

Morphosyntactic Analysis of Some Akan Personal Names

¹Charles Owu-Ewie, PhD, ²Miss patience Obeng, ³Dr. Christiana Hammond

¹Faculty of Ghanaian languages Education University of Education, Winneba

²Faculty of Ghanaian languages Education University of Education, Winneba

³Department of Communication and Media Studies University of Education, Winneba

“Your names shall be Peter, for you are the rock upon which I shall build my church” (Matthew 16: 18)

Abstract: This paper takes a look at personal names among the Akans of Ghana from a morphosyntactic perspective. It provides a structural linguistic analysis of the morphology and syntax of these names as they are used within Akan communication. Names are given in particular languages whose morphology, syntax and semantics inform their meaning to a great extent (Batoma, 2006). This implies that understanding personal names anchors on taking a critical analysis of the internal structure of the word(s) and the syntactic structure that constitute the name besides sociolinguistics, socio-cultural and ethno-linguistics domains. The paper investigated the morphological and syntactic structure of about one hundred and sixty (160) Akan personal names. The data for this study was collected from both primary and secondary sources. The researcher also supported this approach with interviews with the bearers and sometimes the givers of the names to ascertain the complete structural components of such names since some might have undergone some linguistic processes unknown to the researcher. The study noted that at the morphological analysis level, some Akan names were single stems, compounds, affixations, and reduplications. It was also realized from the data that at the syntactic level some names were by function declaratives, imperatives or interrogatives and structurally as simple, compound or complex.

Key Words: Akan, personal names, family names, given names, morphosyntax.

I. Introduction

The interaction between the Akans and the Europeans, which dates back in the 14th Century had immense influence on the former. Such interaction had political, economic, social and linguistic influence on the Akans, especially the Fantes. The presence of the Europeans, especially the British did not only influence our indigenous languages but our names and naming systems. They bestowed their personal names on our indigenous ones and in some cases Anglicized some of them. For example Akwa became *Acquah*, Ata became *Arthur*, and Kuntu (blanket) become *Blankson*, and Enu became *Enuson*. Though Ghanaians are gradually drifting back to their roots and are using the indigenous personal names, others still use the anglicized names if even they are using indigenous ones.

The study of personal names has not had much attention in theoretical linguistics like other areas (Mojapelo, 2009). However, a closer look at personal names uncovers interesting linguistic features; morphological and syntactic features that may be helpful in understanding and appreciating Akan names. As Batoma, (2006) indicates, understanding personal names hinges on critical study of the internal structures of the word(s) and the syntactic structure(s) that constitute the names besides sociolinguistic, socio-cultural, historical and ethno-linguistic domains. Personal names have some universal connotation; that is all languages or ethnic groups have personal names. According to Al-Zumor (2009, p. 15), personal names form a special group within the vocabulary of a language. They obey most phonological, morphological, syntactic, orthographic or semantic rules.

Personal names as specific linguistic act are intimately linked with values, traditions, hopes, fears and events in people's lives (Al-Zumor, 2009). In the same way, Agyekum (2006) indicates that the Akan personal name system and practice is a marker of their beliefs, ideology, religion, culture, philosophy and thought. Rosenhouse (2002) also holds the view that personal names reveal the preferences of their owners. Personal naming practices are important because they offer insights into the patterns of social and cultural organization of communities and can be a key to broader cultural changes. They inform people about what is seen as significant about the background and the circumstances at the time of birth. The name (word) used to refer to the new person has enormous symbolic power and at the same time send a message, express hope or prayer to perpetuate a cultural

or religious tradition (Alford, 1987). Personal names encapsulate personal and ethnic/tribal experiences and history of a people.

II. Statement of the Problem

Personal names are identity markers for the individuals who bear them. It is a way of distinguishing an individual from the other. Besides, personal names serve a referential function (Agbedor, 1991). However, African names in general and Fante names in particular go beyond the referential function. They are the embodiment of the philosophical thought and the reflection of various circumstances surrounding the birth of a person. According to Agbedor, African names are different from other nonAfrican names because they have elaborate linguistic structure, complex semantic content and the relationship of names to the African value systems. As Agyekum (2006; 207) indicates

The knowledge about Akan names gives insight into African culture, philosophy, thought, environment, religion, and language. The symbolic nature of Akan names and their interpretation depicts Akan religious beliefs, and their interaction with foreign culture.

This makes African names in general and Akan (Fante) names in particular worthy of studying.

Though there have been articles that discuss the sociolinguistic, morphophonology, and cultural aspects of Akan personal names and naming practices (Agyekum, 2006; Adomako, 2013; Obeng, 1997), little attention is paid to the morphosyntactic nature of Akan (Fante) personal names. This paper therefore focuses on the morphology and syntax (morphosyntactic analysis) of Akan personal names to put another linguistic dimension to understanding Akan (Fante/Twi) personal names. This study is essential and significant because understanding names in particular languages to great extent are informed by the morphology, syntax and semantics of that language. Studies of this nature is a way of preserving our indigenous personal names because like what occurs in any language, personal names change, develop and die out and have life cycle similar to that of the other lexical items of the language (Rosenhouse, 2002).

III. The Akan and Akan naming system

According to Agyekum (2006), the 2000 population census of Ghana indicates that Akan is the language of the Akan people which is the largest ethnic group in Ghana with a population of about 49.1% native speakers and 44% as non-native speakers of Akan (CIA World FactBook, 2014). Ethnologue (2009) indicates that Akan is among the 100 largest languages of the world and has 11 million native speakers and 1 million as L2 speakers in 2007. The language is spoken in ten regions of Ghana; Ashanti, Central, Brong Ahafo, Eastern, Western, and Volta. It is also spoken in parts of Cote d'Ivoire. Akan as a language belongs to the Kwa family of languages. Akan is made up of mutually intelligible dialects like Fante, Akuapem, Asante, Agona, Dankyira, Assin, Akyem, Wassaw, Kwawu, Bron, and Twifo. Agbedor (1991) refers to this group based on mutual intelligibility as Cluster 1. This cluster is also referred to as r-Akan, which do not explicitly have the letter "r" in their original form. The other cluster is the l-Akan, which, comprises Nzema, Baoule, Anyin and other dialects spoken mainly in Cote D'Ivoire. The use of the letter/sound "r" is very rare. Data for this paper was selected from Fante in cluster 1. The data is mainly Fante origin, also known as *Mfantsefo*. They occupy the coastal areas between the Gas of the Greater Accra Region and the Nzemas of the Western Region of Ghana (Owu-Ewie, 2014). It is the language of the Central and part of the Western Regions of Ghana. Fante has sub-dialects like Agona, Anomabo, Abura, Gomua, Oguua, and Ahanta. Abakah (2004) puts the sub-dialects of Fante into three main groups; Oguua (Iguae), Anee (West) and Boka (East). Abakah does this categorization with Oguua (Iguae) as the reference point.

The naming system among the Akans (Fantes) is very unique from that of the Western societies but it has some common characteristics of other African and Ghanaian ethnic groups like the Yorubas of Nigeria and the Ewes of Ghana (Agyekum, 2006). The Akan naming systems depicts the Akan philosophy and culture. Among the Akans (Fantes), every child born whether male or female has two names; a name from the day he/she was born-birthday name (*kradzin* – soul name) and a given name – *agyadzin* or *dzinpa* (names given by the father) (Obeng, 1997; Ansu-Kyeremeh, 2000; Agyekum, 2006). This implies that by default, every Akan has a birthday name and later a given name. For example, I am called *Kwesi Amissa* because I was born on Sunday (*Kwesida*) *Kwesi* and *Amissa* being my given name (*egyadzin/dzinpa*). In this paper, only given names (*egyadzin/dzinpa*) will be considered for analysis. This is so because the birthday names are only at morpheme level. They are predictable because the day one is born has a predetermined name. Personal names have rich linguistic elements which sometimes need morphological and syntactic analysis before the name can be understood and appreciated. As Batoma (2006) indicates, the unclear nature of language used in the formation of names sometimes present problems to their interpretation and that the morphology, syntax and semantics of such names inform their meaning to a great extent.

IV. Theoretical Framework

This study falls under the broader discipline *onomastic*, which involves the study of names. Onomastic is broadly dichotomized into toponym/toponomastic (the study of place names) and anthroponomastic (the study of personal names). The focus of this study is on anthroponomastic/anthroponomy. The study of names in general has influenced considerably the recovery and reconstruction of many heritages including Africa (Batoma, 2006). The study of personal names is cross-linguistic and has been investigated in many cultures and languages across the world. Studies on personal names outside Africa include Al-Zumor's (2009, pp. 25/26) socio-cultural and linguistic analysis of Yemeni Arabic personal names, which indicates that naming systems belong to social and cultural systems in which they are embedded, naming systems reflect essential values and important traits in their respective social organization and regional dialects as one of the essential sources of names. The study also noted that Yemeni personal names contain precious elements of information on the history of human groups and that names vary in their linguistic structure across generations which may lead to conclusion that traditional Arabic names are at risk of extinction. Other studies include Arabic naming practices and names lists (Auda, 2003), a historical, sociocultural and linguistic analysis of Indian personal names (Sharma, 2005) and an anthropological linguistic study of personal and place names among North American Indians (Bright, 2003). Bright's study also looked at grammatical peculiarities of place names. There have also been studies on personal name in Africa which has centered on pragmalinguistic study of Yoruba personal names (Ogunwale, 2012), names as pointers as in Zulu personal naming practices (Suzman, 1994), the influence of westernisation on Ovambo personal in Namibia (Saarelma-Maunumaa, 1996), and naming among the Xhosa of Southern Africa (Neethling, 2005). Another study worth noting is Mojapelo's (2009) article on the morphology and semantics of proper names in Northern Sotho. The study noted that some proper names in Northern Sotho have the same phonetic form as the common noun but can be distinguished by morpho-syntactic means. The study also identified that common nouns may serve as modifying agents and compound with personal proper names for specific semantic effects. Though these studies look at the morphological, semantics, historical, sociocultural and pragmatics of names, they fall short of looking at the interface between the morphology and syntax of personal names.

Several studies on personal names have also been conducted in some Ghanaian communities in general and the Akan ethnic group in particular within the various fields of study ranging from anthropology, linguistics to communication and sometimes a multifaceted one (combination of these disciplines). Scholars like Agbedor (1991), and Dakubu (2000), have worked on personal names among the Ewes and the Dagombas respectively. Agbedor in his study looked at the sociocultural and grammatical analysis of Ewe names and found that two major principles (the Home Context principle and the Philosophical Principle) underlie naming systems among the Ewes. He also identified that Ewes names are derived from simple as well as complex and productive syntactic processes. Dakubu, however documents personal names and naming practices of the Dagomba in a linguistic and textual manner. Studies that investigate personal names in Akan include works by Obeng (1997, 1998, and 2001) on a morphophonology of Akan hypocoristic daynames, a pragmatic and structural study of Akan death-prevention names, and an ethnographic and morphophonological study of personal names in Akan and some African societies. Ansu-Kyeremeh (2000) on other hand looks at the various communication functions performed by Bono personal names. One other study that has had immense impact on the study of Akan personal names is the work of Agyekum (2006) on the sociolinguistic of Akan personal names. From a linguistics anthropological perspective, he identified the following as the typology of Akan personal names: day names, family names, circumstantial names, theophorous names, flora and fauna names, weird and incarnate names, achievement names, insinuating and proverbial names, bodily structure and kinship names. A critical look at these studies shows that though this is a fertile area of linguistic study, exhaustive research on the domains of phonology, morphology and syntax has received little attention. This paper therefore attempts to contribute to the discussion of Akan personal names from morphological and syntactic perspectives.

V. Purpose of the Study and research questions

This study involved the morpho-syntactic analysis of some Fante personal names. The purpose of this study was to identify specifically the morphological components of some Fante personal names. The study also sought to find out the syntactic function and syntactic structure of some Fante personal names. These purposes resulted in the following research questions:

- What are the morphological components/structure of some Fante personal names?
- What are the syntactic structure and function of some Fante personal names?

VI. Methodology

This is a qualitative study, which involves the morphosyntactic analysis of Fante personal names also known as anthroponomy. The names collected and analyzed in this study excluded day names (names one acquires based on the day he was born); it involved only given-names. The data for the study was collected from both

secondary and primary sources. The secondary sources include names collected from Fante cultural books. One book, which was very useful in this endeavor was *Yeehyiahya OO!* (Crayner, 1988), which has a list of Fante personal names and their appellations. Names were also collected from 2015-2016 matriculation books, which have names of Akan (Fante/Twi) students. The primary data was also collected by the researcher. In addition, the researcher asked his students to collect as many Fante names as possible within a week, which was part of their cultural studies lesson on naming among the Akans. The collection was supplemented with interviews with some namebearers and name-givers to gather the story/history or etymology of some of the names, which helped the researcher to get their underlying morphological and syntactic structures since some of the names might have been misspelled or might have undergone some changes because of some phonological processes. It may also happen that the name might have been truncated. For example, *Kwaakwa* is *Kwaw Akwa*. In the same way, one hears *Bɔn* (sin/crime/case) which is the truncated form of *Asem bɔn fata hianyi* (a bad case/thing befits the poor person). The interview with bearers and givers of the names was essential because as Batoma (2006) and Tucker (1956) put it, lack of writing at some point in time led to foreigners imposing their own orthography. For example, *ɔkyer* is written as *Ocher*, *Ata* as *Arthur* and *Akwa* is written as *Acquah*. In all, I purposively used about 160 personal names over a period of about three months. The names used in this study exclude day names. Only family/given names are used. After collecting the names, I used inductive and creative synthesis approach of data analysis to categorize and code the names under the appropriate morphological and syntactic divisions.

VII. Findings And Discussion

For effective categorization of Akan personal names, a distinction has to be made between classification by specific and generic elements and the linguistic substance (i.e. morphology, syntax, and semantics) of such names (Tent & Blair, 2011). In this paper, the second distinction is the crucial element. The paper discusses Akan personal names by looking at their morphological and syntactic structures. The morphological aspect deals with the internal structure of the individual morphemes that constitute the name. This helped the researcher to identify the word formation processes involved. The syntactic component discussed the function and structure of Fante personal names at the sentence level. It points out whether a given personal name is functionally declarative, interrogative or imperative sentence or structurally a simple, compound or complex sentence. The data is analyzed below:

7.1 Morphological analysis of Fante Personal Names

The morphology of personal names were analyzed under the following categories: single root morphemes, compounds, affixation and reduplication.

7.1.1 Single stem personal names: A critical analysis of the names used indicated that some Akan personal names are single stems that can be said to be arbitrary used in identifying the persons who bear them. They are made up of single root morphemes and have unique meanings. Examples are *Kuma* (small), *Abotar* (patience), *Ahen*, *Adoma*, *Mansa*, *Ofori*, *Fosu*, *Asare*, *Opoku*, *Nyame* (God), *Nyan*, *Adom* (Grace), and *Sumina* (dumpster). Others are *Akroma* (hawk), *ɔkɔr* (Eagle), *Ghana*, *Aboso*, *Nyansa* (wisdom), *Dɔnkɔ* (slave), *Bɔndze*, *Ewusi*, *Kuntu* (blanket), *Pra* (name of river/name of a deity), *Afram* (name of river/name of deity), *Mensa* (third born male) and *Sika* (money). These names cannot be broken down further into morphemes without destroying the internal structure of the word that signifies the name.

7.1.2 Compound personal names: The study found some personal names, which were identified as compounds; made up of two or more stems. Compounding can be put into semantic and formal classifications (Kurosaki, 2009; Syal & Jindal, 2007). Formal classification of compounds is compound classification based on the word classes that compose. Formal classification is adopted in this paper to classify compounding since a greater number of the personal names are a composition of nouns, which are by themselves independent. The linguistic complexity of Fante personal names is a direct consequence of the variety and richness of the semantic load and socio-cultural information that the names are made to carry. Depending on the amount of information being encoded, Fante personal names can be derived from nominals and other word classes to form compounds. The following compound types were identified in the data analysis.

7.1.2.1 Noun + Noun

This category of personal names is made of two independent nouns combined to denote the name of the person. The resultant noun can be a solid compound, hyphenated compound or open compound. The following are examples:

- *Solid compounds:* The personal names in this category consist of two independent nouns, which are written as one. Examples are:

Table 1: Solid compound names

Name of Person	Morphological analysis Noun + Noun	English Gloss	Free English translation
1. Asaaseaban	asaase + aban	land + fort/castle	difficult person
2. Nyameasem	Nyame + asem	God + word	God's word
3. Nyameakwan	Nyame + akwan	God + ways	God's ways
4. Nyameadom	Nyame + adom	God + bless	God's blessing
Nyameenyi	Nyame + enyi	God + eye	God's eye Water's eye/surface Palm kernel oil god of Pra river
Nsuenyi	Nsu + enyi	Water + eye/surface	
Adwengo	Adwe + ngo	Palm kernel + oil	
Bosompra	Bosom + pra	god + pra (name of river)	

From the data above 2-5, indicate possession. The first noun, in each case *God* possesses the second noun. This applies to example 6. The implication of this is that God gives all these children to the parents who bear them.

- *Open Compounds:* Other noun-noun compounds remain open in the resultant name. For most of these names, there are some categorizations and permutations. Examples are

Table 2: Open compound names

Name of Person Morphological analysis

Noun + Noun

1. Oben Gyasi	Obeng + Gyesi
Ntiamoa Nyansa	Ntiamoa + Nyansa
Ntiamoa Mensa	Ntiamoa + Mensa
Agyeman Badu	Agyeman + Badu
5. Mensa Adiana	Mensa + Adiana
6. Amissa Ahen	Amissa + Ahen
Ahen Mensa	Ahen + Mensa
Amissa Ata	Amissa + Ata
Akomea Agyekum	Akomea + Agyekum
Adubɔfo Agyekum	Adubɔfo + Agyekum
Owuwie Amissa	Owuwie + Amissa

In these examples, the first noun (name) is a modifier to the second noun (name) which is the head noun. This is so because when two nouns are in succession the first act as the modifier and the second, the head noun. For example, Oben qualifies Gyasi (in example 1). This can be interpreted as Oben the son of Gyasi or Adobea, the son of Agyekum as in example 10 above. In these cases, the two independent nouns form the compound. It must

be noted that, in these names the second one, which is the head noun, is the surname the name of the father) because most Ghanaian use their fathers' names as surnames in school. This implies that the modifier becomes the middle name (the given name of the child) and then the Christian/Muslim name as the first name. Therefore, a child in school with the name Charles Owuewie Amissa has Charles as the first name, Owuewie as the middle name and Amissa as the surname. In another development, some of these names are fixed because the names and their appellations are combined. Examples are as follows: Agyemang Pambour, Mensa Aborampa, Frempong Manso, Otuo Serebour, Boakye Yiadom, Sapon Kumankuma, and Adusee Poku. Others are Apea Kubi, Aseebu Amamfi, Ofori Amamfo, ɔsɛɛ Tutu, ɔpon Kyekyeku, Apentsen Ofosuhen, Amosa Kakabo, Tweneboa Kodua and Twieku Bonso. As oppose to the first set of names in the category (1-11) above, the first names in this category are the real (given) names (head noun) and the second, the appellation. The appellations are the modifiers. The surnames in this category are the first names and the appellation as middle names. It is rare to find somebody with only an appellation name as his/her real name but occasionally you may find someone called Kweku *Manso* (*Kweku* – Wednesday born and *Manso* the appellation name which has now become the given name). Such situation may arise perhaps the appellation name might have been used over time and has now metamorphosized to a given name. It must also be noted that names like *Mensa*, *Manu* and *Nsia* are counting names so an individual can add his real name to it e.g. *Nsia Amissa*, *Manu Kwartan*, and *Mensa Yiadom*. Again, it is not rare to hear the name *Kweku Mensa*. (a Wednesday born and a third male born).

- *Hyphenated Compound*: In this category of names, the two independent names are written with hyphen. One may think that the use of the hyphen is just a convention but it has some implication on what constitute a surname. Below are examples of hyphenated compound personal names:

- | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1. Asafo-Agyei | 12. Agyei-Mensa | 23. Owuewie-Amissa |
| 2. Gyehu-Apea | 13. Edu-Gyamfi | |
| 3. Owuewie-Amissa | 14. Owusu-Mensa | |
| 4. Antwi-Boasiako | 15. Gyamfi-Dua | |
| 5. Opoku-Ware | 16. Apea-Kubi | |
| 6. ɔkyer-Daako | 17. Edu-Oben | |
| 7. Akufo-Addo | 18. Bampo-Addo | |
| 8. Edu-Amankwaa | 19. Adom-Gyima | |
| 9. Obiri-Yeboah | 20. Edu-Boahen | |
| 10. Adu-Anin | 21. Opoku-Fofie | |
| 11. Agyeiwa-Yiadom | 22. Ansa-Boahen | |

In the examples above, the hyphenated nouns are elevated to a surname echelon. The person's given name is tied to the father's name as one form. The first part of the hyphenated name is the child's given name and the second, the father's name. This means that none of these two names is a middle name unlike the open compound ones. It must be noted that some of these examples have come about because of marriage. Some time ago in Ghana, women adopted the surname of their husbands when they get married in a matrimonial manner. For example, a woman with the name *Miss Josephine Ankra* after marriage in the matrimonial way to Mr. John Ahin will abandon her surname and replace it with that of the man's surname so she will be called Mrs. Josephine Ahin. In recent times, because of changes in the concept marriage and the changing roles of women in marriage, this practice is dying down. Most women now maintain their surnames plus that of the men and hyphenate them e.g. Mrs. Josephine *Ankra-Ahin*.

7.1.2.2 Noun + Postposition

The study also identified that some Fante personal names consist of nouns and postpositions as compounds. A few personal names collected belong to this category. In these examples, the noun and the postposition are written as one word (solid compound). Examples include the following:

Table 3: Noun/postposition compound names

Personal Name	Morphological analysis Noun + Postposition	English Gloss	Free English translation
1. Manano	Man + ano	town + edge/tip	leader of town
2. Nyameano	Nyame + ano	God+ mouth	God's saying
3. Owuekyir	Owu + ekyir	death + after	after death
Owumu	Owu + mu	death + in	in death what
Owuano	Owu + ano	death + mouth	death says end
Owuewiei	Owu + ewiei	death+end	of death

7.1.2.3 Noun + adjective

The data from the study also showed that some Akan personal names consist of a noun (N) and an adjective (Adj). In these names, the adjective is written together with the noun. The adjective part of the name is said with a high tone. The following were examples from the data:

Table 4: Noun-adjective compound names

Personal Name	Morphological analysis (Noun + Adjective)	English Gloss	Free English Translation
Samanpa	Saman + pa	ghost good	good ghost
Duafun	Dua + fun	tree rotten	rotten tree
Danpan	Dan + pan	house + empty	empty house
Adakapan	Adaka + pan	coffin + empty	empty coffin
Brapa	Bra + pa	life + good	good life
Asemyaw	Asem + yaw	case + painful	painful case/news
Asempa	Asem + pa	case/news + good	good case/news
Ntomago	Ntoma + go	cloth + tattered	tattered cloth
sikafew	Sika + few	money + beautiful	beautiful person

7.1.2.4 Affixation

Affixation is the process of adding prefixes and affixes to stems. Verbal nominalization in Akan is through affixation (particularly prefixation). There are two ways through which this nominalization process can be realized in Akan. These are direct verb stem/base nominalization and nominalization afterreduplication.

• Nominalization

Nominalization is the process of changing verbs, adjectives or other open word classes into nouns. It is also called *nouning*. In transformational grammar, *nominalization* refers to the process of deriving a noun phrase from an underlying clause. (Bodomo, 1997; Appah, 2003). According to SIL International (2004), nominalization is a noun phrase that has a systematic correspondence with a clausal predication which includes a head noun morphologically related to a corresponding verb. Adomako (2012) refers to such affixation in Akan as verbal affixation, which are always prefixes (verbal prefixation). It must be noted that in Akan, the verb phrase (VP) can be a verb, a verb and a noun, a verb and an adverb or a verb and an adjective. Nominalization is a category change. Below are examples of names from the data, which were formed through the process of nominalization:

Table 5: Names formed by nominalization

Verb/Verb Phrase	English Gloss	Affix (Prefix)	Noun (name)	English Gloss	Free English translation
1. ka menko	Leave me alone	a-	Akamenko	left alone	Lonely person
2. ye (bi) hwɛ	Do some see (try)	a-	Ayɛbiahwɛ	Try some see	A person who experiments
5. ye woho	Do yourself	a-	Ayɛwoho	Self doer	Self destroyer
6. gye nsamu	Take hand (uncontrolled)	a-	Agyensamu	gone out of hand	Uncontrollable person
7. *Bra yie	Come well	a-	Abayie	Has come well	Lucky person
8. *fa dzi	Take eat (take and eat)	a-	Afadzi [afedzi]	Has taken to eat	One who takes and eats/consumes
9. gye man	Take town (save town)	a-	Agyeman	Has saved town	Saviour of town (Saviour)
10. fir yie	Germinate well	a-	Afiryie	Has germinated well	Lucky person
11. dzi yie	Eat well	e-	Edziyie	Has eaten well	A fortunate person or one who succeeds
12. *Bra bio	Come again	a-	Ababio	Has come again	Reincarnated person
13. ka akyir	Stay behind	a-	Akaekyir	Has stayed behind	Late arrival
14. *ye bi	Do some	a-	*Ayebi	Has done something	Doer of things
15. ko	fight	a-	Ako	war	Fighter
16. tse nka	Feel scent	a-	Atsenka	Has experienced	Experiencer

The affix (the nominalizer) is said with a high tone but the last syllable of the nominalised name is said with a low tone. If it is read with a high tone, it becomes a perfect tense. In example (7, 12), *bra* changes to *ba* because in Akan (Fante) *bra* is only used in the present tense; in any other tense form, *ba* is used.

- *Suffixation*

Suffixation is a morphological process whereby a bound morpheme is attached to the end of a stem. In Akan, some suffixes are used to transform a personal male name (masculine) to a female (feminine) one. Examples of such suffixes in Akan include – *wa*, – *ba*, – *ma*, – *maa* and – *aa*. It must be noted that the suffixes – *wa* and – *ba* are sometimes used to indicate diminutive (smallness). For example, *kuro* (village/town) + – *ba* (small) = *kuroba* (small town/village) or *dua* (tree) + – *ba* (small) = *duaba* (small tree/twig) and *kwan* (road) + – *wa* (small) = *kwanwa* (small road/short distance). The following were examples from the data:

Table 6: Female names formed from suffixation

MASCULINE	SUFFIX	FEMININE
1. Ofori	– <i>wa</i> /– <i>waa</i>	Oforiwaa
2. Frempon	– <i>maa</i>	Frempomaa
3. Amissa	– <i>wa</i> /– <i>ba</i>	Amissawa/Amissaba
4. Ampea	– <i>ba</i>	Ampeaba
5. Fosu	– <i>wa</i> /– <i>waa</i>	Fosuwaa/Fosuwaa
6. Nyan	– <i>ba</i>	Nyanba
7. Adom	– <i>a</i> /– <i>aa</i>	Adoma/Adomaa
8. Fori	– <i>wa</i> /– <i>waa</i>	Foriwa/Foriwaa
9. Pra	– <i>ba</i>	Praba
10. Wobir	– <i>ba</i>	Wobirba
11. Egyir	– <i>ba</i>	Egyirba
12. Nyame	– <i>wa</i>	Nyamewa
13. Boahen	– <i>ma</i> /– <i>maa</i>	Boahen/Boahemaa
14. Kuntu	– <i>wa</i>	Kuntuwa
15. Afram	– <i>ba</i>	Aframba
16. Ewusi	– <i>wa</i>	Ewusiwa
17. Bondze	– <i>wa</i>	Bondzewa

7.1.2.5. Reduplication

Reduplication is the process of repetition whereby the form of a prefix/suffix reflects certain phonological process characteristics of the root (Crystal, 2007). Examples in Akan (Fante) include

- i. *bu* (break) becomes *bubu* (break repeatedly/break several times)
- ii. *hwe* (look) becomes *hwehwe* (search)
- iii. *nsu* (water) becomes *nsunsu* (watery)
- iv. *ɔman* (town) becomes *amanaman* (towns)
- v. *fa* (take) becomes *fefa* (take repeatedly)
- vi. *abo* (rocky) becomes *aboabo* (very rocky)

From the above examples, it can be realized that reduplication in Akan can be partial (as in examples ii and v) or complete repetition (as in examples i, iii, iv and vi) of the root word (Owu-Ewie, 2014). Reduplication is a form of word formation in Akan. The open word classes (nouns, verbs, adverbs and adjectives) in Akan can all be reduplicated. It must be noted that in some cases when words are reduplicated, some phonological processes like elision, assimilation, vowel raising and vowel addition occur. Since all open class words can be reduplicated, it implies that some personal names can be reduplicated as in the few examples below:

- i. *Kyɛkyɛr* (a person who delays) is made up of *Kyer* (to delay) + *Kyer* (to delay). In this example, there is deletion and vowel lengthening. The liquid sound /r/ is deleted in the base form and compensated for with /ɛ/. This phenomenon is referred to as compensatory lengthening. This is an example of partial reduplication.
- ii. *Tsetse* (has no particular meaning).
- iii. *Kwakwa* (nothing) – This name is a typical example of complete reduplication.

7.2 Sentential Level Analysis of Fante Personal Names

To understand proceeding and analysis in this section, it is prudent to explicate on the sentence structure in Akan (Fante). The structure of the Akan sentence is Subject + Verb + Object (SVO). This section looks at the syntactic structure of some Akan (Fante) personal names. It looks at some Fante personal names and sentential level analysis. The data collected showed that some Fante personal names are complete sentences. The analysis of the names was put into two broad categories: by *function* and *structure*. It was realized that by function some names are declaratives, questions and commands/imperatives. The analysis also portrayed that by structure some personal names were compound sentences while others were found to be complex sentences. Below are the analyses:

7.2.1 Sentential personal names and sentence function analysis

By function, sentences are classified into declaratives, commands/imperatives and questions (interrogatives) (see Owu-Ewie, 2014). According to Crystal (2003), a declarative sentence refers to a verb form or sentence or clause types which are typically used in expressing statement. Such sentences are sometimes referred to as indicative sentences. On the other hand, an imperative (command) sentence usually has no subject. Where a subject is used, it is always in the plural form. The verbs in such sentences are in the imperative mood. Question or interrogative sentences are used to make enquiries and are usually marked with interrogative words. Examples of such words in Akan (Fante) includes *woana* (who), *hen* (where), *ahen* (how many) etc. In some cases, the question word is not used but it has a rising tone at the end of the sentence. The data revealed that some personal names can be declaratives, imperatives/commands, and questions/interrogatives. Examples are as follows:

7.2.1.1 Sentential Personal Names with declarative function

The data collected indicated that some personal names are declarative sentences; they are statements. Some of these names were written as single words, as isolated words or as hyphenated words. Some are composed of a noun, which is the subject, a verb and a noun which is the object while others consist of a noun (subject) and a verb (SV). At times the name is made up of a noun (subject), a verb and an adjective (used predicatively) (SVAdj). The following were names from the data that were declaratives:

Table 7: Sentential Personal Names with declarative function

NAME STRUCTURE	
1. Menyinndawodo (Me enyi nnda wo do)	Me enyi nnda wo do <u>my eye</u> (neg) lie you on (I do not depend on you) Pro + N (subj) V Pro (obj.) Postp
2. Kafodzidzi (Kafo dzi dzi)	Kafo dzi dzi debtor eat eat (Debtor eats)
3. Ohiaeyaw (Ohia ye yaw)	N (subj) V V (verb reduplication) Ohia ye yaw Poverty is painful (Poverty is painful) N(Subj) V Adj (comp)
4. Barimansu (Barima nsu)	Barima nsu Men (neg)cry (men don't cry – men endure)

		N (subj)	V	
5. Morohwɛ Nyame	Mo	rohwe	Nyame	
Morohwɛ Nyame	I	(prog)see	God	(I am looking up to God)
	Pro (Subj)	(prog)V	N (Obj)	
6. ɔnnkaekyir	ɔ	nnka	ekyir	
(ɔ nnka ekyir)	It	(neg)left	behind	Pro(subj) (neg) V PostP(Comp) (it is not late)
7. Kornka (Kor nka)	Kor	nka		
	One	ing(remain)		(one should remain)
	(Num)Subj	(ing)V		
8. ɔɔyɛfɛw	ɔɔ	yɛ	fɛw	
(ɔɔ yɛ fɛw)	N(subi)	V	adj	
	Love	is	nice	(love is nice/beautiful)
9. Nyamedɔm (Nyame dɔ m(e))	Nyame	dɔ	me	
	God	love	me	(God loves me)
	N(subj)	V	Pro (obj)	
10. Asembɔn fata hianyi	Asem bɔn	fata	hianyi	
	N (subj)	V	N(obj)	
	(Bad case befits the poor		person)	
11. Obinnyin (Obi nnyim)	Obi	nnyim		
	Somebody	neg(know)		(Nobody knows)
	Subj	(neg)V		
12. Owuseɛfie (Owu sɛɛ fie)	Owu	sɛɛ	fie	
	Death	destroy	home	(Death destroys home/family)
	N(subj)	V	N(obj)	
13. Owuasa	Owu	asa		
	N (subj)	V Death	(perf) finish	(Death has finished)

7.2.1.2 Sentential Personal Names with imperative (command) function

In Akan and in most languages, the imperative sentence has no subject if it is in the singular form (2014). However, an imperative sentence has the subject when the subject is in the plural form. The subject in each case is implied and is *ɔwo* (you). The following were examples identified from the data:

1. Towkyen	Tow kyen V Postp throw away (reject)
2. Towmekyen	Tow me away V Pro(obj) Postp throw me away (reject me)
3. Fawoho	Fa woho V Pro (obj) Take yourself (you are free)
4. Faasemkye	Fa asem kye V N(obj) V Take case give (forgive)
5. Prasoam(e)	Pra soa me V V Pro (obj) sweep carry me (put it on me)
6. Fabiyeserew	Fa bi ye serew V Det V N Take some do laugh (laugh over some things/don't take all things serious)
7. Tsenabeebi	Tsena beebe V adv Sit somewhere (sit somewhere)
8. Kɛdadwen	Kɛda dwen V V Go sleep think (sleep and think over it)
9. Tanmeawu	tan me a, wu V Pro(obj) Part. V Hate me die ((if you) hate me, die)
10. Sunkwa	su nkwa V N(obj) Cry life (cry for life/cry for health)
11. Surobasia	suro basia V N(obj) Fear woman (fear woman)
12. Susuka	susu ka V V measure say (Say (it) moderately)

7.2.1.3 Sentential Personal Names with interrogative (question) function

According to Crystal (2003), interrogative sentences refer to sentences, which are used in the expression of questions. Such sentences are marked by interrogative words/items like *which, why, where, who, when, how* etc. In some cases a statement is inverted e.g. *They are coming* is inverted to *Are they coming?* Sometimes, such sentences are not marked by interrogative words but with a rising pitch at the end of the sentence. This phenomenon is realized in Akan (Fante). Examples of personal names as interrogative sentences in the data collected are as follows:

1. Abɔwonda Abɔ wo nda?
(Perf)dig your grave (Have you dug your grave?)
2. Beyeɛden (wo) beyeɛ den?
(you) (Ing) do what ((you) what did you come to do?)

4. Towmekyen

Tow	me	kyen
V	(Pro) obj	adv
Throw	me	away (throw me away)

5. Ohiaeyyaw

Ohio	yɛ	yaw
N(subj)	V	Adj.
Poverty	is	painful (Poverty is painful)

6. Kafonndzidzi

Kafo	nndzidzi?
N (subj)	(neg)V (redupl)
Debtor	eat (Does Debtor not eat?)

7. ɔwoahene	ɔ-	wo	ahene	
Pro(subj)	(pres)V	(pl)N(obj)		
			She	born chiefs (She gives birth to prominent people)
8. Barimbansu	Barimba	nnsu		
	N (subj)	(neg) V		
	Man	(neg) cry		(Man does not cry)
9. Tsenabeebi	Tsena	beebe		
	V	Adv		
	Sit	somewhere		(sit somewhere)
10. Kornka	Kor	nka		
	Num (subj)	(ing)V		
	One	(ing) remain		(One should remain)
11. Sikayɛfɛw	sika	yɛ	fɛw	
	N(subj)	V	Adj	
	Money	is	beautiful/nice	

7.2.2.2 Personal names with compound sentence structure

As indicated by Crystal (2003), a compound sentence is made up of two or more independent clauses. The clauses involved are joined by coordinating conjunctions like *and* (*na/ne*), *but* (*naaso*), *or* (*anaa*), *ntsi* (*so*) etc. Crystal also identifies that some compound sentences do not have explicit coordinating conjunctions. Such compound sentences are referred to as 'asyndetic coordination'. These types of sentences were found to be very few in Akan personal names. In fact there was only one of such personal name in the data collected.

i. *Surobasia na nyin kyer* (*Suro basia na nyin kyer*)

The two main clauses in this sentence are *suro basia* (fear woman) and *nyin kyer* (grow old) joined by the coordinating conjunction *na* (and). The name means fear woman and grow old/live long. The person who bears this name is most of the time called *Surobasia*. It is upon further interrogation that the second part will be revealed.

7.2.2.3. Personal names with complex sentence structure

A complex sentence structure has a main (independent) clause and one or more subordinate (dependent) clauses. This type of sentence structure exists in Akan too. In Akan, the subordinate clause is marked by subordinating

correlation conjunctions like *sea* (if). The *se* component is optional but the *a* particle and the comma are compulsory elements (Owu-Ewie, 2014). In all the personal names collected, the *se* element is dropped but for analysis purposes, it is included and put in parenthesis. Names with this type of sentence structure were found to be few. The following are examples:

1. *ɔwɔmuaoye*

((*Se*) *ɔwɔ mu a*, *oye*)

Subordinate Clause – (*se*) *ɔwɔ mu a*, ((if) he is in)

Main clause – *Oye* (it is good)

Free English translation – If he is included, it is Good,

2. *Asemnntowada*

((*se*) *asem nnto wo a*, *da*)

- Subordinate clause – (*se*) *asem (neg) to wo a*, ((if case (neg) reach you)

- Main clause – *da* (sleep

- Free English translation – If you are not faced with a problem, relax.

3. *Adzewɔfieaoye*

((*se*) *adze wɔ fie a*, *oye*).

- Subordinate clause - (*se*) *adze wɔ fie a*, ((if) something is in house)

- Main clause – *Oye* (it is good)

- Free English translation – If there is property in the house, it is

good.

4. *Ibowuawu*

((*se*) *I- bowu a*, *wu*)

- Subordinate clause – (*se*) *I (fut) wu a*, (If you (fut) die)

- Main clause – *wu* (die)

- Free English translation – If you will die, die.

5. *Semereka*

Se me- reka a, *adze besa*

- Subordinate clause – *se me- (prog) ka a*, (If I am saying)

- Main clause – *Adze (fut) sa – (night will fall)*

- Free English translation – If I am to say it, night will fall (Time will not allow me to say all I have to say).

It must be noted that the subordinate part of example V varies depending on the experience of the giver of the name.

VIII. Conclusion

The paper investigated the morphological and syntactic structure of one hundred and sixty (160) (Akan) Fante personal names. The data for the study was collected from both primary and secondary sources. The study identified that some Akan (Fante) names are morphologically single root morphemes, compounds, affixations (nominalization and suffixation) and reduplications. The compound names consisted noun/noun (open compound, solid compounds and hyphenated compounds), noun/postpositions and noun/adjective. At the sentential level, some names were functionally declarative, interrogative and imperative (command) and some were structurally, some names were found to be simple, compound and complex sentences. A critical analysis of the sentential names indicated that simple sentences names were the most frequent used followed by complex sentences and compound sentences in that order.

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