 12 students (6.3%) felt that studying Akan does not open good career opportunities

Figure 5: Perception of Career Opportunities from Studying Akan



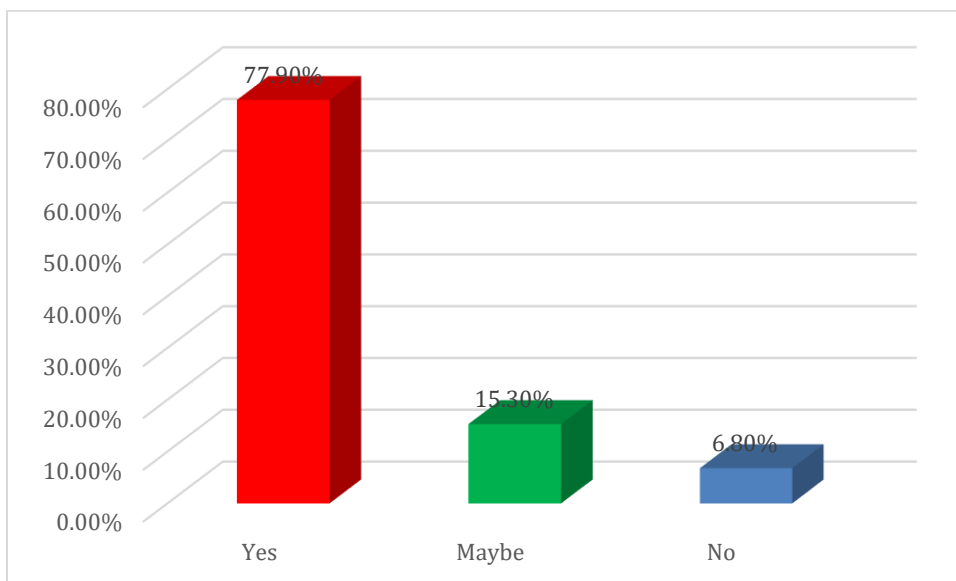
Support for making Akan a compulsory subject at the basic education level is overwhelmingly strong. A total of 161 students (84.7%) responded “Yes,” demonstrating a strong belief in the importance of early Akan language education. Meanwhile, 17 students (8.9%) said “No,” indicating opposition to the idea, and 12 students (6.3%) were not sure, reflecting some uncertainty about its appropriateness or practicality.

Figure 6: Belief That Akan Should Be Compulsory at Basic Education Level



A strong majority of students expressed pride in the idea of teaching Akan in the future. A total of 148 respondents (77.9%) said “Yes,” indicating high enthusiasm and positive attitudes toward promoting the language professionally. Another 29 students (15.3%) responded “Maybe,” showing openness but some uncertainty about pursuing teaching roles. Only 13 students (6.8%) stated “No,” suggesting limited interest in teaching the language

Figure 7: Willingness to Teach Akan in the Future



#### 4.5 What factors shape these perceptions, including cultural, societal, and personal influences?

This section presents the factors that shape students' perceptions of studying the Akan language in a distance education setting. The findings highlight how cultural, societal, and personal influences affect students' motivation and attitudes toward the programme. Students reported several challenges in their study of Akan, with the most common being a lack of textbooks or learning materials, mentioned by 138 students (72.6%). This indicates that instructional resources are a major obstacle for many learners. Limited job prospects were identified by 35 students (18.4%), highlighting concerns about the career relevance of the programme. In addition, 31 students (16.3%) felt discouraged by a lack of interest among peers, suggesting that peer support for Akan studies may be low. A smaller group, 16 students (8.4%), reported that the low societal prestige associated with the language posed a challenge.



Table 8: Challenges Faced by Students of Akan (N = 190; Multiple Responses Allowed)

Challenge Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
Lack of textbooks or learning materials	138	72.6%
Limited job prospects	35	18.4%
Lack of interest among peers	31	16.3%
Low societal prestige	16	8.4%

*Note: Percentages exceed 100% because respondents could select more than one challenge.*

Out of the 190 students who responded to the question on whether they feel supported by the university in their study of Akan, the majority, 153 students (80.5%), indicated Yes, suggesting that most students feel they receive some form of support such as materials, academic recognition, or resources.

However, a significant minority, 37 students (19.5%), reported No or provided explanations describing various challenges. The reasons given for lack of support include limited learning materials, inadequate or delayed modules, few qualified instructors, unavailability of books, and difficulties accessing results. Some specific concerns included: “Because there are limited learning materials, few qualified instructors, and not enough recognition or encouragement for studying the Akan language,” and “Mostly Twi results are not published and there are no books for learning.” These responses show that while overall support is perceived as high, notable gaps still exist for some learners.

### **Qualitative analysis**

This section examines the underlying factors that shape students’ perceptions of the Akan language within a distance education setting. It explores the cultural, societal, and personal influences that inform how learners value, experience, and relate to the study of Akan.

#### **Theme 1: Educational Policy and Curriculum Status as a Shaping Influence**

Students’ perceptions of Akan are strongly shaped by how national and institutional education policies position the language. When Akan is treated as a core or compulsory subject, students perceive it as valuable and central to Ghana’s education system. Conversely, when it is optional or inconsistently implemented, they view the language as undervalued. Respondents repeatedly emphasised the role of curriculum placement in shaping their attitudes, reflecting a societal message about the language’s worth. This influence was evident in comments such as “It should be made compulsory at the basic education level,” and another stating that “Akan language should be compulsory at education level. Text books and story books... should be provided to basic schools.” A third respondent reinforced this point by noting, “The Akan language should be compulsory at the basic level (L1) to help pupil to understand and speak fluently.” These voices

highlight how formal policy decisions significantly shape perceptions of value, relevance, and legitimacy of the Akan language.

### **Theme 2: Availability of Resources and Institutional Support**

Students' perceptions are also deeply shaped by the material support and institutional recognition they receive while studying Akan. Many respondents expressed that insufficient teaching and learning materials, delayed modules, and limited resources negatively affect their motivation and create the perception that Akan is not prioritised by the university. One respondent captured this sentiment by explaining, "Because there are limited learning materials, few qualified instructors, and not enough recognition or encouragement for studying the Akan language at the university." Another highlighted the practical struggles: "Textbooks should be available for learning. No materials for study." A third voiced frustration with institutional delays, stating, "The module is not always ready... we have to print them ourselves." These resource-related challenges shape students' sense of support, prestige, and long-term commitment to the study of the language.

### **Theme 3: Cultural Identity and Heritage as Motivational Forces**

For many students, the Akan language is more than an academic subject as it represents a symbol of identity, heritage, and cultural pride. Their perceptions are shaped by personal and collective beliefs about the language's role in preserving culture, transmitting values, and maintaining Ghanaian traditions. This cultural connection frequently motivates them and strengthens positive perceptions of the programme. As one respondent shared, "The study of the Akan language helps to know our tradition and culture." Another emphasised the role of heritage, stating, "Youth should learn how to preserve their culture and traditions... Akan Language shows transitions and cultural heritage." A third respondent linked language to dignity and pride: "We should be proud of our

mother language, and we shouldn't feel shy to speak." These statements reveal how cultural meaning strongly influences their attitudes, commitment, and expectations regarding the language.

#### **Theme 4: Social Attitudes, Motivation, and Perceived Status**

Personal experiences of respect, recognition, and future opportunities also shape student perceptions. Many respondents noted that societal attitudes toward Akan, including whether it is respected or viewed as inferior, affect their motivation. One respondent highlighted concern of stigma: "Encourage young ones that studying Akan language doesn't make one inferior." Another pointed to perceptions of low status within the university, saying, "They don't value us much." Career prospects also influenced perceptions, with one student stating, "There should be more job prospects for those who study Akan language." These sentiments reflect how societal and personal factors such as respect, self-esteem, and opportunity deeply shape students' overall perceptions of Akan.

#### **Promotion of the Akan Language Among Youth and Students**

The responses reveal several recurring strategies that students believe will effectively promote the Akan language. The most dominant suggestion was to make Akan compulsory at various levels of education, including basic, junior high, senior high, and even university. Many students expressed strong support for compulsory Akan instruction, believing that it signals value and ensures early exposure. This was reflected in comments such as, "It should be made compulsory at the basic education level," and "Should be compulsory in the SHS curriculum."

Another major recommendation was to increase the availability of teaching and learning materials. Students emphasised the need for adequate textbooks, storybooks, and Teaching learning materials to strengthen language learning. Statements like "Provide necessary resources for Akan language,"

and “More textbooks should be provided to make learning and reading easier,” demonstrate this priority.

Students also highlighted the importance of using Akan more frequently in daily communication, teaching, and cultural activities, suggesting that visibility enhances relevance. Some proposed that Akan be used in instruction, while others encouraged speaking Akan regularly in schools. This was evident in responses such as, “Allowing learners to speak the language at schools,” and “Akan Language should be engaged in regular conversation and also used in songs.”

Additionally, students emphasised the role of cultural pride and identity, proposing programmes, events, and sensitisation efforts to strengthen appreciation of the language. Statements such as “Educate the youth about how important the Akan language is,” and “Akan should be promoted because it helps us preserve culture,” reinforce the cultural dimensions of promotion.

Finally, some respondents pointed to the need for trained teachers and career pathways, explaining that strong instructional support and future opportunities can attract more learners. This includes suggestions such as providing training for Akan facilitators and creating job prospects for graduates.

## **Conclusion**

The paper confirms that Akan has a strong cultural and linguistic presence in Ghana, with high level of motivation at the level of language usage even though there are perceptual and language resource challenges but students’ of CoDEL, UEW, Techiman offering Akan language as a course hold a positive perceptions and attitude towards Ghanaian language of study as a course or program of study irrespective of the mixed and influenced by societal, institutional, pedagogical and personal factors. Understanding these perceptions, especially in tertiary distance-education contexts, is key to enhancing language teaching, curriculum design and student outcomes. The

present study contributes by focusing on the understudied context of CoDEL and providing insights that could inform improved Akan language instruction in Ghana.

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