

**THE MORPHOSEMANTICS OF *-NI* AND *-FOO* NOUNS IN  
AKAN**

**BY**

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**(10246100)**

**This Thesis/Dissertation is submitted to the University of Ghana,  
Legon in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of  
MPHIL IN LINGUISTICS Degree**

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## DECLARATION

I, Grace Afua Dankwaa Djan declare that except for references to works which have been duly cited, this thesis is a result of my original research, under the supervision of Professor Clement Kwamina Insaideo Appah and Dr. Seth Antwi Ofori, and that it has neither in whole nor in part been presented for another degree elsewhere.

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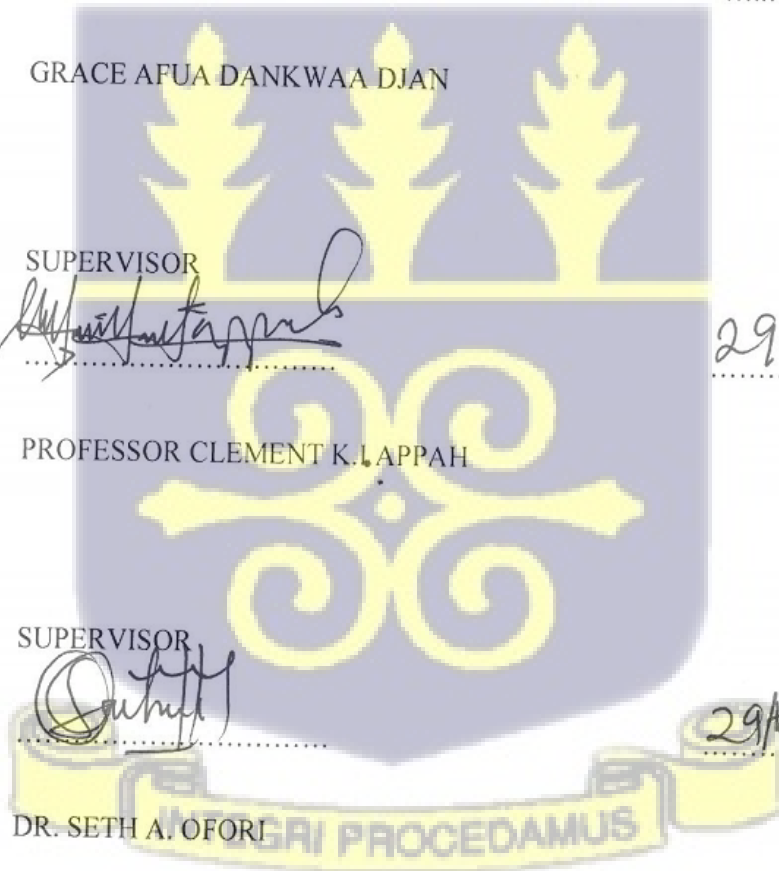
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## **DEDICATION**

**To A Faithful God, Thank You**

**To Alfred, Daniel, Jael and Gabriel, my siblings**

**To Benjamin and Cecilia, my Parents**

**To all who are overwhelmed in any endeavor and are pushed to the wall to  
give up. This is to You! BE KIND TO YOURSELF, Keep Pushing, It will  
pay off**



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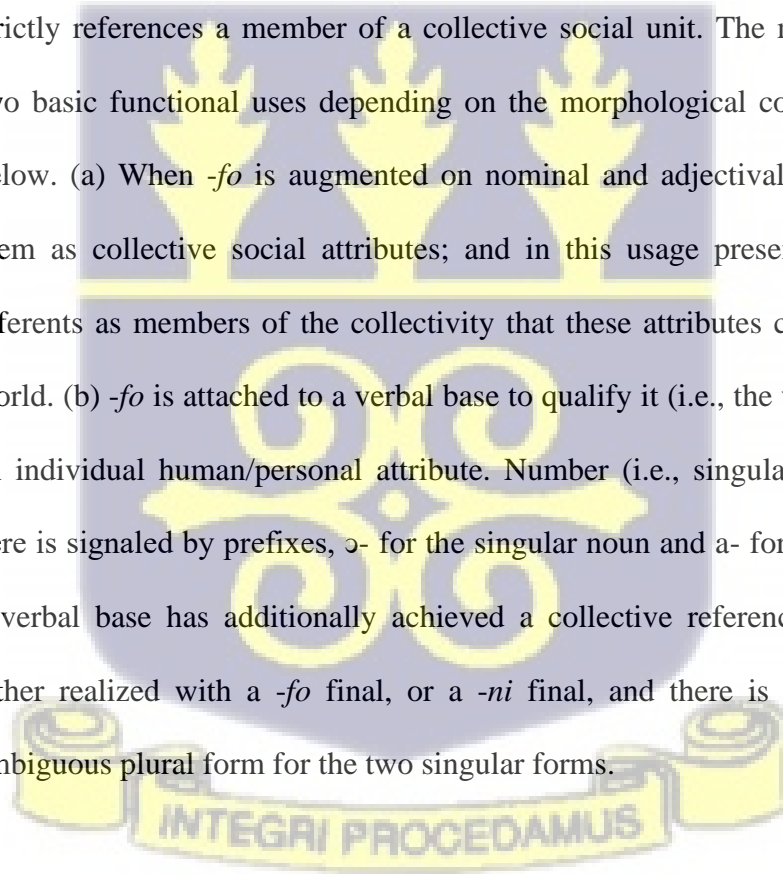
To my muses, Eugenia S. Cobbina, Selina Ansah, Jones, Michael O.F. Ribeiro, Percy O. Adams, Randy K.A. Nkansah, Fiifi and Araba Biney, Kofi Dotse, you have been such great support systems. I appreciate and love you all very much, thank you!

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## ABSTRACT

This study aimed to establish the principles that motivate the formation of *-ni* and *-fo* nouns in Akan, as an alternative to previous accounts on the subject. Our primary objective was to examine the contributions *-ni*, *-fo*, prefixes and other key morphological units (i.e., bases) make, both structurally and semantically/functionally, towards the formation of *-ni* and *-fo* nouns in Akan, assuming principles of Lieber's (2004) Lexical Semantic Model, which is decompositional in its approach to lexical analysis. From the current study, a base performs one of two functions in a morphological context. That is, it either denotes a collective (i.e., social) attribute, or an individual (human) attribute. *-ni* strictly references a member of a collective social unit. The morpheme *-fo* has two basic functional uses depending on the morphological context as indicated below. (a) When *-fo* is augmented on nominal and adjectival bases, it presents them as collective social attributes; and in this usage presents its (i.e., *-fo*'s) referents as members of the collectivity that these attributes connote in the real world. (b) *-fo* is attached to a verbal base to qualify it (i.e., the verbal attribute) as an individual human/personal attribute. Number (i.e., singularity and plurality) here is signaled by prefixes, *ɔ-* for the singular noun and *a-* for the plural. Where a verbal base has additionally achieved a collective reference, the singular is either realized with a *-fo* final, or a *-ni* final, and there is a single, lexically ambiguous plural form for the two singular forms.



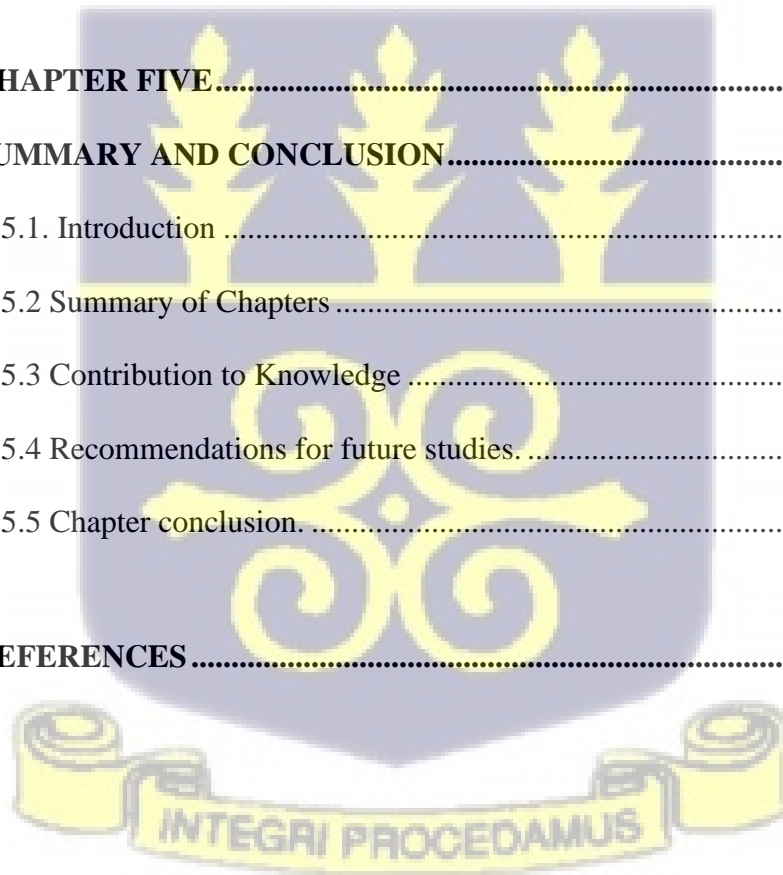
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Map 1: The Administrative Map of Ghana

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1	First Person
2	Second Person
DEF	Definite determiner
N	Noun
NEG	Negative
Nom	Nominal
NP	Noun Phrase
PERF	Perfect Aspect
PRF	Prefix
PL	Plural
POSS	Possessive
PROG	Progressive
REL	Relative
SG	Singular



## CHAPTER ONE

### GENERAL INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Introduction

This research examines the morpho-semantic properties of two forms, namely *ni* /ni/ and *fo* /fɔ/, in Akan grammar. The following are other manifestations of the two forms in the three literary dialects of Akan – namely Asante Twi, Akuapem Twi and Fante. In the Fante dialect, *ni* exists as *nyi* [ɲi]; and *fo* /fɔ/ is realized as *foɔ* [fɔɔ] in Asante (i.e., but as *fo* [fɔ] in the Akuapem and Fante dialects). The forms *ni* /ni/ and *fo* /fɔ/ are considered as the basic/underlying forms in the current study since the *ny* [ɲ] sound of *nyi* as in Fante is derived through /n/ palatalization before the front vowel /i/; and the final *ɔ* of [fɔɔ] as in Asante is a derived feature of nouns in Asante (see Ofori 2019). Therefore, whatever the observation is (and therefore is said) about *ni* and *fo* holds true for these three literary dialects of Akan.

Data is integrated and analyzed with a theoretical model of derivational semantics: Morphology and Lexical Semantics (Leiber 2004). In particular, the goal of this study is to provide an in-depth study of the range of distributions of the forms *ni* and *fo* morphologically and syntactically and the range of functions associated with these distributions. The study also focuses on defining the constituent structures of the range of *ni* and *fo* nouns to determine the constraints on their functional distributions in Akan grammar. Also, the study explores the semantic contributions the bases

(i.e., the units that *ni* and *fo* combine with to form nouns) make to the overall meaning of derived noun forms.

The present chapter is the general introduction of the study. In section 1.2, an ethno-linguistics description of Akan is presented. 1.3, I discuss the study background in relation to affixation in Akan. The statement of problem that is the research gap I seek to fill is looked at in section 1.4. In sections 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, and 1.8, the research questions guiding the study, the objectives of the study, and significance of study are presented and the research methodology is given respectively. The organization of the study is presented in section 1.9. The conclusion of chapter is presented in section 1.10

## **1.2 An Ethno-linguistic Description of Akan**

In this section, we look at the ethnography and some linguistic features of Akan to provide us with some basic background to the language under study.

### ***1.2.1 Ethnographic account of Akan***

The name Akan, refers to both an ethnic group and the language spoken by this group. Hitherto the 2018 Ghanaian new regions referendum, the people called Akans were found in five out of the then ten administrative regions of Ghana. Currently, they are found in eight (8) out of the sixteen (16) administrative regions of Ghana, namely Ashanti, Bono East, Bono, Ahafo, Western North, Western, Central and

Eastern regions as shown in (figure 1) below. They represent 14.630 million out of the total population of 30.8 million Ghanaians, according to the 2021 Population and Housing Census report. According to Dolphyne (2006: xi), the name Akan has been used to refer to the language, whose dialects include Asante, Fante, Akuapem, Sefwi, Agona, Akyem, Wasa, Kwahu, Bono etc. since the 1950's; the time when the need for a unified orthography for the varieties of this language was acknowledged. Three of these dialects have since attained literary status- Fante, Akuapem and Asante.

Akan is the most widely spoken and used indigenous language in Ghana. The language is now spoken by about 47.5% of Ghanaians as a first language, and as a second language by a good percentage of the remainder as it is an important language for trade in most parts of the regions, especially the Greater Accra region of Ghana. The language is also spoken in some parts of the Ivory Coast. It is classified under the Kwa sub-group of languages of the Niger-Congo family of languages.

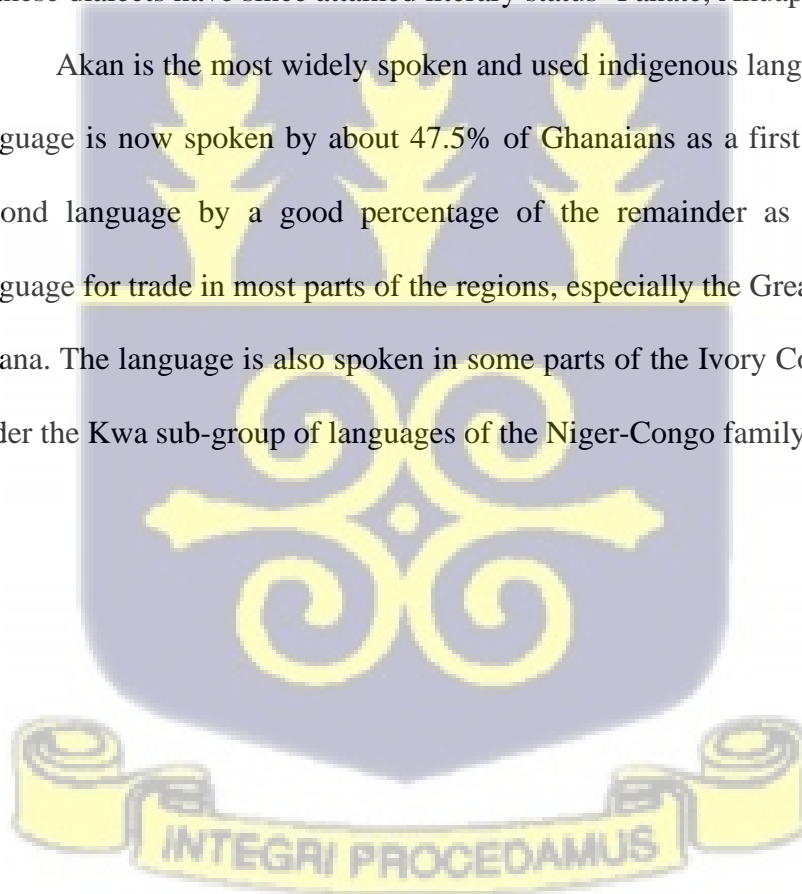
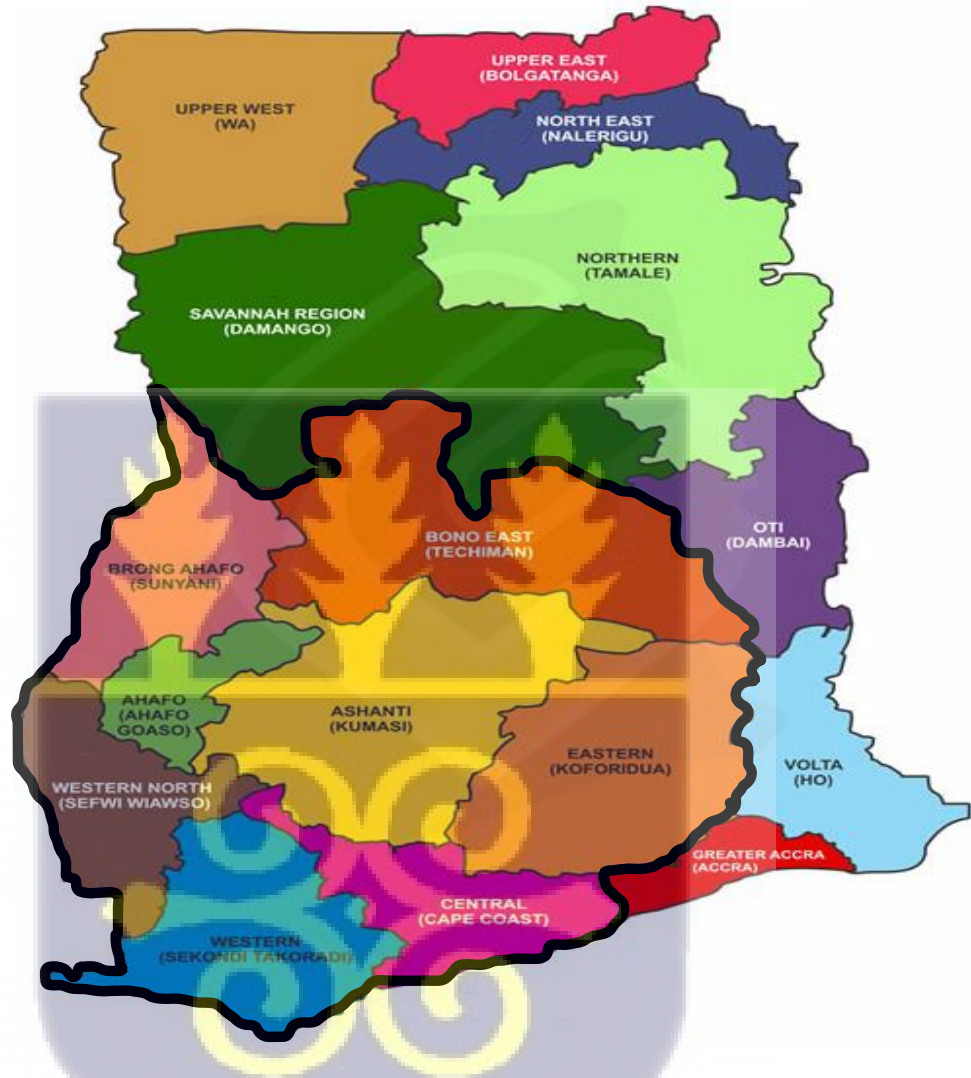


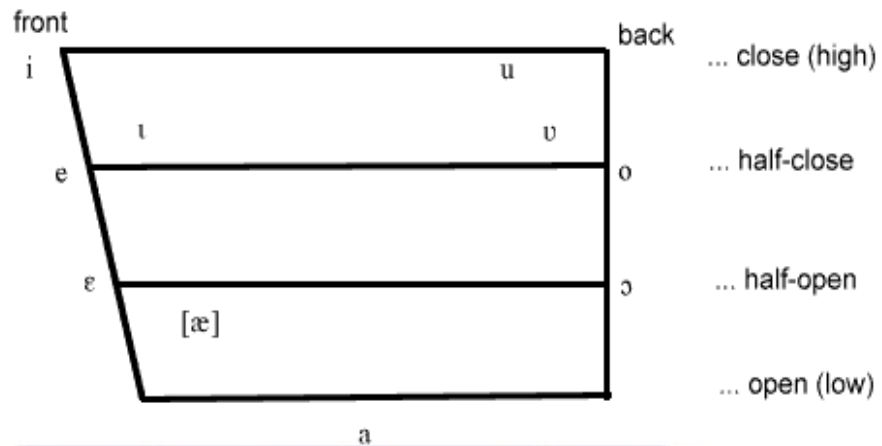
Figure 1 is the map of Ghana



*Map 1: The Administrative Map of Ghana showing Akan occupied Regions*

### *1.2.2 Akan speech sounds.*

Akan vowel sounds have three distributions. The first are the oral vowels which involve all the air in the production coming through the mouth. They are represented in the orthography by seven vowel letters: / i e ε a ɔ o u/ as seen in figure one.



**Figure 1: Akan Vowel Chart (Dolphyne 2006:7)**

The second are the long vowels, which are produced same as the oral vowels and are represented in the orthography by doubling the vowel letters as in /ii ee εε aa oo uu/.

The vowel sounds are largely described in terms of the shape of the tongue and the lips when the vowel is being produced. Table 1 illustrates the Akan oral and long vowels in words.



**Table 1: Akan Oral and long vowels in words**

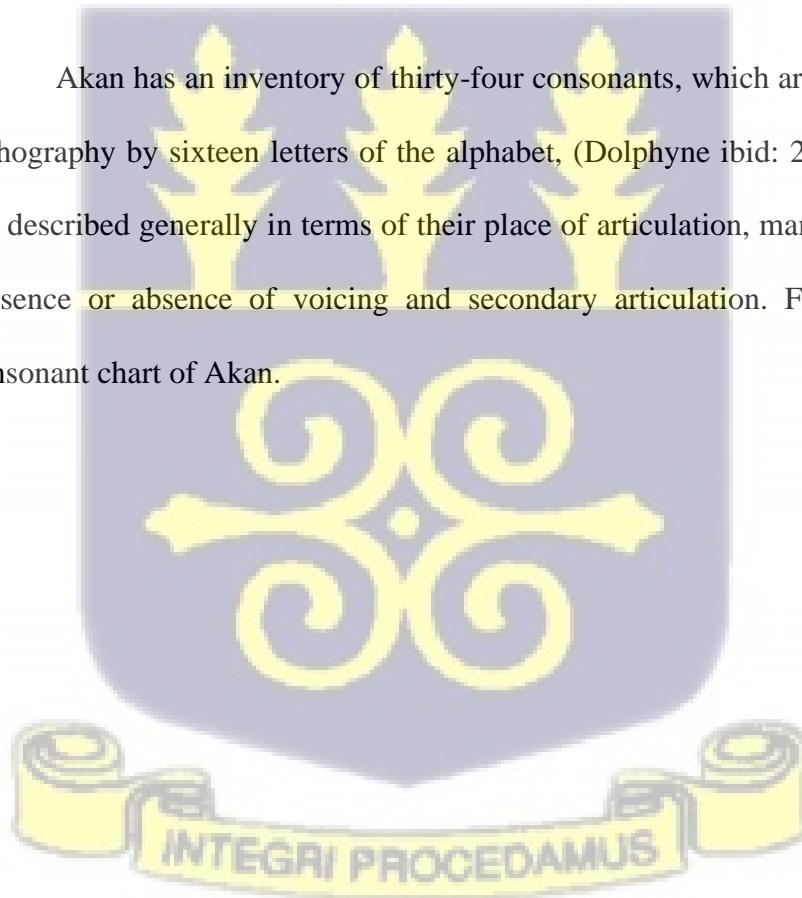
Vowel	Word	Translation
i	Siw	plug a hole
e	Sew	Sharpen
ɛ	sɛw	Spread out
ɔ	sɔw	Catch
a	Saw	Dance
o	Dwo	Cool down
u	Suw	Be worn out/decay
a:	Daa	Everyday
ɔ:	kɔɔ	Red
i:	Dii	Ate
ɛ:	fɛɛfɛ	Pretty
u:	Atuu	Hug
o:	Apoo	Cheating
e:	Hwee	Empty

The third are the nasalized vowels, produced with the air coming out of both the mouth and nose. The nasal vowels bring about differences in the meanings of words that may be identical hence they are phonemic. They are five in number- /ĩ ě ã õ ù/. Although vowel nasality is not indicated in Akan orthography, nasality of vowels is indicated by /~/ above the vowel letter in transcription. Table 2 illustrates Akan nasalized vowels in words.

**Table 2: Akan nasal vowels in words**

Nasal vowels	Words	Gloss	Non-nasals	words	Translation
ĩ	fĩ	‘dirt’	I	fi	‘go out’
ě	sě	‘teeth’	E	se	‘sharpen’
ã	kã	‘say’	A	ka	‘bite’
õ	tõ	‘bake’	O	to	‘throw’
ũ	hũ	‘see’	U	hu	‘blow’

Akan has an inventory of thirty-four consonants, which are represented in the orthography by sixteen letters of the alphabet, (Dolphyne ibid: 26). The consonants are described generally in terms of their place of articulation, manner of articulation, presence or absence of voicing and secondary articulation. Figure 2 shows the consonant chart of Akan.



“Unified” Akan consonant chart.

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Alveolar	Pre-palatal	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Stop	p, b		t, d			k/k <sup>w</sup> , g/g <sup>w</sup>	*ʔ
Fricative (voiceless)		f	s	ç (hy)			h
Labialized Fricative (voiceless)				ç <sup>w</sup> (hw)			
Affricate				tç(ky) (voiceless) dz(gy) (voiced)			
Labialized Affricate				tç <sup>w</sup> , dz <sup>w</sup> (tw,dw)			
Lateral (voiced)			l				
Nasal (voiced)	m		n		ɲ (ny)	ŋ (n)	
Labialized nasal (voiced)					ɲ <sup>w</sup> (nw)	ŋ <sup>w</sup> (nw)	
Glide (voiced)			r		y	w	

*Figure 2: The Akan Consonant Chart*

### 1.2.3 Tone in Akan

Tone is a critical feature to the meaning of a word in Akan. According to Dolphyne (ibid: 52), “Akan is a tone language, which means that the meaning of a word in

Akan depends not only on the vowels and consonants of which the word is made, but also on the relative pitch on which each syllable of the word is pronounced’.” This adds a distinct aspect to the importance of vowels, consonants and syllables of the language. There are two basic tones in Akan- high tone [ˈ] and low tone [ˌ]. The syllable is the tone- bearing unit in Akan, which is constituted of V, CV and V. Therefore, the presence of a low or high tone on similar seeming syllables will result in different words due to the difference in tones on the syllables.

Example (1) below shows the differences in the meaning of some identical words, relative to tone.

1. a. pápá ‘good’      pàpá ‘father’      pàpà fan  
b. dá ‘day’      dà ‘never’

### 1.3 Study Background-Affixation in Akan

Linguists employ different strategies to create new words from existing ones in languages. Plag (2004) recognizes that English makes use of affixation, non-affixation and compounding among other word formation strategies in creating new words. By putting together smaller units called morphemes, he identifies that morphologically complex words are formed. For example, *employer* is derived from *employ* by attaching the affix *-er* to the base.

Like English, Akan is endowed with a variety of complex morphological processes. Affixation, compounding and reduplication have received appreciable

scholarly attention (cf. Chistaller 1875; Dolphyne 1988; Osam 1993, 1994; Bodomo and Marfo 2002; Kamboon 2002; Appah 2003; Adomako 2012; Ansah 2021). To better appreciate *-ni/-fo* derivatives, we will discuss Akan affixation. Dolphyne 2006 asserts that the structure of Akan word is the stem(s), root(s) and affixes. Discussing the general formation of words in Asante and Fante, Christaller (1875:17) remarks that “[a]ll words, concerning their form and origin are either primitives, or derivative, or compound”; describing primitives as the simple stems by which derivatives are formed by the accrument of prefixes, suffixes and reduplication. He gives examples of some prefixes he terms ‘nominal prefixes’ (a-, e-, o-, m-, am-) found in nouns, adjectives and numerals) and nominal suffixes’ (-e, -i, -ee, -ie,) which he describes as palatal suffixes. The other suffixes he mentions are *-ma, -wa, -ni, -fo*. In what follows in 1.3.1.1 and 1.3.2., we discuss the nominal prefixes and suffixes.

### ***1.3.1 Akan Nominal Prefixes***

In Akan, nominal prefixes are either vowels or homorganic nasals (Dolphyne 1988, Osam 1993, 1994; Appah 2003; Adomako 2012) whose form is usually determined by the vowel of the stem. In Table 3, Kamboon (2002) presents the Akan nominal prefixes spelling out the functions of a particular prefix, (whether singular or plural), the form of the prefix, the base it attaches to and examples of nominals derived from these prefixes.

**Table 3: Nominal Prefixing in Akan (Kambon 2002:42)**

Function	Affix	Attaches to	Examples
Singular	∅	Nouns	gyata [dzata] ‘lion’, kurow [kurow] ‘towns’
Singular	ɔ, o	Nouns (usu. Humans)	o-hu [o-hu] ‘fear’, ɔpanyin [ɔ-panin] ‘elder’
Singular/Plural	a, æ	Nouns	a-gya [æ-dza] ‘father’, a-bofra [a-bofra] ‘child’, a-gyata [æ-dzata] ‘lions’
Singular	ɛ, e	Nouns	e-kuw [ekuw] ‘group’, ena [ɛ-na] ‘mother’
Plural	m, n	Nouns (usu. Liquids)	mbogya [m-bogya] ‘blood’, n-su [n-su], ‘water’, m-panyin-fo [m-panin-fo] ‘elders’
Singular/Plural	am, an	Nouns	am-pan [am-pan] ‘bat’, an-kaa [an-kaa] ‘orange’

Appah (2003) after listing the nominal prefixes as (ɛ-, e-, ɔ-, o-, i-, a-) notes that all the prefixes mark singular nouns and form their plural with /a-/, except those that have /a-/ and /i-/ as a singular marker which take a homorganic nasal as a plural marker as seen in example one (1a-f) below.

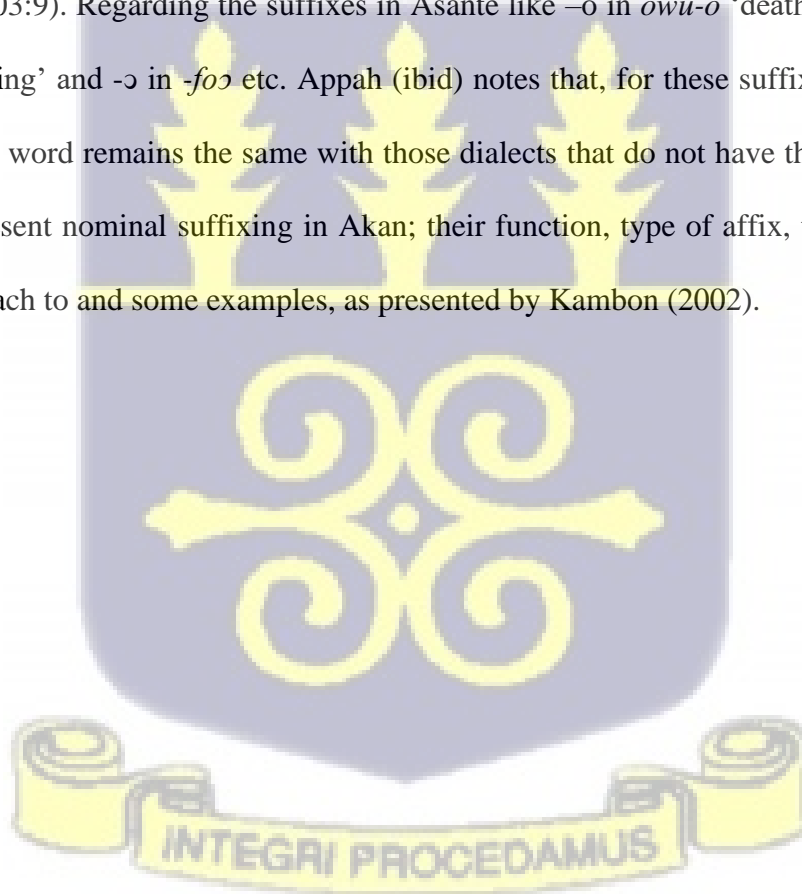
1. <b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>
a. a-boa	m-boa
SG-animal	PL-animal
‘an animal’	‘animals’
b. i-dua	n-dua
SG- tree	PL-tree
‘a tree’	‘trees’
c. ε-dan	a-dan
SG-building	PL-building
‘a building’	‘buildings’
d. o-honin (As)	a-honin (As)
SG-idol	PL-idol
‘an idol/a smaller god’	‘idols/smaller gods’
e. e-dziban (Fa)	n-dziban (Fa)
SG-food	PL-food
‘food’	‘foods’
f. ɔ-bɔfo	a-bɔfo
SG-angel	PL-angel
‘an angel’	‘angels’

(Appah 2003:8-9)

It is worth noting that these prefixes are nominalizing affixes (Dolphyne 1988; Appah 2003) and it is important we discuss them, as they have direct bearing on the derivation of *-ni/-foɔ* nouns as we see in Table 4 below.

### ***1.3.2 Akan Nominal Suffixes***

“Akan nouns have suffixes which are, for the most part, derivational” (Appah 2003:9). Regarding the suffixes in Asante like *-o* in *owu-o* ‘death’ and in *-ε* in *ade-ε* ‘thing’ and *-ɔ* in *-foɔ* etc. Appah (ibid) notes that, for these suffixes, the meaning of the word remains the same with those dialects that do not have them. In Table 4, we present nominal suffixing in Akan; their function, type of affix, the word class they attach to and some examples, as presented by Kambon (2002).



**Table 4: Nominal Suffixing in Akan (Kambon 2002:42)**

Function	Affix	Attaches to	Examples
Singular	∅	Nouns	ε-kɔm [ε-kɔm] ‘hunger’, sika [sika] ‘money’
Singular	-ni	Human Nouns	o-sua-ni [o-suiæ-ni] ‘student’, o-sika-ni [o-sikæ-ni] ‘rich person’
Singular/ Plural	- fo(ɔ)	Human Nouns	ɔ-nokwa-fo [ɔ-nokwa-fo] ‘truthful person’, a-bibi-fo [æ-bibi-fo] ‘Africans’
Plural	-nom	Nouns	nana-nom [nanæ-nom] ‘ancestors’, nua-nom [nuiæ-nom] ‘cousins’
Diminutives	-wa	Nouns	Asante-wa [asante-wa] ‘female Asante’, a- barima-wa [a-barima-wa] ‘young male’
Noun formation	-e	Verbs, nouns	m-frafra-e [m-frafra-e] ‘mixture’, owigyina-e [ouidzina-e] ‘noon’
Noun formation	-i	Verbs, nouns	mmubu-i [mmubu-i] ‘paralysis’, apue-i [æpɔie-i] ‘east’

In addition to the nominal suffixes mentioned in Table 4, Dolphyne (1988) and Appah (2003) capture the nominal suffix /-ba/ as part of the diminutives. Adding to Kambon’s description of the plural nominal suffix /-nom/, Appah (ibid:11) asserts that it is used to pluralize kingship nouns. Of essence to the current study, as has

already been established, are the singular nominal suffix */-ni/* and its plural counterpart */-foɔ/*. Appah notes that */-foɔ/* occurs together with certain prefixes to mark plurality in the stems they attach to

#### 1.4 Problem Statement

The forms *ni* and *fo* have received extensive scholarly attention in the Akan literature (Christaller 1875; Dolphyne 1988; Osam 1994).

Christaller (1875) talks about the forms *ni* and *fo* under the sub topic derivatives, prefixes, suffixes, and reduplication of formation of words in general in Akan. He describes *ni* and *fo* as personal suffixes under the category of nominal suffixes. He mentions that the personal suffixes *ni* is used only in the singular and *fo* is used in the both singular and plural of derivatives.

Generally, the structural analysis involved in the formation of *ni* and *fo* derivatives are not given. The consequences are that the formal structural features of *ni* and *fo* nouns are yet to be described.

Dolphyne (1988:84) classifies *ni* and *fo* under nominal affixes in Akan and labels *fo* in two sets; agentive suffix and plural suffix (usually occurring with a plural prefix). Dolphyne (ibid), recounts concerning the form *ni* that, the advance vowel in the form harmonizes with the vowel in the preceding syllable to an advanced quality. She labels the form *ni* as a suffix as well. Discussing the trends in double marking, Osam (1994) glosses the form *ni* as ‘one who’ and asserts that, *ni* must have started

out as a derivational morpheme, deriving a noun from the verbs, but now, its use goes beyond derivational limits. Again, he mentions that, *ni* has the function of marking singular nouns, with its plural as *fo*.

However, the semantic role of the bases of the forms that *ni* and *fo* bring to the overall meaning of the derived simplex and complex nouns are not considered. Again, the syntactic and morphosyntactic approaches involved in the formation of complex *ni* and *fo* nouns are not researched. There is therefore the need to study the occurrence of *ni* and *fo* nouns to ascertain the formation of their structure, the semantic contributions of the bases as well as the forms they take in the derived simple or complex nouns.

### 1.5 Research Questions

This study seeks to address the following questions.

1. What are the morphological and syntactic properties of *ni* and *fo* simplex and complex nouns in Akan grammar.
2. What are the semantic contributions of the bases and the bound *-ni* and *-fo* morphemes to derived simplex and complex nouns in Akan grammar?
3. What functional roles do *ni* and *fo* play in derived simplex and complex noun outputs in Akan?

### 1.6 Objectives of the study

This work is guided by the following objectives:

1. To identify the morphological and syntactic properties of *ni* and *fo* in simplex and complex nouns in the Akan grammar.
2. To identify the semantic contributions of bases and the bound *-ni* and *-fo* morphemes to derived nouns in Akan.
3. Identify the functional roles that *-ni* and *-fo* play in the derived noun outputs in Akan.

### 1.7 Significance of study

This work aims at filling the gap in the literature pertaining to:

- The morphological and syntactic properties of *ni* and *fo* simple and complex nouns in Akan.
- The semantic contributions the bases and the bound *-ni* and *fo* morphemes make to derived nouns in the grammar of Akan.

### 1.8 Research Methodology

The data for this work is primarily from secondary sources; the Akan dictionaries, word list and related literature on the topic. Christaller's (1933) Dictionary of the Asante and Fante Language called Tshi (Twi) and the Akan Dictionary [2006] produced by the Department of Linguistics at the University of Ghana provides a

rich database of an extensive range of words and their meanings for the careful selection, classification and examination of the various types of the derived nouns. The Asante-Twi Bible also serves as a rich go to source of these morphemes. This source of data was chosen because of the large amount of data it contains and its accessibility.

Secondly, selected Akan radio programs, especially morning shows (Adom FM, Peace FM and Oman FM) were listened to and recorded. The morning shows were selected because of their interactive nature and the use of the Akan language in its current form. As studio panelists and callers shared their view on trending topics, some of the target nouns were realized. The target words were extracted and transcribed for analysis. This second (primary) source of data serves as a complement to the list of words I got from the written sources and documents.

Also, attention was given to everyday interactive conversations with people at church, social gatherings and some social media platforms, mainly WhatsApp status to identify and extract the instances where these derived nouns were used and the various meanings given them for further analysis.

### ***1.8.1 Presentation of Data***

Data for the study is presented with standard interpretation. The data is presented with Akan orthography and their respective English glosses which help with

understanding. I present the bases with their English glosses, then the derived noun with its translation. Consider for example, the presentation in Table 5 below:

**Table 5: Examples of *ni* and *fo* derivatives**

Base	Gloss	Derived noun	Gloss
Sika	‘money’	Osikani	‘a rich person
ohene	‘a chief’	Ahemfo	‘chiefs’
Boa	‘to help’	ɔbofo	‘helper’
Akan	‘an ethnic group’	Akani	‘a native of Akan

In the examples, the base represents the form to which *ni* and *fo* is attached.

The derived nouns are given in their full word form with their interpretation.

### 1.9 Organization of the work.

The thesis is divided into five (5) chapters. Chapter one (1) is the introductory chapter; the ethnolinguistic description of Akan is given. The problem statement, research questions guiding the study, objectives and significance of study, as well as the research methodology are also discussed concluding with the organization of chapters of the thesis. Chapter two (2) reviews relevant literature and expounds on the theoretical model of the study. To ensure that the objectives of the study are met, chapter three (3) analyzes the morphological strategies involved in the formation of

*ni* and *fo* simple and complex nouns. Chapter four (4) discusses the semantic contributions of the bases as well as the bound and free *ni* and *fo* morphemes make to the derived simplex and complex nouns in Akan. Chapter five (5) provides the general findings, conclusion of the thesis and recommendations for future studies.

### **1.10 Conclusion**

In the current chapter, I have discussed the background of the study, and the need for the study, presenting the origin of *-ni* and *-fo* and their unique inflectional and derivational properties thus far, which is important to the study.

Again in this chapter, the research questions guiding the study, objectives of study, study background which discusses affixation in Akan, statement of problem as well as the significance of the study were all captured. Lastly, the chapter covered the data and methodology of study as well as the overall organization of the thesis.



## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the literature and theories that have relevance to the objectives and scope of this research. On the literature, I review the existing positions on *-ni* and *-fo(ɔ)* by Akan linguists (2.1), and some viewpoints on nominalization as a linguistic notion and process (2.2), as background to this study. The sections on theoretical framework (2.3) focus on the following. A literature review with the subtitle: ‘Derivation and Inflection’ (2.3.1) presents the linguistic definitions of the two concepts and lays out the relevant morphological procedures based on which a form may be characterized as either derivational or inflectional. The existing works on *-ni* and *-fo(ɔ)* in Akan did not consider the bigger literature on derivation and inflection, and did not also subject the different uses of the two forms to the relevant derivational/inflectional testing. That is, they simply employed the two concepts in their functional/semantic definitions of these forms without any testing. Therefore, a review of the literature on the two concepts, and the choice to submit the two forms to derivational and inflectional testing in the current study to determine which of the two functions is applicable to which form in which morphological domain is in order. Subsection (2.3.2) outlines the basic tenets of the model of Morphology and Lexical Semantics (MLS) (Lieber, 2004), a theory

devoted to the study of how the meaning of complex forms are derived from those of constituent forms. Section 2.4 concludes the chapter.

## **2.2 Literature Review: A review of the literature on *ni* and *foɔ* in Akan grammar**

The distributions and functions/semantics of *ni* and *foɔ* have been explored by the following Akan linguists (Christaller 1875; Balmer and Grant 1929; Dolphyne 1988; Osam 1994; Appah 2003, 2006; Abakah 2000, 2004; Ofori 2016). This section reviews some of the existing formal and semantic/functional positions on *ni* and *foɔ*. The presentation here will provide some context for the current study, and will help in my analysis and reanalysis on the structure, semantics and functions of *ni* and *foɔ* in Akan grammar.

Abakah (2000) describes *-ni* and *-foɔ* as suffixal bound particles; and indicates that the suffix *-ni* was originally (i.e., not currently) an independent noun. According to Christaller (1875), *-ni* as a suffix was derived from the noun *o-ni-pa* meaning ‘person’. Dolphyne (1988: 84) writes that it was derived from the noun *oni* ‘person’, while Balmer and Grant (1929:34) posit *enyi*, ‘eye’ – Fante dialect (i.e., *ani* in the Twi dialects of Akan) as its origin. This is because the eye is a distinctive feature of a person. Thus, *nyi* derives from the first syllable of the form *nyimpa* which means ‘person’. The form *o-ni* and *o-nipa* is one and the same noun both

meaning ‘a person or human being’. Again, both *nyimpa* and *o-nipa* mean ‘person’ as observed already. The difference in form is dialectal.

Christaller (1875) also glosses *-fo(ɔ)* as ‘persons’ in the *Dictionary of the Asante and Fante language*. Balmer and Grant (1929:34) make reference to *-fo(ɔ)* as being putatively connected with the form *fow*, which is suggestive of abundance, many etc. The suffix *-fo(ɔ)*, according to Abakah (2004:286), derives from *ɔfu(ɔ)* ‘persons’. In the current study *fo(ɔ)* is not only a bound form, but also a free nominal morpheme in the Akan language. The form *-ni* is also treated as a free morpheme in some areas of Akan grammar by the current study.

Some semantic/functional positions on *-ni* and *-fo(ɔ)*: According to Christaller, *-ni* and *-foɔ* ‘person(s)’ form personal nouns from the stems they are suffixed to; for example, *ohia-ni* ‘a poor man’ is a combination of the stem *ohia* ‘poverty’ and *-ni*; *ɔtam-fo* ‘an enemy’, underlyingly consists of *tan* ‘to hate’ and *-fo*. He outlines the various strategies by which number is marked in Akan. They are:

- (i) by prefixing *a-*, e.g. *ɔhene* ‘king’ to *a-hene* ‘kings’.
- (ii) by reduplication and prefixing *a-*, e.g. *ɛtɔw* ‘lump’ to *atɔwatɔw*<sub>[PL]</sub>
- (iii) by prefixing a nasal (*m-*, *n-*, *ŋ-*) e.g. *ɛda* ‘days’ to *nna*<sub>[PL]</sub>
- (iv) by suffixing *-fo* and changing the prefix e.g. *afɛ* ‘comrade’ to *mfɛ-fo*<sub>[PL]</sub> and, in the event where the stem ends with *-ni*, it is substituted by *-fo* in the plural e.g. *ohia-ni* ‘a poor man’ to *a-hia-foɔ*<sub>[PL]</sub>
- (v) by suffixing *-nom* and

(vi) by suffixing *-ma* and *-wa* e.g. *ena* ‘mother’ to *ena-nom*<sub>[PL]</sub> and *ɔyare* ‘sickness’ to *nyarewa*<sub>[PL]</sub>

Balmer and Grant (1929) note, concerning *-nyi* and *-fo(ɔ)* that, nouns ending with these suffixes are descriptive of a person (e.g., *ɔfari-nyi* ‘fisherman’). They further assert that *-nyi* is a singular marker of Akan which is substituted by *-fo* in the plural. They mention that *-nyi* derives personal nouns from towns. e.g. *Oguaa* ‘Cape Coast’ → *Oguaa-nyi* ‘a Cape Coast person’, *Oguaa-fo*<sub>[PL]</sub>. They identify and group nouns having *-fo* as their singular as being vocational nouns from adjectives or verbs. For example, the words in (1a-c) are vocational or occupations requiring some skills.

1	Noun	Gloss	
a.	onu-fo	‘fisherman’	
b.	ɔtom-fo	‘blacksmith’	
c.	ɔso-fo	‘priest’	(Balmer and Grant 1929: 35)

In the current study, number – i.e., merely specifying an item as singular or plural – is not the primary reason for attaching either *nyi/ni* or *-fo(ɔ)* after some linguistic item in Akan.

Balmer and grant (1929) further give instances where *-nyi* and *-fo* co-occur in some singular personal nouns such as in (2) below. They explained that *-fo* as used in the forms below, is underlyingly *fow* ‘to climb’, ‘to go up’.

- 2 a.   ɔkwa-fo-nyi   ‘one who goes up into the mountains-bushman’  
      b.   ɔpo-fo-nyi   ‘one who goes up on the sea- fisherman’(Balmer and Grant 1929: 35)

I take a different stance on Balmer and Grant’s (1929) semantic analysis on -fo in the nouns above in the current study. Fo as used in the forms above is fo(ɔ), which is the form in analysis in the current study.

Dolphyne (1988:84) asserts that, *-foɔ* is a plural suffix which usually occurs with a plural prefix. This implies that, *-foɔ* functions as a number marker. E.g. *ɔpanyin* ‘elder’ to *mpanyim-foɔ*<sub>[PL]</sub>.

Discussing the Akan noun class system, Osam (1994) argues that the system is becoming plural-oriented. His basis is that there are now more nouns with plural marking than there are with singular markings. He maintains that synchronically Akan speakers themselves are not conscious of the singular prefix anymore because the singular prefixes are being co-lexicalized with the noun system. This makes the language appear to be developing a new classification of nouns along the lines of the plural marking system. He makes a case with specific reference to the human nouns as having a trend towards double plural marking. That is, some human nouns are marked for plural by the use of the old prefix as well as by certain suffixes. This is illustrated in (3) below.

3.	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
a.	bata-nyi	a-bata-fo	‘traders’
	gyedzi-nyi	e-gyedzi-fo	‘believers’
b.	ɔ-bayi-fo	a-bayi-fo	‘witches’
	o-kua-nyi	a-kua-fo	‘farmers’
	o-tum-fo	a-tum-fo	‘mighty men’
c.	ɔ-saman	n-saman-(fo)	‘ghosts’
	a-bɔnsam	‘m-bɔnsam-(fo)	‘devils/evil doer’

He explains that the suffix *-nyi/-ni* which means ‘one who...’ must have been realized as a derivational morpheme, deriving a noun from verbs but now goes beyond the derivational limits and now functions as a singular marker, with *-fo* as its plural counterpart as seen in (3a). He describes *-fo* in (3b) as being a plural marker yet it is being reanalyzed as both the singular and plural marker of the nouns. According to Osam, in (3c), the function of *-fo* unlike its function in (3a & b) is optional. His claim is that, there is a possibility that with these words, the presence of *-fo* as a plural marker is a new phenomenon. Missing from Osam’s (1994) account is a linear glossing justifying the verbalness of the forms to which *fo* is attached. Not every item mentioned as a verb in the above data is indeed a verb. For example, the base word *bata* is not a verb; the verb is *tu bata* ‘to embark on a trip’, and yet *tu* being the main verbal item of the pair is completely omitted from the derived noun;

also, it is not clear whether *bɔnsam* is also a verb; and the form in Twi is *ɔb(r)onsam* ‘devil’; whereas the plural is *ab(r)osamfo(ɔ)*.

Appah (2003) describes *-ni* and *-foɔ* as occurring together with certain prefixes to mark singularity or plurality in the stems they are attached to. Appah (2003) notes that by their suffixation to the base word, citizenship/nationality, identificational and agentive nouns are derived (Appah 2003; 200). In the current study, we establish the basic meanings of *ni* and *fo(ɔ)* and explore the different formal distributions of these forms to establish a more definite functional and/or semantic properties of these forms in Akan grammar. We argue that identification is the basic function of every noun; therefore, it is in no way a unique semantic property of only *-ni* and *-fo(ɔ)* derivatives in Akan. Also, derivatives with the *-ni* morpheme in Akan are not agentive – an agentive *-ni* derivative will be ungrammatical in Akan grammar. Appah’s semantic analysis of *-ni* and *-fo(ɔ)* derivatives is not exhaustive. There are forms like *ɔbatanyi/abatafo* (Osam 1994), *ɔdefo/adefo*, which are neither agentive nor citizenship/nationality personal nouns. This study aims to provide an exhaustive semantic/functional account which takes care of the forms *ɔbatanyi/abatafo* (Osam 1994), *ɔdefo/adefo* “well-to-do” and several others that the existing semantic positions have not (i.e., like immediate forms), and cannot handle.

The following paragraph is in response to Abakah’s analysis of *-ni* and *-fo(ɔ)* as particles. Crystal (1992: 291) defines a particle as “[a]n invariable item with a

grammatical function.” He goes further to say this, “[t]he term is especially used for a form which does not readily fit into a standard classification of parts of speech.” If Crystal’s definition of a particle is true, then *-ni* and *-fo(ɔ)* as used in Akan are not particles based on Christaller’s (1933) dictionary definitions of *ni* and *foɔ* in Akan below, and also based on the following evidence from “personal communication” with Seth Antwi Ofori. According to Ofori (P.C), the forms, *-ni* and *-foɔ* are free forms in synchronic Akan where they function as full NP, as in the examples below.

(4a.) Use of *ni* as head of a relativized-NP

Yɛ-a-hu      oni    a      ɔ-fa-a      sika    no.

We-PERF-see person REL s/he-take-PAST money DEF

“We have found/seen the person who took/stole the money.”

(This sentence in rapid speech comes to be realized as: Yɛahu nea [nia] ɔfaa sika no.

That is, [oni + a] merge to derive nea [nia].

Below also is a full-NP usage of *-fo(ɔ)* with the nominal prefix *a-* (i.e., *afo(ɔ)* ‘members’).

(4b) Wo afo(ɔ) [w’afoɔ] rekɔ.

2SG comrades PROG-go

‘Your comrades/colleagues/friends are going (i.e., are on their way).’

(Seth Antwi Ofori, personal communication, 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2022)

In the sentence above, *-foɔ* as a full-NP is realized as *afɔ(ɔ)* (i.e., a possessed-NP) in a possessive construction with *wo* ‘your’ (the possessor). That is, *ni* and *fo* have independent usage where they function as full-NP with their nominal prefixes, *ɔ-* (realized phonetically as [o] due to [+ATR] harmony) for *ni*, with *a-* as the nominal prefix for *fo(ɔ)*. From the examples above as offered to me Ofori in a “personal communication”, it is too early to use the term particle for *-ni* and *-fo(ɔ)* in Akan. Functionally, *ni* and *fo(ɔ)* are nouns, which are added after other items of the language irrespective of their class membership to derive the *ni* and *fo(ɔ)* type of human nouns.

### 2.3 Literature Review: Nominalization

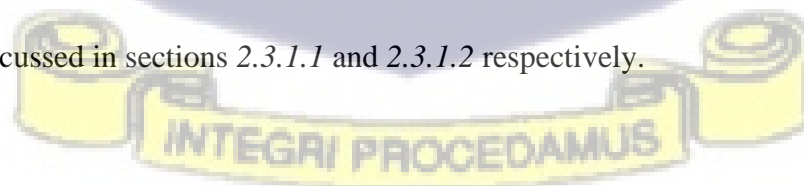
This section reviews relevant literature on nominalization. Works on nominalization examine what it is, its types, as well as the strategies for expressing it. The concept of nominalization has been extensively studied by linguists (Crystal 1987; Matthew 1997; Tallerman 1998; Givon 2001; Payne 1997; Comrie and Thompson 2007; Koptjevskaja-Tamm 2006). Crystal (1987: 426) defines nominalization as “a process of forming a noun from another word class, e.g. red to redness”. Matthew (1997) defines it as “any process by which either a noun or a syntactic unit functioning as a noun phrase is derived from any kind of unit”. Tallerman (1998:78) defines nominalization as “... making something into a noun; specifically, the process of turning a verb into a noun”. Comrie and Thompson (2007: 334), also defines

nominalization as “turning something into a noun”. In addition to the definition of Comrie and Thompson (ibid), Koptjevskaja-Tamm (2006: 652) extends the definition to include the “corresponding processes or operations and to their results. According to Haspelmath (2002), the term covers a broad range of transpositional phenomena, where transpositional, in turn, refers to word class changing operations.

I take an inclusive view of nominalization as most of the authors have mentioned. From the various definitions given above, we will add that, the term nominalization is a derivational process by which lexical and syntactic items are transposed from one word class including nouns and phrases/clauses to the class of nouns. This suggests that we may distinguish different types of nominalization and their concomitant strategies. In the next section, we discuss the types and strategies of nominalization.

### ***2.3.1 Types/Strategies of Nominalization***

There are two main types of nominalizations identified in the literature. They are (i) Grammatical nominalization and (ii) Lexical nominalization. These two types are discussed in sections 2.3.1.1 and 2.3.1.2 respectively.



### ***2.3.1.1 Grammatical Nominalization***

Grammatical nominalization is discussed in the literature widely (Payne 1997; Givon 2001; Comrie and Thompson 2007). Givon (2001), in discussing the noun phrases derived by nominalization, posits that syntactic complexity in NP's may be best characterized as a product of nominalization. This means that one of the intricacies in sentence constructions is as a result of nominalization. He defines nominalization as “the process by which a finite verbal clause – either complete or a subject-less verb phrase – is converted into a noun phrase” (Givon 2001:24). This definition thus supports the notion of nominalization as a grammatical rather than a lexical process.

According to Givon, a verbal clause is nominalized when it occupies a prototypical nominal position or function; that is subject, direct object, indirect object or a nominal predicate within another clause. This syntactic complexity of NP's arising from the strategy of nominalization reflects the structure of their source verbal clause. Therefore, within the nominalized NP, the former assumes the syntactic role of the head noun, while the other clausal elements (subjects, objects, verbal complements etc.) assume the role of modifiers.

Givon argues that nominalization in this sense is best described in terms of syntactic adjustment from the finite verbal clause original to the nominal NP. He outlines the major components of such adjustments as follows:

- verbs becoming a head noun

- Verbs acquiring nominalizing morphology
- Verbal loss of tense-aspect-modal morphology
- Loss of pronominal agreement morphology
- Subject or object acquiring genitive case-marking
- Addition of determiners
- Conversion of adverbs into adjectives.

Example (5) illustrates a finite verbal clause (5a) being nominalized (5b).

- 5a. She knew mathematics.  
b. Her good knowledge of mathematics.

### 2.3.1.2 *Lexical Nominalization*

The second type of nominalization we will discuss is lexical nominalization (Comrie and Thompson 2007; Payne 1997). Payne (1997:223), in his seminal work on describing morphosyntax, defines nominalization as “the operation of allowing a verb to function as a noun”. He gives the formula of this process as follows:

6.  $V \rightarrow [V]_N$  or  $V \rightarrow N$

According to Payne, there are a number of ways by which a noun may be related to a verb, including (i) referring to the agent of the action described by the

verb, (ii) referring to the result of the action described by the verb, etc. He asserts that languages employ diverse nominalization strategies in the nominalization process and these strategies differ functionally according to the resulting noun's semantic relationship to the original verb. In the next subsections, we discuss the strategies identified by Payne (1997).

### 2.3.1.2.1 Action Nominalization

Payne (1997: 223) identifies action nominalization as one of the strategies of lexical nominalization. He defines action nominalization as the action, usually in the abstract, which is expressed by the verb root. It is formulated as (7)

7.  $V \rightarrow N$  ACTION designated by V

What follows are examples of action nominal in (7).

7a. That was a significant **breakthrough**.

He has **hangup**

b. **Walking** is good.

I am looking for **employment** <employ>

He worked in **construction** <construct>

(Payne 1997: 224)

c. gnaya → wo-gnaye

'to deceive' 'deception'

(Comrie and Thompson 2007:335)

Example (7a) shows the process in English where a **verb plus a preposition** is used to form the lexical nominalization. Example (7b) shows the lexical nominalization process where **morphological** strategy is employed, where we see a change in form from verb to noun. (7c) shows the **analytic strategy** where a particle is used to show lexical nominalization in Lakohota, a Sioux language of South Dakota.

#### 2.3.1.2.2 *Participant Nominalization*

Participant nominalization is a verb-based nominalization process that results in a noun that refers to one of the participants in the action designated by the verb root.

Payne (1997) gave the formula for this process as (8)

$$8. \quad V \quad \rightarrow \quad N_{\text{PARTICIPANT of } V}$$

Payne asserts that this participant nominalization strategy often derives different functionalities. He identified two main functionally different participant nominalizations: (i) those that refer to the agent of the action of the verb (ii) those that refer to the patient of the action of the verb.

##### 2.3.1.2.2.1 *Agent(tive) Nominalization*

Comrie and Thompson (2007) and Payne (1997) make particular reference to this nominalization strategy. Comrie and Thompson (2007:335) refer to nouns derived

from this process as agentive and refer to the process as action/state nominalization. Payne (1997:226), on his part, states that “[a] nominalization that refers to the agent of the nominalized verb is an **agent nominalization**”. The formula for this derivation is as shown in (9)

$$9. \quad V \rightarrow N_{\text{AGENT of } V}$$

Examples of nouns formed through this process in English and Akan are given in (10).

10. a. pickpocket <someone who picks pockets> (Payne 1997: 226)  
b. kyerekyere-foɔ ‘a teacher/ someone who teaches’ (Appah 2003: 73)

Plungian (2000) makes known the derivational and inflectional status of agentive nouns in Dogon, a group of about twenty related though often not mutually intelligible dialects spoken in a remote South-West part of Mali, in West Africa. As observed, the morphological problem for Dogon is the problem of wordhood in that it has several dimensions and implies, among others, that there are large intermediate zones with no clear-cut boundaries both between affixes and clitics and between inflectional and derivational markers.

Plungian asserts that, in Dogon, agentive nouns are usually obtained by means of a word-final marker *-ne* which is neither called a non‘suffix’ nor ‘clitic’, and this is applicable to a limited number of nouns and adjectives but not verbs. To a

large extent, it could be considered as the nominalizing deverbal marker. The term ‘agentive’, according to Plungian, seems justified because the general meaning of the derived nouns is ‘a person who...’, but he observes that there are some semantic peculiarities of this form depending on the lexical class of the element of departure.

The present study will, as a matter of importance, probe more into this sense of ‘agentive’ nouns since the suffixation of the morphemes *-ni* and *-foɔ* to the base forms, among others, ‘agentive’ nouns in the Akan language. For instance, *kua* ‘farming’ ~ *o-kua-ni* ‘farmer’ that is ‘a person who does the action connoted by the base *kua* ‘farming’. Further details of the semantic peculiarities arising from the functions of the suffixes and the nouns they form will be discussed in chapter four.

Returning to ‘Agentive Nouns in Dogon’, Plungian shows some denominal and deadjectival uses of the *nɛ* marker in examples (11) and (12) below

11. Denominal *nɛ* nouns

a. ɔgɔ ‘power’ ~ ɔgɔ.nɛ ‘hogon, religious leader’

b. ɔgɔy ‘wealth’ ~ ɔgɔy.nɛ ‘rich man’

c. kɔnnɔ ‘enmity’ ~ kɔnnu.nɛ ‘enemy’

d. antolou ‘hunting’ ~ antolu.nɛ ‘hunter’

e. gūy ‘theft’ ~ gūy.nɛ ‘thief’

12. Deadjectival *nɛ* nouns

a. dɔgɔ ‘belonging to the Dogon race’ ~ dɔgɔ.nɛ ‘Dogon person’

b. pulɔ ‘belonging to the Fulani race’ ~ pulɔ.nɛ ‘Pullo, Fullani person’

c. dɛgu ‘poor’ ~ dɛgu.nɛ ‘poor person’

d. pɛɛy ‘old’ ~ pɛɛ.nɛ ~ old person’ (Plungian 2000: 180-181)

From the examples (11 & 12), it can be seen that the main sources of the *nɛ*-derivations are nouns and adjectives which denote properties. Consequently, the derivatives relate to a person who has, or is characterized by the corresponding property.

Plungian further discusses the properties of *nɛ* and identifies that all *nɛ*-forms have common properties. He adds that some of these properties can be said to be nominal and others verbal. First, from the syntactic point of view, they behave like nouns because they are the syntactic heads of the nominal phrases and consequently, they can be modified by attributes and postpositions. Secondly, all the *nɛ*-forms can take a suffixal plural marker.

In conclusion, *nɛ* is an affix which behaves like a clitic, and a derivational marker which behaves like an inflectional one. Except for behaving like a clitic, the suffixes *-ni* and *-foɔ* seem to have similar derivational and inflectional properties as *nɛ* in Dogon.



### 2.3.1.2.2.2 Patient Nominalization

Patient nominalization refers to the patient of the nominalized verb. It is formulated as (13)

$$13. V \rightarrow N_{\text{PATIENT of } V}$$

The data in example (14) below show how English derives patient nouns from verbs via the suffixes *-ee*. Thus *-ee* is a patient nominalizer.

14. He is a new employee      <employ>  
A retiree                              <retire>

Patient nominals express the meaning that the referent noun will be affected by the event or activity designated by the base.

### 2.2.1.2.3 Instrument nominalization

This is a process of forming a noun from a verb in which the noun so formed refers to the instrument used to execute the act designated by the base. These nouns are habitually identical to agent nominalization. The formula for instrument nominalization is given in (15).

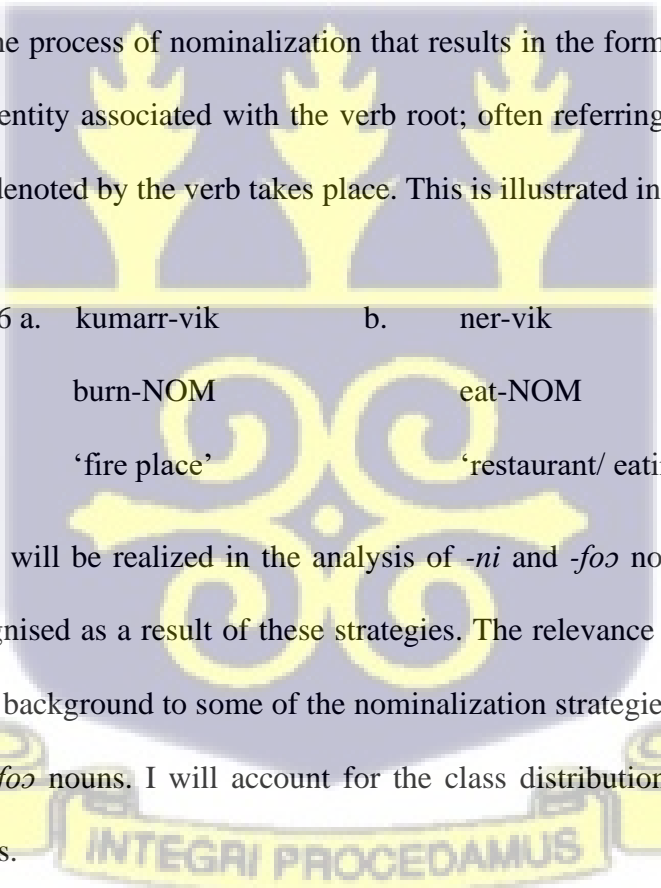
$$15. V \rightarrow N_{\text{INSTRUMENT of } V}$$

Example in English is given in where the verbs are suffixed with *-er* to be instrument nominalization.

15a. “coffee grinder, can opener” (Payne 1997: 228)

#### 2.3.1.2.4 Location Nominalization

This is the process of nominalization that results in the formation of nouns that refer to some entity associated with the verb root; often referring to a location where the activity denoted by the verb takes place. This is illustrated in (16).



16 a.	kumarr-vik	b.	ner-vik
	burn-NOM		eat-NOM
	‘fire place’		‘restaurant/ eating place’

Appah 2003:76

It will be realized in the analysis of *-ni* and *-foɔ* nouns that, their meanings are recognised as a result of these strategies. The relevance of this sections above is to give a background to some of the nominalization strategies employed in deriving *-ni* and *-foɔ* nouns. I will account for the class distribution of these strategies and semantics.

The location nominalization will be modified to account for the meaning of *-ni* and *-foɔ* nouns from locative nouns. We will refer to this class of nouns as nationality nouns.

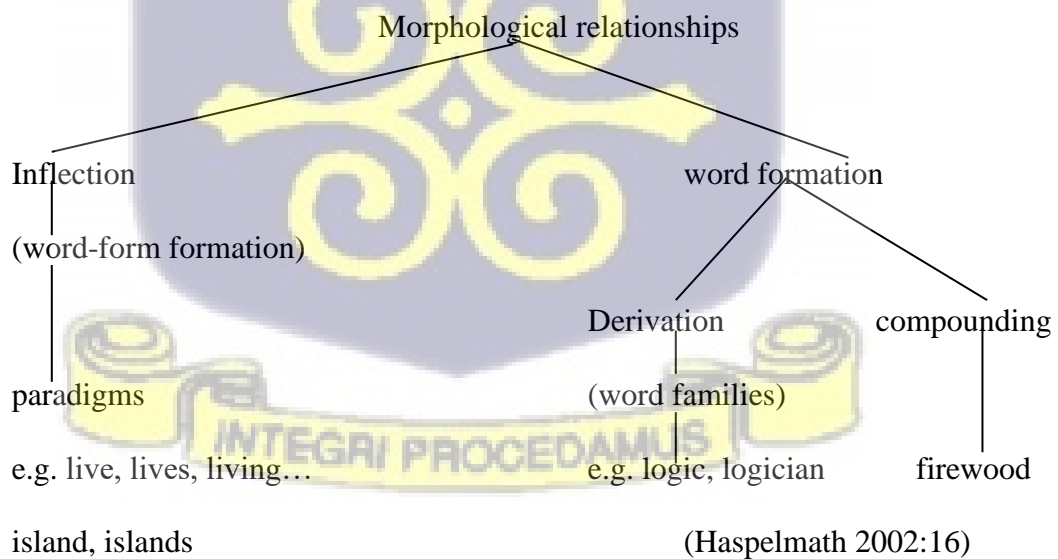
## 2.4 Theoretical Frameworks

The aim of this study is to ascertain the functional/semantic contribution(s) of *ni* and *foɔ* in their varied morphological and syntactic uses in Akan grammar. Under this section, I set out to describe the theoretical framework that underpins this current study. Subsection (2.4.1) provides the relevant background for determining the functional statuses of *-ni* and *-fo(ɔ)* in *-ni* and *-fo(ɔ)* noun derivatives; we achieve this objective by submitting the different uses of *-ni* and *-fo(ɔ)* in noun derivatives to derivational and inflectional testing as formulated by Haspelmath and Sims (2010). Subsection (2.4.2) outlines the basic tenets of the Morphology and Lexical Semantics (MLS) framework as proposed by Lieber (2004). Note that the various linguistic processes that underlie nominalization as reviewed in (2.2) are equally important morpho-semantic procedures to be employed in addition to positions here; we combine principles from these three areas of morphological analysis to give a formalized, and also a more determinate, account of the functions and semantics of the different uses of *ni* and *fo(ɔ)* in Akan grammar.

### 2.4.1 Derivation and Inflection

As we have observed in section 2.2 above, two main morphological themes run across in the discussion of the functions of *ni* and *fo*. These are derivation and inflection. According to Haspelmath & Sims (2010:18) inflection and derivation are the two rather different kinds of morphological relationship among words for which

two technical terms are commonly used (inflectional morphology and derivational morphology). The concept of derivation and inflection have been widely studied across languages (Booij 2000; Stump 2001; Plag 2003; Haspelmath 2002; Haspelmath & Sims 2010; Aronoff & Fudeman 2011). Though it is not easy to find clear cut criteria for the differences between derivation and inflection, Dixon (2010:142) points out that “[i]n the description of many languages, recognition of a distinction between inflectional and derivational processes is a useful analytic tool”. This has given rise to many linguists to identify the concepts in their languages and make distinctions of the two processes where it applies. Haspelmath (2002), illustrates the sub divisions of morphology in Figure 3 below and this enables us to identify the positions of inflection and derivation in morphology.



**Figure 3: sub divisions of morphology.**

In figure 3 above, a traditional distinction is made between inflection, on the one hand, and derivation and compounding as part of word-formation, on the other hand. According to Booij (2006), inflection deals with the different forms of a word. For example, the English words ‘walk’, ‘walks’, ‘walked’ and ‘walking’ are considered different word forms of the lexeme ‘WALK’. Derivation on the other hand deals with the creation of new lexemes. For example, the noun ‘walker’, is not considered a form of the lexeme ‘WALK’, rather a different lexeme with different meaning and a different lexical category that is a noun.

The major distinction between inflection and derivation is the creation of different word forms, and the creation of different words respectively. Inflectional morphemes encode grammatical categories such as ‘plurals’ in *workers*, ‘person’ in *works*, ‘tense’ in *picked* or ‘case’ in *John’s*.

#### ***2.4.1.1 Composition of inflectional and derivational forms***

Plag (2003) details the composition of derived inflectional or derivational forms. The processes of inflection and derivation derive complex words. For instance, the word ‘walks’ is made up of *walk* and *-s*, ‘walker’ from *walk* and *-er* and so on. The term used to describe these forms are complex words (that is, the process of putting together smaller elements to form larger words to form more complex meaning). Complex words can be decomposed into their smallest meaningful parts called morphemes. Morphemes can be free or bound. Free morphemes occur alone with

their specific meaning, whereas bound morphemes attach to some other morphemes. The cover term used to describe bound morphemes is AFFIXES and they are named depending on their position relative to the morpheme they attach to- that is the root, stem or base, because they are the central meaningful element of a word. Pertaining to the base of a word, it is the element where morphological operations apply. When an affix occurs before the base of a word, it is called the prefix, and when it occurs after the base of a word, it is called the suffix. In the current study, we refer to the forms, which *ni* and *fo* attaches to as the base.

Generally, through the application of a morphological process of affixation, which is the attachment of an affix (prefix, suffix etc) to a base word, both inflectional and derivational results can be realized. To be able to appreciate the inflectional and derivational properties of *ni* and *fo*, we shall look at some of the properties of inflection and derivation in general (Haspelmath & Sims 2010; Booij 2006; Plag 2003)

#### ***2.4.1.2 Properties of inflection and derivation***

In this section, we shall look at the distinct properties of inflection and derivation as seen in some of the literature (Haspelmath and Sims 2010; Plag 2003; Bauer 2004; Booij 2000, 2006). Following Plag (2003:17), we summarize the properties of inflection and derivation in the English language in Table 6 below.

**Table 6: The properties of inflection and derivation**

<b>Inflection</b>	<b>Derivation</b>
Encodes grammatical categories	Encodes lexical meaning
Is syntactically relevant	Is not syntactically relevant
Occurs outside all derivation	Can occur inside derivation
Does not change part of speech	Often changes the part of speech
Is rarely semantically opaque	It is often semantically opaque
It is fully productive	It is often restricted in productivity
Always suffixational (in English)	It is not restricted to suffixation

#### ***2.4.2 Morphology and Lexical Semantics***

We employ a framework of lexical semantics which assumes a connection between form and meaning, and is able to isolate the meaning of affixes together with the meaning of simple and complex words for such analysis. This work thus relies on a descriptive framework which is derivation friendly (cf. Lieber 2004). The theory, as expounded in Lieber's (2004) "Morphology and lexical semantics (MLS) explores the meanings of morphemes and how they combine to form a system of lexical-semantic account that is disintegrated and allows for a smaller number of basic meaning, as such ..., these basic meanings are suitable as the smallest parts of the meanings of complex words (see Melloni 2007). The theory explores "the meanings of morphemes and how they combine to form the meaning of complex word,

including derived words, compounds and words formed by conversion” (Lieber 2004:i), building on the premise that (as opposed to words) a systematic way of describing the semantics of word formation is lacking in the traditional generative morphology (Lieber 2004:2).

MLS postulates that the meaning of complex words is compositional: as long as morphemes are associated with meaning, that is, the principal idea is that though there may be few exceptions, the meaning of complex words can be derived through the make-up of the meaning of basic constituents. This model, therefore, set out to develop and justify a framework in which questions about the meaning of word-formation processes with respect to polysemy, multiple affixation, zero-derivation and semantic mismatch concerns are addressed. These concerns are related, in that, they all form a larger question of how the meanings of complex words are characterized. I discuss the basic tenets of the framework below.

#### ***2.4.2.1 Tenets of Lieber’s (2004) Lexical Semantic Model.***

Some basic principles of MLS, which are adopted and adapted to guide the study on the morphosemantics of the Akan affixes *-ni* and *-foɔ* are given below:

- The model is decompositional in its approach to lexical analysis. This model allows us to view derived *-ni* and *-fo* nouns as consisting of several distinctive properties. That is, as “... made up of some relatively small number of primitives or atoms of meaning which qualify to be the right ‘grain

size’ to allow us to talk about the meaning of simplex/complex words (Lieber 2004). For instance, (17) below illustrates in Akan, the meaning of the complex word *odiadeni* ‘one who inherits (something)/an heir’; through the make-up of the meaning of its basic constituents:

17. o-di-ade-ni

NOM-eat-thing- person

‘one who inherits (something)/ an heir’

In (17) above, we see evidence of the compositionality of the complex word *odiadeni* in Akan as postulated in MLS.

- The theory considers lexical semantic representation as being made up of two parts: the semantic/grammatical (Skeleton) representation and the semantic/Pragmatic (Body) representation. The skeleton is the decompositional part of the representation and it is hierarchically arranged into functions and arguments. It is less amenable to change and contains aspects of the semantic component which have consequences for the morphosyntax of the item. The body on the other hand is encyclopedic and holistic because it expresses the perceptual and cultural knowledge associated with the lexical item. The body is only partially formalizable.
- The theory asserts that “the sorts of polysemy we find in the simplex lexicon should also be found in derived words” (Lieber 2004:11). Here the multiplicity of meanings expressed by complex lexemes are expressed in the

same terms as in simplex lexemes. This implies two different explanations in the model of which this study assumes:

- i. That each affix has a single skeleton, with a very extensive and conceptual meaning, and the varied meanings come as a result of the composition with different bases.
- ii. That affixes are naturally polysemous and they take multiple skeletons.

iii.

## 2.5 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter looked at the literature on the Akan language and theories that have relevance to the objectives and scope of this research. The study extensively looked at the available literature on the language and theoretical framework. For instance, nominalization, a linguistic notion and process, was thoroughly discussed looking at the types; namely Lexical and Grammatical Nominalisation and how this current work contributes to its body of knowledge.

In addition, the literature on 'Derivation and Inflection' was also analyzed. The relevant morphological procedures which characterize a morpheme as either derivational or inflectional and their distinguishing properties were likewise discussed.

It was further raised that the existing works on *-ni* and *-fo(ɔ)* in Akan did not consider the wider literature on derivation and inflection, and also never subjected

the different uses of the two forms to the relevant derivational/inflectional testing; only employing the two concepts in their functional/semantic definitions without any testing. This gap will be attended to in the subsequent chapters.

In conclusion, the MLS theory by Lieber (2004), is used in the current work to study how the meaning of complex forms are derived from those of constituent forms and how *-ni* and *-fo(ɔ)* bring about meaning in the Akan language.



## CHAPTER THREE

### STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF *NI* AND *FO* NOMINAL

### DERIVATIVES

#### 3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we examine the morphological and syntactic properties of *ni* and *fo* nouns in Akan. We discuss the strategies involved in the formation of *ni* and *fo* nouns and establish the formal constraints on the distribution of *ni*, *fo* and prefixes in the formation of *ni* and *fo* nominal derivatives. To allow us describe or analyze the distribution (strategies) of the formation of *-ni/-fo* derivatives in this chapter, in consonance with Leiber's (2004) 'skeleton' concept, (which is the foundation of what we know about the primitives (morphemes)), each derived *-ni/-fo* noun will be decomposed into its relatively small number of primitives or atoms. Accordingly, we are able to distinctively identify the primitives that make up a *-ni/-fo* derivative as (1) a prefix, (2) a base (noun, verb or adjective) and (3) a suffix (*-ni/-fo*). In section (3.2), we discuss prefixation of *ni* and *fo* nouns, which leads us to discuss the bases of *ni* and *fo* nouns, specifically nominal bases in section (3.3), verbal bases in section (3.4) and adjectival bases in section (3.5). We then discuss the conclusion on *-ni/fo* derivatives in Akan (3.6) and then chapter summary in (3.7)

### 3.2 Prefixation in derived *ni* and *fo* nouns.

In this section, we discuss prefixation in *ni* and *fo* nouns. The process of derivation refers to the formation of new words through the morphological operation, affixation, which is the attachment of a morpheme, either bound or free to a base. In this regard, prefixation which is a type of affixation strategy, is the process where an element, in this case a morpheme, (which is the smallest linguistic unit with meaning), attaches to a base, root or stem at the left-hand side of the base or occurs before the base. This morpheme that occurs before the base is referred to as the prefix.

Generally, *ni* and *fo* derivatives have an internal morphological structure as shown in (1) where ‘X’ is the base to which either *ni* or *fo* is attached to derive a noun. This is exemplified in (2a-c).

(1) [[X]-ni/fo]<sub>N</sub>

(2)

a. sukoo-ni

school- person

‘a student’

b. bambɔ-fo

security- person

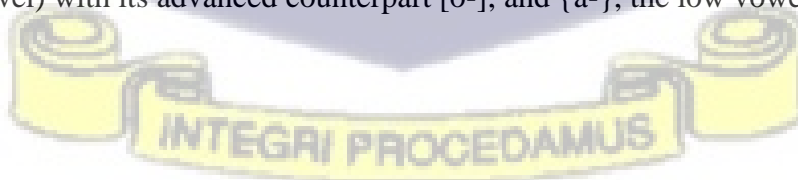
‘a security guard’

- c. America-ni  
 America-person  
 ‘An American’

The examples in (2a-c) exemplify the general internal structure of *ni* and *fo* nouns as given in (1). We observe a linear glossing of derived *ni* and *fo* nouns where, the form *ni* attaches to *sukuu* ‘school’ to derive *sukuuni* ‘a student’ in (2a); the form *fo* attaches to *bambɔ* ‘security’ to derive *bambɔfo* ‘a security guard’ (2b); and in (2c), *ni* attaches to *America* to derive *Americani* [amerɪkæni] ‘American’. All the three examples in (2a-c) have no overt prefix (i.e., have a null or zero prefix). Where a prefix is overtly marked, it is attached immediately before the base of the derived noun as represented in (3) below by ‘Y’.

(3) [Y]<sub>PREFIX</sub> [[X]<sub>BASE</sub>-ni/fo]<sub>N</sub>

In Table 7 below, we present examples of prefixes for *ni* and *fo* nouns. There are three distinct prefixes in the table below. They are: {ɔ-} (mid rounded unadvanced vowel) with its advanced counterpart [o-]; and {a-}, the low vowel.



**Table 7: -Ni and -Fo derivatives**

Singular		Plural	
Derivatives	English gloss	Derivatives	English gloss
a. ɔ-kɔm-fo	‘fetish priest’	a-kɔm-foɔ	‘fetish priests’
b. ɔ-dansi-ni	‘builder’	a-dansi-foɔ	‘builders’
c. ɔ-manfra-ni	‘sojourner’	a-manfra-foɔ	‘sojourners’
d. ɔ-kyerekyere-foɔ	‘teacher’	a-kyerekyere-fof	‘teachers’
~ ɔ-kyerekyere-ni			
e. o-dimafoɔ	‘advocate’	a-dima-foɔ	‘advocates’
f. o-dunsi-ni	‘herbalist’	a-dunsi-foɔ	‘herbalists’
g. o-bibi-ni	‘an African’	a-bibi-foɔ	‘Africans’
h. o-sukuu-ni	‘students’	a-sukuu-foɔ	‘Students’
i. o-hiani	‘poor person’	a-hiafoɔ	‘poor people’
j. a-namusi-ni	‘representative’	a-namusi-foɔ	‘Representatives’
k. nkyenetɔn-foɔ	‘salt seller’	nkyenetɔn-foɔ	‘salt sellers’
~ nkyenetɔn-ni			

The prefixes [ɔ-] and [o-] form the singular form of the *ni* and *fo* derivatives which are on the left side of the table, while identified on the right side of the table is the prefix [a-] which forms the plurals of the singular *ni* and *fo* derivatives on the left. We can observe the forms in (a), *ɔkɔmfɔ* ‘fetish priest’ on one hand and *akɔmfɔ*<sub>[PL]</sub> ‘fetish priests’ and in (g), *obibini* ‘an African’ and *abibifo*<sub>[PL]</sub> ‘Africans’. We thus modify the structure presented in (3) above to accommodate the prefixes as seen in (4), where ‘Y’ is a prefix.

(4) [Y]<sub>Nom PRF</sub> [[X]-ni/fo]<sub>N</sub>

The prefixes [ɔ-], [o-] and [a-] falls under the category of nominal prefixes (which are prefixes found in nouns, adjectives and numerals, Christaller (1875); Dolphyne (2006:82)). Therefore, ‘Y’ in (4) is identified as a nominal prefix (Nom PRF).

Akan operates advanced tongue root [ATR] harmony (Dolphyne 1988). Prefixes in *ni* and *fo* nouns like every word in Akan, submit to this vowel harmony process. Accordingly, from Table 7 above, we observe from the derivatives on the right hand of the table that the vowels in the bases of the *-ni* and *-fo* derivatives select the same ATR quality as the prefix of the derivative. The vowels in the stems of examples (a-d) are all realized with a retracted tongue, suggesting that, the prefix to be selected will be produced in same manner, thus, [ɔ-], which is produced with a retracted tongue root is selected. For instance, since the vowel in the stem *kɔm*, in (a)

is realized with a retracted tongue root ([-ATR]), it selects [ɔ-] as prefix, which is also realized with a retracted tongue root to derive *ɔkɔmfo* ‘fetish priest’.

In examples (e-j) in Table 7 above, it can be realized that all the vowels in the base of the *ni* and *fo* noun forms are realized with an advanced tongue root. This means that the prefix to be selected will also be produced as [o-] in harmony with the immediate vowel of the base in the feature advanced (i.e., [+ATR]). For example, the vowel /i/ in the stem *dima*, (e) being realized with an advanced tongue root ([+ATR]), selects [o-] which is also realized with an advanced tongue root, as prefix to derive *odimafo* ‘advocate’. In like manner, *dunsini* selects [o-] as prefix to derive *odunsini* ‘herbalist’. The prefixes [ɔ] and [o] can thus be described as allomorphs of the same morpheme {ɔ-}, being realized differently due to the ATR specification of the vowel in the stems immediately before it.

Again, from Table 7 one above, we can observe the phenomenon of ATR in the examples on the right hand of the table. In deriving the plurals of the singular derivatives on the left, the prefix is changed to *a-* and the suffix to *-fo* in cases where the singular of that form is *-ni*. The ATR quality of the base of the derivative predicts the ATR quality of the plural prefix as well. Therefore, the plural form of *ɔkɔmfo*, selects the vowel [a] as prefix and derived as *akɔmfo* ‘fetish priests’ since the vowel in the base is produced with a retracted tongue root. When the immediate vowel of the base is advanced, the prefix [æ] is preferred in harmony with the base vowel as in: (f) *adunsifo* [ædunsifo] ‘herbalists.’ In the orthography of Akan, [æ-] is written as

*a-*. The forms [a-] and [æ-] are allomorphs of the same morpheme {a-} but are realized differently due to the ATR quality of the base to which they are attached.

### 3.3 Nominal bases of *-ni* and *-fo* derivatives

In this section, we discuss the noun bases to which *-ni* and *-fo* are attached. Nouns are labels of different things which include animate objects (persons and animals), inanimate objects, places (geographic locations and parts of space in general), time, quantities, qualities, states and conditions of the mind and body (Christaller 1875). In addition, nouns may mean any member of a class of words that typically can be combined with determiners, to serve as the subject of a verb, can be interpreted as singular or plural, can be replaced with a pronoun and can refer to an entity, quality, state, action, or concept. Building on the schema given in (4), we represent the internal structure of noun-based *-ni* and *-fo* derivatives as in (5), where ‘Y’ is the prefix of the derived word; ‘X’ is the base, which is identified as a noun [X]<sub>N</sub>, to which *-ni* or *-fo* is attached to derive a noun.

$$(5) \quad [Y]_{\text{Nom PRF}} [[X]_{\text{N}} -ni/fo]_{\text{N}}$$

The following noun-base types can be identified in Akan: concrete noun-bases (3.3.1), abstract noun-bases (3.3.2), state noun-bases (3.3.3), and place noun-bases (3.3.4). We take each of the nouns and discuss them in the sections that follow. Sentences are given under each subsection to show the ‘nounness’ of these items.

### 3.3.1 Concrete noun-bases of *-ni* and *-foɔ* derivatives

Nouns denoting material or physical objects are termed as concrete nouns. Concrete nouns in consideration here are: *sika* ‘money’, *(e)tu(o)* ‘gun’, *ade* ‘thing/wealth’ and *ekuru* ‘sore’. Below in (6) are sentences and linear gloss illustration in which these items (italicized) function as nouns of their sentences, appearing in object and subject positions of the sentences.

(6)

(a) Papa no wɔ *sika*.

man DEF have money

‘The man has money.’

(b) ɔbarima no kura *tu*.

Male DEF hold/deal-in gun

‘The man is a possessor of gun.’

(c) ɔbea no wɔ *ade*.

FemaleDEF have ‘thing/wealth’

‘The woman has wealth.’

(d) *Ekuru* a-tu abofra no.

Sore PERF-infect child DEF

‘Sore has infected the child.’

In each of the above sentences, there are two nouns, the noun which becomes our base denotes some property, with the other noun as the possessor of that property. In the data below, these nouns are employed as bases of *-ni* and *-foɔ* derivatives. The singular/plural output forms of the resultant nouns are: *osikani/asikafoɔ* (as in 7); *otufo/atufu* (as in 8); *ɔdefo/adefo* (as in 9); and *okufo/akufo* (in 10).

(7)

- (a) Base: *Sika* 'money'
- (b) (b-i) Singular: *Osikani* 'a rich person'
- (b-ii) Input: o- sika -ni  
Nom PRF- money -person
- (c) (c-i) Plural: *asikafoɔ* 'rich people/persons'
- (c-ii) Input: a- sika -foɔ  
Nom PRF- money -person

(8)

- (a) Base: *Otu(o)* 'gun'
- (b) (b-i) Singular: *otufo* 'a musketeer'
- (b-ii) Input: o- tu -fo  
Nom PRF- gun -person

(c) (c-i) Plural: atufo 'musketeers'

(c-ii) Input: a- tu -fo  
Nom PRF- gun -person

(9)

(a) Base: ade 'thing'

(b) (b-i) Singular: ɔdefo 'a wealthy person'

(b-ii) Input: ɔ- de -fo  
Nom PRF- thing -person

(c) (c-i) Plural: adefo 'wealthy persons'

(c-ii) Input: a- de -fo  
Nom PRF- thing -person

(10)

(a) Base: ekuru 'a sore'

(b) (b-i) Singular: okufo 'a person with sores'

(b-ii) Input: ɔ- ku -fo  
Nom PRF- sore -person

- (c) (c-i) Plural: akufo 'persons with sores'
- (c-ii) Input: a- ku -fo
- Nom PRF- sore -person

The noun bases in (7)- (10) above can be described as simple bases because they are all made up of one stem, which is the central meaningful unit. This is evidenced by the syllable structure identified in the bases/stems - CVCV in *sika* (7), VCVV in *etuo* (9), VCV in *ade* (9) and VCVCV in *ekuru* (10).

Again, from the examples in (7) to (10), it can be realized that the form of the bases are maintained in some derivatives, while in others, the form of the bases changes. For instance, the syllables in the base *sika* is maintained in the derivative *osikani* in (7), in *otuo*, the last syllable V-[o] is deleted, remaining 'tu' in *otufu* (8), in *ade*, V-[a], which is the first syllable [a] is dropped to be 'de' in *ɔdefo* (9) and in *ekuru*, the first syllable V-[e] and last two syllables CV- [r],[u] are dropped, leaving the syllable, CV- 'ku' in *okufo* (10). In deriving *ni* and *fo* nouns from concrete nouns, the form of the base to which *ni* and *fo* attaches may undergo some phonological changes. Forming *ni* and *fo* nouns from noun bases or stems, it is possible to have all the syllables of the base intact, being attached with *ni/fo* as seen in (7). It is also possible to have some of the syllables being lost at word initial (9), at word final (8) or at both word initial and word final (10).

The following prefix-suffix distributions are realized in the data above: [ɔ-]/[o-] appears strictly on singular derivatives, and [a-] on strictly plural ones. The suffix *-foɔ* has two distributions, it appears in singular nouns with [ɔ-]/[o-] as prefix from (8) to (10); and co-occurs with [a-] in plural forms. The form *-ni* strictly occurs in the singular noun as in (7). It needs to be pointed out that the prefixal forms [o-]/[ɔ-] delete when there is another word before it in rapid speech. For example, we say: *ɔbarima no ye defoɔ* “The man is a rich person”, but not *ɔbarima no ye ɔdefo*. The latter form is mainly observed in slow speech. The prefix [a-] unlike [o-]/[ɔ-], cannot be deleted. For example, it is ungrammatical to say: *Mmarima no ye defo* when the meaning “The men are rich persons” (i.e., *Mmarima no ye adefo*) is what is intended. The loss of [o-]/[ɔ-] in singular forms with the *-foɔ* suffix does not lead to structural ambiguity for the fact that [a-] is never deleted in plural forms.

### 3.3.2 *Abstract noun-bases of -ni and -foɔ derivatives*

This subsection examines the use of abstract nouns as bases for *-ni* and *-fo* derivatives. Abstract nouns represent intangible ideas i.e. things one cannot perceive with the five senses. In the data below, the syntactic and morphological distributions of these bases have been specified. Syntactically, these bases are nouns and function as either subjects or objects of their sentences. Data from (11) to (18) have the following subdivisions: in (a) are the bases; the syntactic distributions of bases are displayed in (b); and in (c) the morphological structure of *-ni* and *-fo* derivatives are

represented. The abstract bases in the data below are: *nkontompo* ‘calumny’(11), *ahantan* ‘pride’ (12), (*o*)*hia* ‘poverty’ (13), *mmusu* ‘mischief, bad omen’ (14), *bayie* ‘witchcraft’ (15), *atoro* ‘a lie’ (16), *tumi* ‘power’ (17), and *nokware* ‘truth’ (18); the use of all these base forms is justified by the fact that their derivatives have unique morphological structures and also the bases depict different semantic notions. The singular/plural output forms of the resultant nouns are: *okontomponi /akontompofo* (as in 11); *ahantanni / ahantanfo* (as in 12); *ohiani / ahiafo* (as in 13); *obusufo/ abusufo* (as in 14); *obayifo/ abayifo* (as in 15); *otorofo/ atorofo* (as in 16); *otumfo/ atumfo* (as in 17); and *onokwafo / anokwafo* (in 18).

(11)

(a) *Base: nkontompo* ‘calumny’

(b) *Syntactic distribution of nkontompo*

(b-i) Aberewa no di nkontompo

Old.woman DEF engages-in calumny

‘The old woman engages in calumny.’

(b-ii) Aberewa no ye/twa nkontompo

Old.woman DEF be/cut calumny

‘The old woman is calumnious (i.e., a habit).’

(b-iii) Aberewa no ye nkontompo

Old.woman DEF be calumnious.person

‘The old woman personifies calumny.’

(c) *Morphological distribution of **nkontompo***

(c-i) Singular: okontomponi ‘a calumniator’

(c-ii) Input: o- kontompo -ni  
Nom PRF- calumny -person

(c-iii) Plural: akontompofo ‘calumniators’

(c-iv) Input: a- kontompo -fo  
Nom PRF- calumny -person

(12)

(a) Base: ahantan ‘pride’

(b) *Syntactic distribution of **ahantan***

(b-i) Abofra no ye ahantan

child DEF be pride

‘The child is proud.’

(b-ii) Ahantan a- hye no mma

Pride PERF-fill him/her full

‘He/she is full of pride.’

(c) *Morphological distribution of ahantan*

(c-i) Singular:       ɔhantanni   ‘a proud person’

(c-ii) Input:           o- hantan -ni  
Nom PRF- pride -person

(c-iii) Singular:     ahantanfo   ‘proud persons’

(c-iv) Input:          a- hantan -fo  
Nom PRF- pride -person

(13)

(a) Base: (o)hia   ‘poverty’

(b) *Syntactic distribution of (o)hia*

(b-i) Kwaku di hia  
Name eat/experience poverty  
‘Kwaku is (extremely) poor.’

(b-ii) Ohia n-ye  
Poverty NEG-be.good  
‘Poverty is bad.’

(c) *Morphological distribution of (o)hia*

(c-i) Singular:       ohiani   ‘a poor person’

(c-ii) Input:          o- hia -ni  
Nom PRF- poverty -person

(c-iii) Plural: ahiafo 'poor persons'

(c-iv) Input: a-       hia -fo  
Nom PRF- poverty -person

(14)

(a) Base: mmusu 'mischief, bad omen'

(b) *Syntactic distribution of mmusu*

(b-i) Ohia ye mmusu.  
poverty BE mischief  
'Poverty is a bad omen.'

(b-ii) Mmusu n-ka wo.  
mischief should-be.fall 2SG  
'Woe betide you.'

(c) *Morphological distribution of mmusu*

(c-i) Singular: obusufo 'a mischievous person'

(c-ii) Input: o-       busu -fo  
Nom PRF- mischief -person

(c-iii) Plural: abusufo 'mischievous persons'

(c-iv) Input: a-       busu -fo  
Nom PRF- mischief -person

(15)

(a) Base: bayie

‘witchcraft’

(b) *Syntactic distribution of bayie*

ɔ-wɔ bayie

He-have witchcraft

‘He has witchcraft.’

(c) *Morphological distribution of bayie*

(c-i) Singular: obayifo ‘a witch’

(c-ii) Input: o- bayi -fo

Nom PRF- witchcraft -person

(c-iii) Plural: abayifo ‘witches’

(c-iv) Input: a- bayi -fo

Nom PRF- witchcraft -person



(16)

(a) Base: atoro

‘a lie’

(b) *Syntactic distribution of atoro*

Aberewa no ye atoro

Old.woman DEF be lie

‘The old woman is a liar.’

(c) *Morphological distribution of atoro*

(c-i) Singular: atorofo

‘a liar’

(c-ii) Input: o- toro -fo

Nom PRF- lie -person

(c-iii) Plural: atorofo

‘liars’

(c-iv) Input: a- toro -fo

Nom PRF- lie -person



(17)

(a) Base: *tumi* 'power'

(b) *Syntactic distribution of tumi*

ɔhene no wo tumi

king DEF have power

'The king has power.'

(c) *Morphological distribution of tumi*

(c-i) Singular: otumfo 'a powerful being'

(c-ii) Input: o- tum -fo

Nom PRF- power -person

(c-iii) Plural: atumfo 'powerful beings'

(c-iv) Input: a- tum -fo

Nom PRF- power -person



(18)

(a) Base: nokware

‘truth’

(b) *Syntactic distribution of nokware*

Nokware a- sa

truth PERF-finish

‘Truth is finished.’

(c) *Morphological distribution of nokware*

(c-i) Singular: onokwafo ‘a truthful person’

(c-ii) Input: o- nokwa -fo

Nom PRF- truth -person

(c-iii) Plural: anokwafo ‘truthful persons’

(c-iv) Input: a- nokwa -fo

Nom PRF- truth -person

Bases from (11) to (13) employ {ɔ-} and –ni as affixes to derive singular derivatives, while those from (14) to (18) rather combine {ɔ-} and –fo to derive singular derivatives. The morphological structure and constituents of plural derivatives are similar to those in (3.3.1) – i.e., they take [a-] as prefix, with –fo as their suffix.

### 3.3.3 State noun-bases of -ni and -fo derivatives

In this section, we take a look at state nouns as bases of *-ni* and *-fo* derivatives. The import of this section is to know and appreciate the types of nouns there are that derive *ni* and *fo* nouns. We define state nouns as the condition of someone or something. State noun bases for consideration in this section are *yare(ε)* ‘sickness’ in (19), *kuna* ‘widowhood’ in (20) and *sigya* ‘singlehood’ in (21). We illustrate their syntactic and morphological distributions accordingly.

(19)

(a) Base: *yareε* ‘sickness’

(b) Syntactic distribution of *yareε*

(b-i)	Yaree	yε ya
	Sickness	be pain
	‘Sickness is painful.’	

(c) Morphological distribution of *yareε*

(c-i) Singular:	ɔyarefo	‘a sick
	ɔ- yare- fo	person’
(c-ii) Input:	Nom- sick -person	

(c-iii) Plural: ayarefo 'a sick person'  
 a- yare- fo

(c-iv) Input: Nom - sick -person

(20)

(a) *Base:* kuna 'widowhood'

(b) *Syntactic distribution of kuna*

(b-i) Maame no a-di kuna  
 Woman the PST-eat/experience widowhood  
 'The woman is experiencing widowhood.'

(c) *Morphological distribution of kuna*

(c-i) Singular: okunafoɔ okunani 'widow'

(c-ii) ɔ-kuna-foɔ ɔ- kuna -ni  
 Nom- widowhood -

Input: pers. Nom- widowhood -  
 pers.



- (c-iii) Plural: akunafoɔ 'widows'  
a- kuna- fo
- (c-iv) Input: Nom PRF- widowhood -person

(21)

(a) *Base*: sigya 'singlehood'

(b) *Syntactic distribution of sigya*

Paul di sigya  
Paul eat/undergoes singlehood  
'Paul is undergoing singlehood.'

(c) *Morphological distribution of sigya*

- (c-i) Singular: osigyani 'a bachelor/spinster'
- (c-ii) Input: o- sigya -ni  
Nom PRF- single -person
- (c-iii) Plural: asigyafɔ 'single persons'
- (c-iv) Input: a- sigya -fo  
Nom PRF- single -person

From the examples (19 -21) we see that, the derivative of *kuna* take either *-ni* or *-fo* as a suffix in the singular; *sigya* strictly inflects for *-ni* in the singular and *yare(ε)* strictly inflects for *-fo* in the singular. These nouns take as their plurals- *ayarefo*, *akunafo* and *asigyafɔ* respectively. That is, they employ a- and -foɔ simultaneously as affixes in their plural forms.

### 3.3.4 Place noun-bases of *-ni* and *-foɔ* derivatives

Place nouns are defined in this study as parts of space in general or of certain things (Christaller 1875), particularly points that are occupied by persons or things, or geographic points such as towns, cities, countries etc. The place noun bases in consideration in this study are: *wiase* ‘world (i.e., under the sky)’ (22); *asaase* ‘earth/land’ (23); *(e)fie* ‘house/home’ (24); and *Ghana* ‘country Ghana’ (25). In the examples that follow, (22) to (25), we present the syntactic and morphological distributions of these place nouns.

(22)

(a) *Base: (e)wiase* ‘world’

(b) *Syntactic distribution of wiase*

(b-i) Mo- n-dɔ [nnɔ] wiase.

2 (PL) NEG-love world

‘Do not love the world.’

(c) *Morphological distribution of (e)wiase*

(c-i) Singular: ewiaseni 'a pagan'

(c-ii) Input: ewiase -ni  
world -person

(c-iii) Plural: ewiasefo 'pagans'

(c-iv) Input: ewiase -fo  
world -person

(23)

(a) *Base:* asaase 'earth/land'

(b) *Syntactic distribution of asaase*

Me-ton asaase.

1 sell land

'I sell land.'

(c) *Morphological distribution of asaase  
(or asaase so 'top of earth/land')*

(c-i) Singular: asaaseni ~ assasesoni 'a person of the earth'

(c-ii) Input: asaase (so) -ni  
earth (top of) -person

(c-iii) Plural: asaasefo ~ asaasesofo 'persons of the earth'

(c-iv) Input:        asaase        -fo  
                          earth        -person

(24)

(a) *Base:* efie                                'house/home'

(b) *Syntactic distribution of (e)fie*

(b-i)    eha ye me        fie  
          Here be POSS house  
          'Here/this is my home'

(b-ii)   Kwame firi efie  
          Name come home  
          'Kwame comes from a (good) home'

(c) *Morphological distribution of (e)fie*

(c-i)    Singular:        efieni                                'house mate'

(c-ii)   Input:        efie        -ni  
                          house -person

(c-iii)   Plural:        efiefo                                'house mates'

(c-iv)   Input:        a-    fie        -fo  
                          Nom PRF- house -person

(25)

(a) *Base:* Ghana

‘country Ghana’

(b) *Syntactic distribution of Ghana*

(b-i) Ghana ye oman papa

name be country good

‘Ghana is a good country’

(c) *Morphological distribution of Ghana*

(c-i) Singular: Ghanani ‘a person from Ghana’

(c-ii) Input: Ghana-ni

Ghana -person

(c-iii) Plural: Ghanafo ‘persons from Ghana’

(c-iv) Input: Ghana -fo

Ghana -person

The base of a place noun derivative denotes a space in which a person (i.e., with the *-ni* suffix) or some persons (i.e., with the *-fo* suffix) belong. These derivatives uniquely retain the initial vowels of bases and neither inflect for [ɔ-/o-] (i.e., the human prefixes) in their singular forms, nor for [a-] in their plural forms. That is, the suffixes *-ni* and *-fo* are enough for the expression of singularity and plurality (respectively).

### 3.4 Verbal bases of *ni* and *fo* derivatives

Christaller (1875:55) describes a verb as “a word by which we ascribe doing or being (action or state and quality) to a person or thing called subject”. According to Christaller (ibid), the verb in its bare form is a primary or seemingly compound stem with one to three syllables or reduplicated with two to six syllables. The schema presented in (26) represent the internal structure of verb based *ni* and *fo* derivatives, where ‘Y’ is the prefix of the derived word, ‘X’ is the base, which is identified as a verb [v], that *ni/fo* attaches to derive a noun.

(26) [Y]<sub>Nom</sub> PRF [[X]<sub>V</sub> -ni/fo]<sub>N</sub>

We discuss dynamic verbs, which are verbs that denote active events in the following sections. Particularly we focus on the type of bases that derive *ni* and *fo* nouns. In section 3.4.1 we look at simple verb bases of *ni/fo* derivatives, in section 3.4.2, complex verb bases and in section 3.4.3, we look at reduplicated base verbs.

#### 3.4.1 Simple verb bases of *ni* and *fo* derivatives

We define the simple verb bases here as those bases with a single stem. We show their syntactic and morphology distribution in (27) to (30). The simple verb bases under attention are *sua* ‘to learn’ (27), *twere* ‘to write’ (28); *hwe* ‘to watch/to care for/to look’ (29); *kɔm* ‘to be spirit possessed’ (30). The singular/plural output forms of the resultant simple base verbs are: *ɔsuani/ asuafo* (27); *ɔtwerefo/ atwerefo* (28); *ɔhwefo/ ahwefo* (29); *ɔkɔmfo/ akɔmfo* (30)

(27)

(a) *Base:* sua 'to learn'

(b) *Syntactic distribution of sua*

(b-i) sua ade

learn something

'learn/ be studious (about) something'

(c) *Morphological distribution of sua*

(c-i) Singular: ɔsuani 'student/a learner/a disciple'

(c-ii) Input: ɔ- sua -ni

Non PRF- learn -person

(c-iii) Plural: asuafo 'students/learners/disciples'

(c-iv) Input a- sua -fo

Nom PRF- learn -person

(28)

(a) *Base:* twerɛ 'to write'

(b) *Syntactic distribution of twerɛ*

(b-i) twerɛ krataa no

write letter DEF

'write the letter'

(c) *Morphological distribution of **twere***

(c-i) Singular:    ɔtwerefo                          ‘a writer’

(c-ii) Input:       ɔ-       twere   -fo

Nom PRF- write -person

(c-iii) Plural:     atwerefo                          ‘writers’

(c-iv) Input:       a-       twere   -fo

Nom PRF- write -person

(29)

(a) *Base:* hwe                          ‘to watch/to care for/to look’

(b) *Syntactic distribution of **hwe***

(b-i) hwe abɔfra no    so                          ma            me

Look baby DEF PREP                          PREP OBJ PRONOUN ‘Look after the baby for me’

(c) *Morphological distribution of **hwe***

(c-i) Singular:       ɔhwefo                          ‘a guardian’

(c-ii) Input:       ɔ-       hwe   -fo

Nom PRF- care for -person

(c-iii) Plural: ahwɛfo ‘guardians’

(c-iv) Input: a- hwe- fo  
Nom PRF- care for -person

(30)

(a) Base: kɔm ‘to chant’

(b) Syntactic distribution of *kɔm*

(b-i) Nana be kɔm  
Name FUT- spirit.possessed  
‘Nana will minister in the spirit’

(c) Morphological distribution of *kɔm*

(c-i) Singular: ɔkɔmfo ‘a fetish priest’

(c-ii) Input: ɔ- kɔm -fo  
Nom PRF- spirit possessed -person

(c-iii) Plural: akɔmfo ‘fetish priests’

(c-iv) Input: a- kɔm -fo  
Nom PRF-spirit possessed -person

The prefix-suffix distributions realized in the data above is akin to the ones identified in section 3.2 above. [ɔ-] appears on singular derivatives, due to the -ATR quality of the vowels in the base verbs, being produced with a retracted tongue root. [a-] remains as the prefix for the plural derivatives. With the exception of *ɔsuani* ‘a student’ (27) which derives its single derivative with *-ni* affix, all the others, *ɔtwerefo* ‘writer’ (28), *ɔhwefo* ‘guardian’ (29), *ɔkɔmfo* ‘fetish priest’ (30) derive their single derivative with the prefix [ɔ-] together with *-fo*. From the data, it can be seen that the verb bases which derive *ni/fo* derivatives are the root or unconjugated forms of the verbs with no functions attached to them.

### ***3.4.2 Complex verb bases of ni and fo derivatives***

We look at complex verb bases of *ni* and *fo* derivatives. We define complex verb bases in the study as verb bases with two distinct bases which are combined. Two complex verb base types are seen in *ni* and *fo* derivatives. The first, being a Noun-Verb base and the second being a Verb-Verb base as shown in subsections 3.4.2.1 and 3.4.2.2 respectively.

#### ***3.4.2.1 Ni and fo derivatives with Noun-Verb compound bases***

In this subsection, we consider *ni* and *fo* derivatives with their bases being complex verb bases. The verbs which *ni* and *fo* attach to derive *ni* and *fo* nouns are made up of two distinct stems, which is a noun and a verb. We present the syntactic and

morphological distribution of examples of the bases in (31)- (33) below. The complex bases under consideration in this section are *to ban* ‘to build a stone house/wall’ (31) *di gua* ‘to trade’ (32) and *ye eduru* ‘to make medicine’ (33).

(31)

(a) *Base: to ban* ‘to build a stone house/wall’

(b) Syntactic distribution of *to ban*

(b-i) ye- be- to ban no enne  
 we FUT build wall DEF today  
 ‘We will build the wall today.’

(c) *Morphological distribution of banto* ‘wall building’ from the verb: ***to ban*** ‘**to build a wall**’

(c-i) Singular: obantoni ‘a mason’

(c-ii) Input: o- ban to -ni  
 Nom PRF- wall.build -person

(c-iii) Plural: abantofa ‘masons’

(c-iv) Input: a- ban to -fo  
 Nom PRF- wall.build -person

(32)

(a) *Base: di gua* 'to trade'

(b) *Syntactic distribution of di gua*

(b-i) ɔbaa no di gua yie

Woman the eat/engages market well

'the woman trades well'

(c) *Morphological distribution of guadie 'trade engagement' from the verb: di gua*

*'engage in trade'*

(c-i) Singular: oquadini 'a trader'

(c-ii) Input: ɔ- gua di -ni

Nom PRF- market eat/engage -person

(c-iii) Plural: aguadifo 'traders'

(c-iv) Input: a- gua.di fo

Nom PRF- market.eat/engage -person

(33)

(a) *Base: ye eduru* 'to make medicine'



(b) *Syntactic distribution of ye eduru*

- (b-i) Mensah ye eduru  
 Name make/prepare medicine  
 ‘Mensah prepares/makes medicine.’

(c) *Morphological distribution of aduroye ‘medicine making’ from the verb: ye duro*

**‘make medicine’**

- (c-i) Singular: oduruyεfo ‘a herbalist’  
 (c-ii) Input: o- duruyε -fo  
 Nom PRF- medicine.making -person  
 (c-iii) Plural: aduruyεfo ‘herbalists’  
 (c-iv) Input: a- duruyε -fo  
 Nom PRF- medicine.make –person

In examples (31)-(33) above, it can be realized that, the bases of the *ni/fo* derivative are compound bases with their constituents being a noun and a verb (N-V) i.e. *ban to* ‘wall build’ in *o-banto-ni*; *gua di* ‘market engage’ in *o-guadi-ni* and *eduru ye* ‘medicine making’ in *eduruyε-fo*. The compound verb bases identified in the data are *ye eduru* ‘prepare/make medicine’, *di gua* ‘engage in market’ and *to ban* ‘build a wall’. The verbs in these compound bases we recognize, function as transitive verbs, that is, they are predicated by objects in this case nouns. In this regard, the verbs *ye* ‘to make or to prepare’ takes *eduru* ‘medicine’ as its predicate, *di*

'to eat/to engage' takes *gua* 'market' and *to* 'to build' take *ban* 'wall' as their predicates accordingly.

In the derivation of *ni/fo* nouns from verb-noun bases, we observe that the verbs in the bases are inverted in the derived word. Thus, we can notice the base, *to ban* as *banto* in *ɔbantoni* 'mason', *di gua* as *guadi* in *oguidini* 'trader' and *ye eduru* as *eduruye* in *eduruyefo* 'herbalist'. A possible explanation we can give to the inversion trend in the derived nouns is that, the originally transitivized verbs become detransitivized on account of appearing after the noun and having no object. At this point, the said detransitivized verbs are joined together with the noun i.e. compounded with the noun to be one unit. The suffix *-ni/fo* is attached to the compound form after which the prefixes [ɔ-]/[o-] is attached to form the singular derivative or [a-] attached to form the plural derivatives. We illustrate these steps in

(34)

- (34) - verb-noun base → *to ban* 'build wall'  
 - detransitivize → *ban to* 'wall build'  
 - compounded → *banto(ɔ)* 'wall building'  
 -ni/-fo addition → *bantofɔ* 'wall building person'  
 - prefix addition → *ɔ-bantofɔ* 'mason'  
 - derived form → *ɔbantofɔ* 'mason'

The steps in (34) illustrate a simplified morphological stages of *ni* and *fo* derivatives with verb noun compounds.

**3.4.2.2 Ni and fo derivatives with Verb-Verb compound bases**

The second type of *ni* and *fo* complex verb base we will look at in this section is the verb-verb (V-V) base. The verbs which derive *ni* and *fo* derivatives are made up of two distinct stems which are compounded (V-V). We present the syntactic and morphological distribution of examples of the bases in (35- 37) below. The complex bases under consideration in this section are *gye di* ‘to have faith’ (35), *tu ko* ‘migrate’ (36) and *di ma* ‘to intercede’ (37).

(35)

(a) Base: *gye di* ‘to have faith/to believe’

(b) Syntactic distribution of *gyedi*

(b-i) Obaa no gye di sɛɛ ɔ-yem  
 woman DEF take eat DET 3SG-pregnant  
 ‘The woman believes that she is pregnant’

(c) Morphological distribution of *gye di*

(c-i) Singular: ogyedini ‘a believer’

(c-ii) Input: o- gyedi -ni  
 Nom PRF- take.eat -person

(c-iii) Plural: agyedifo ‘believers’

(c-iv) Input: a- gyedi -fo  
 Nom PRF- take.eat -person

(36)

(a) *Base:* tu kɔ 'to migrate'

(b) *Syntactic distribution of tu kɔ*

(b-i) ogyam, tu kɔ akyire

Name, uproot go far

Ogyam, migrate and go far

(c) *Morphological distribution of tu kɔ*

(c-i) Singular: otukɔni 'an immigrant'

(c-ii) Input: o- tu kɔ -ni

Nom PRF- uproot. go -person

(c-iii) Plural: atukɔfo 'immigrants'

(c-iv) Input: a- tu kɔ -fo

Nom PRF- uproot. go -person



(37)

(a) *Base:* di ma

‘to intercede’

(b) *Syntactic distribution of di ma*

(b-i) me di ma no  
 1SG eat/engage give DEF

‘I intercede for him/her’

(c) *Morphological distribution of di ma*

(c-i) Singular: odimafo ‘an advocate’

(c-ii) Input: o- di ma -fo  
 Nom PRF- eat/engage. give -person

(c-iii) Plural: adimafo ‘advocates’

(c-iv) Input: a- di ma -fo  
 Nom PRF- eat/engage. give -person

Unlike the verb-noun bases in section 3.4.2.1, *ni* and *fo* derivatives from verb-verb bases do not undergo any change inversely. We will see that the base *gye di* ‘to believe’ is realized as the same form in the derivative in *o-gyedi-ni* ‘a believer’ with the singular and plural affixes being [o-] and *-ni* in (35). In (36), *tu ko* ‘migrate’ is realized as *o-tuko-fo* ‘immigrant’ and *di ma* ‘intercede’ is realized as *o-dima-fo*. ‘advocate’ (37). Both (36) and (37) have the prefix [o-] and suffix *-fo* deriving the singular and [a-] and *-fo* deriving the plural.

**3.4.2.2.1 Ni and fo derivatives with reduplicated Verb compound bases**

*Ni* and *fo* derivatives may be derived from reduplicated forms of a verb as well. The reduplicated verb exemplified in (38) is *di* ‘to eat’- we present the syntactic and morphological distribution accordingly.

(38)

(a) Base: *di* ‘to eat’

(a-i) Reduplicated Base: *didi* ‘to eat’

(b) Syntactic distribution of *didi*

(b-i) m-marima didi

PL-man eat

‘Men (can) eat.’

(c) Morphological distribution of *didi*

(c-i) Singular: odidifo ‘a glutton’

(c-ii) Input: o- didi -fo

Nom PRF- eat -person

(c-iii) Plural: adidifo ‘gluttons’

(c-iv) Input: a- didi -fo

NOM-eat -person

We can observe in (38) that, the structure of reduplicated verb base of *ni* and *fo* derivatives is same as those found in section 3.4.2.2 above, where the prefix-suffix of the singular form of the derived noun is [o-] and -fo and the plural being [a-] and fo.

### 3.5 -Ni and -Fo derivatives from Adjectival bases

Adjectives are words which qualify a noun in order to mark or distinguish it more accurately (Christaller 1875). In syntactic constructions, they may function attributively or predicatively. When they function attributively, they occur after the noun they qualify. On the other hand, predicative adjectives are always joined to the verb of existence (Christaller 1933:XXV). In Table 8, we show some examples of adjective bases which derive *ni/fo* derivatives. *Ni* and *fo* nouns may be derived from adjective bases as seen in data presented in Table 8.

**Table 8: -Ni and -Fo derivatives from adjectival bases**

	Adjective	Singular derivative	Plural derivative	Gloss
a.	<i>keseɛ</i> 'fat'	ɔ-keseɛ	a-kese-foɔ	'Fat people'
b.	<i>Tuntum</i> 'black'	ɔ-tuntum	a-tuntum-foɔ <sub>[PL]</sub>	'dark skinned people'
c.	<i>kɔkɔ</i> 'red'	ɔ-kɔkɔ	a-kɔkɔ-foɔ <sub>[PL]</sub>	'fair/light skinned people'

In the examples in Table 8 above, it can be seen that derived *ni/fo* nominals from adjectival bases strictly inflect for the singular with the prefix [ɔ-] without any overt

suffix. Thus, for the singular of *keseɛ* ‘fat’, *tuntum* ‘black’ and *kɔkɔɔ* ‘red’ in Table (8a-c) we have *ɔkeseɛ* ‘a fat person’, *ɔtuntum* ‘a black person’ and *ɔkɔkɔɔ* ‘a fair person’ respectively. The plurals of the derivatives from adjectival bases are derived with [a-] and *-fo*. We represent the internal structure of adjectival based *-ni/-fo* derivatives for both the singular and plural in (39a) and (39b) respectively:

(39a)  $[[X]_{Adj} -ni/fo]_N$

(39b)  $[Y]_{Nom} PRF [[X]_{Adj} -ni/fo]_N$

The difference between the internal structure of the adjectival based *-ni/-fo* derivative of (39a) in relation to (39b) is the nominal prefix [Y] overtly marking the plural of the derived noun (39b). In both schemas, ‘X’ is the base, which is identified as an adjective [<sub>Adj</sub>], that *ni/fo* attaches to derive a noun.

### 3.6 Conclusion on *ni* and *fo* derivatives in Akan

From the distribution patterns presented from sections (3.2- 3.5), it can be realized that, the morphological strategy involved in the formation of *-ni/fo* derivatives is derivation by affixation. This subsection summarizes the distributional patterns of the affixes involved in *-ni* and *-fo* derivatives in Akan. These symbols have been used in the tables below with the following meanings: the plus symbol ‘+’ denotes that a noun inflects for an affix (prefix or a suffix); plus, symbol in parenthesis ‘(+)’, denotes that a noun minimally inflects for an affix; and an *empty cell* denotes the

absence of an affix on a derived noun. Table 9 below, shows the distribution of affixes in *-ni* and *-fo* nominal derivatives as seen in the examples in section (3.3).

**Table 9: The distribution of affixes in *-ni* and *-fo* derivatives with nominal bases in Akan**

		Singular			Plural	
		ɔ-/o-	-ni	-fo	a-	-fo
Nouns	Place		+			+
	Concrete	+	+		+	+
	State	+	(+)	+	+	+
	Abstract	+		+	+	+

From the distribution of affixes in *-ni* and *-fo* derivatives with nominal bases in Table 9, we can deduce that, to derive their singular forms, bases of concrete, place and state nominals, take *-ni*, as their suffix. It must be stressed that the cases of *-ni* occurrence as singular in state base nominals are minimal, rather, together with abstract nouns, they take *-fo* as their singular suffix. Concerning their singular prefixation, concrete, state and abstract base nominals take [ɔ-/o-]. Prefixation in place nouns does not occur. Another inference from Table 9 is that, noun bases (place/concrete/abstract/state) inflect for *-fo* as plural suffix. All derivatives with nominal bases inflect for [a-] as plural prefix except place nouns.

In Table 10 below, we show the distribution of affixes in *-ni* and *-fo* derivatives with verbal bases in Akan as seen in the examples in section (3.4) above.

**Table 10: The distribution of affixes in *-ni* and *-fo* derivatives with verbal bases in Akan**

				Singular			Plural	
				ɔ-/o-	-ni	-fo	a-	-fo
Verbs	(a)	Simple stems	(i) are converted to nouns	+	+		+	+
			(ii) remain verbal	+		+	+	+
	(b)	Complex V-N stems	(i) are converted to nouns	+	+		+	+
			(ii) remain verbal	+		+	+	+
	(c)	Complex V-V stems (are converted to nouns)		+	+		+	+
	(d)	Complex Verb stems reduplicated		+		+	+	+

The realization of the distribution of affixes in *-ni* and *-fo* derivatives with verbal bases in Table 10 is that, verbal bases are of two types, those that have been

nominalized and those that remain verbal. Nominalized verbal bases inflect for  $\text{ɔ-/o-}$  and  $-ni$  in the singular whereas verbal bases inflect for  $[\text{ɔ-/o-}]$  and  $-fo$  (i.e., in the singular). In the plural, derivatives with verbal bases (i.e., either nominalized verbal or verbal bases) inflect for  $a-$  and  $-fo$ .

In Table 11 below, we show the distribution of affixes in  $-ni$  and  $-fo$  derivatives with adjectival bases in Akan as seen in the examples in section (3.5) above.

**Table 11: The distribution of affixes in  $-ni$  and  $-fo$  derivatives with adjectival bases in Akan**

		Singular			Plural	
		$\text{ɔ-/o-}$	$-ni$	$-fo$	$a-$	$-fo$
Adjective bases	<b>Simple stems</b>	+			+	+

Derivatives with adjectival bases inflect for  $\text{ɔ-/o-}$  but not  $-ni/-fo$  in the singular. They inflect for  $a-$  and  $-fo$  in the plural.

In Table 12 below, we draw a general conclusion on the distribution of affixes on bases of  $-ni$  and  $-fo$  derivatives.

**Table 12: General information on the distribution of affixes on bases of *-ni* and *-fo* derivatives**

	Nominal bases		(Nominalized) Verbal Bases	Adjectival bases
Singular	Place	*ɔ-/-ni	ɔ-/-ni ( <i>nominalized verbal bases</i> ), -fo ( <i>verbal bases</i> )	ɔ-/*-ni, *-fo
	Concrete	ɔ-/-ni		
	State	ɔ-/-ni; ɔ-/-fo		
	Abstract	ɔ-/-ni; ɔ-/-fo		
Plural	a-/-fo		a-/-fo	a-/-fo

From the Table in 12, the following general statements can be made about affixation in noun derivatives in Akan:

- i. All bases take ɔ- for their singular with the exception of a place base.
- ii. All bases take *-ni* in the singular with the exception of adjectival bases.
- iii. *-Fo* co-occurs with only some state, abstract, and nominalized verbal bases in the singular.
- iv. All bases inflect for a- and -fo in their plural forms.

### 3.7 Chapter conclusion

In chapter three, section (3.1) introduces the chapter on the structural analysis of *-ni* and *-fo* nominal derivatives. we have discussed prefixation in the derivation of *-ni* and *-fo* nouns in (3.2), nominal bases of *-ni* and *-fo* derivatives in the perspective of

concrete, abstract, state and place noun bases in (3.3), verbal bases of *-ni* and *-fo* derivatives, with focus on simple, complex and reduplicated verb bases in (3.4), adjectival bases of *-ni* and *-fo* derivatives in (3.5), conclusion on the *-ni* and *-fo* derivatives presented in the chapter in (3.6) and chapter summary in (3.7)



## CHAPTER FOUR

### A SEMANTIC /FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS OF *-NI* AND *-FOƆ* DERIVATIVES IN AKAN

#### 4.1 Introduction

“The meaning of a complex expression is a compositional function of that of its constituents and the way they are combined” (Booij 2005:207). This implies that we can generally derive the meaning of a complex word on the basis of its internal structure. This chapter thus investigates the semantic contributions of the bases and the bound *-ni* and *-foƆ* morphemes to derived simplex and complex nouns in Akan. We will also want to find out what functional roles *-ni* and *-foƆ* play in derived simplex noun outputs in Akan. We define functional roles in the study as the contribution that *-ni* and *-fo* make to the overall meaning of the resultant word. It is our view that the addition that *-ni* and *-fo* makes to the derived noun relative to their meaning, may slightly be different depending on the stems or base they attach to. We recognize that, the meaning of bases and the bound *-ni* and *-foƆ* morphemes to derived simplex and complex nouns in Akan comprise bits of perceptual and cultural knowledge that make the bulk meaning of the lexical representation or the resultant word (Lieber 2004). This, relates directly to the ‘Body’, which is the semantic/pragmatic representation (of the tenets of Lieber’s (2004).

We will first of all have attributive analysis of the bases which *-ni/-fo* attaches to in section (4.2), semantic/functional contribution of affixes to nominal

derivatives in section (4.3), the Inflectional and Derivational Status of *-Ni* and *-Fo* in section (4.4) and chapter conclusion in section (4.5).

#### 4.2 Attributive analysis of bases of *-ni* and *-fo* derivatives

We define attributes in this study as the quality or characteristics possessed by an entity; entities in this case are the nominal, verbal and adjectival bases which *-ni* and *fo* attach to. In this section we examine the bases of *-ni* and *-fo* relative to their attributive quality or characteristics. To determine the attributive qualities of the bases of *-ni* and *-fo* nominals, we would want to find how these attributes function in the syntax of Akan. The syntax helps bring out the meaning of the bases and also the fact that these items describe situations in the real world makes the knowledge about their syntax relevant. In this regard, we will consider three syntactic categories in Akan, which are a noun, a verb and an adjective (as our variable for testing). With each of these syntactic categories, we will look at their basic syntactic distributions in items (a) and how they behave in relativized constructions (attributively) in items (b) respectively of examples (1) to (3) below. The lexical items we will consider in the examples are *tumi* ‘power’ for the noun, *hwε* ‘to watch/ to look at’ for the verb and *kese(ε)* ‘big’ for the adjective.

(1) Nominal item: *tumi* ‘power’

In a basic construction

- a. Nana wɔ *tumi*  
name has power  
‘Nana has power.’

In a relativized construction

- b. Onipa a ɔ- wɔ *tumi*  
human REL 3SG has power  
‘One who has power.’

(2) Verbal item: *hwɛ* ‘to watch (over)/to look at’

In a basic construction

- a. Papa no hwɛ dan so  
man DEF watch (over) house top/over  
‘The man watches (over) after the house.’

In a relativized construction.

- b. Obarima a ɔ- hwɛ dan so no  
Male REL 3SG watch (over) house top/over  
DEF  
‘The man who watches over the house.’

(3) Adjectival item: *kese(ɛ)* ‘big/fat’

In a basic construction

- a. Ntim yɛ *kese(ɛ)*  
Name AUX fat/big  
‘Ntim is fat/big’

In a relativized construction

- b.            Onipa a        ɔ        -yε        kese (ε)  
                  Human REL 3SG    AUX    fat/big  
                  ‘The one who is big’

In examples (1a-b), (2a-b) and (3a-b) above, we observe that, in the basic constructions, (a), *tumi* merely functions as the predicate of the verb *wɔ* ‘has’ (1a), in (2a), we identify the syntactic positions of the nouns (i.e. subject and object) in the construction with respect to the verb *hwε* and in (3a), the adjective *kese(ε)* functions as the predicate of the auxiliary verb *yε* ‘is’ in relation to the noun *Nana*. The lexical items, as exemplified in the relativized constructions in items (b) of (1-3), functions as ascriptions in the relative constructions. in (1b), *tumi* ‘power’ is ascribed to an entity *onipa* ‘human’, and this gives us the interpretation as ‘the one who has power’. Also, in (2b), the verb *hwε* ‘to watch’ is attributed to *onipa* ‘human’, giving the interpretation as ‘one who watches’. Lastly, the adjective *kese(ε)* ‘fat/big’ in (3b), ascribes the quality of being fat/big to the noun *onipa* ‘human’ meaning ‘big person’. The meaning derived of adjectives in attributive constructions is suggestive of that attribute being inherently possessed.

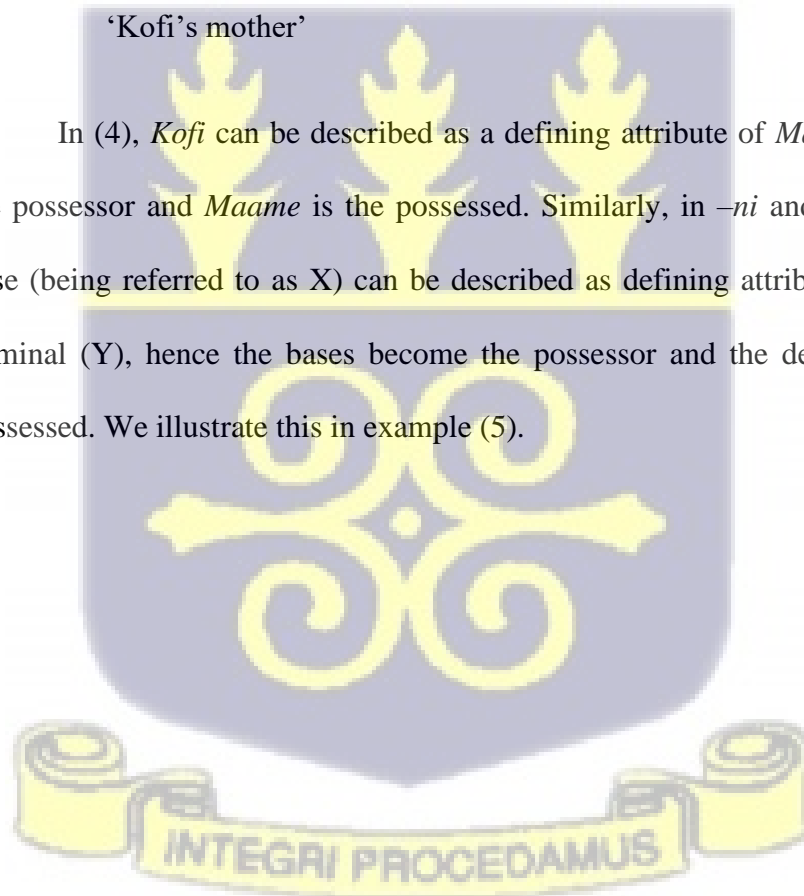
From the above examples, particularly with respect to the relativized (attributive) constructions, we can justify the role that syntax has played in helping us know the meaning of the bases which in all the instances of item (b) is interpreted as ‘one who has the attributes of the noun’, ‘one who is involved or engages in the

attributes of the verb’, and ‘he who is the attribute of the adjective’. In all three interpretations, we can identify that, the bases define the attributes of the possessed or the one who possesses. We illustrate the notion of possession in (4) below, where the possessor is the defining attribute of the possessed.

- (4)    Kofi                    Maame  
         Name.POSS          mother

‘Kofi’s mother’

In (4), *Kofi* can be described as a defining attribute of *Maame* where *Kofi* is the possessor and *Maame* is the possessed. Similarly, in *-ni* and *-fo* nominals, the base (being referred to as X) can be described as defining attributes of the derived nominal (Y), hence the bases become the possessor and the derived nominal, the possessed. We illustrate this in example (5).



(5)	Base (X)	Derivative (Y)	Meaning of (Y)
a.	(X) and (Y) relationship	Possessor Possessed	'one who...'
b.	Nominal Example	<i>sika</i> 'money'	Osikani 'one who has money/ rich person'
c.	Verbal Example	<i>hwe</i> 'to watch/over/to look after'	<i>ɔhwefo</i> 'one who watches over/ guardian'
c-i.		<i>didi</i> 'to eat'	Odidifo 'one who (likes) eats (habitual)/glutton'
e.	Adjectival Example	<i>kese(ε)</i> 'fat/big'	<i>ɔkeseε</i> 'a big person'

In example (5) above, (a) describes the relationship between (X) and (Y), where X being identified as the base is the possessor of (Y) which is identified as the derivative. All the derivatives (Y), in examples (5b) to (5e) have a relativized interpretation as seen in the data. In (5b) *osikani* 'one who possesses *sika* or attributed with *sika* 'money', (5c) *ɔhwefo* 'one who does or is engaged in the act of

the verb *hwɛ* ‘to watch over’, in other words, one who has the attributes *hwɛ* ‘watching over. In (5c-i), *odidifo* ‘one who eats’ is an attribute of the base *didi*, the reduplicated nature of the base brings a habitual meaning to the derivative. Therefore, *odidi* is not only an attribute of one who eats, but also one who likes or is in the habit of eating. In this regard, we can boldly state that, the bases of *-ni* and *-fo* derivatives, bring more meaning than what the bases actually connote. Finally in (5e), *ɔkeseɛ* ‘one who is fat/big’ is seen as an attribute which the base *keseɛ* projects.

The meaning of attributes as described in the study are:

- i. The doer of something e.g *o-sua-ni* ‘one who learns/student’
- ii. The origin of someone e.g *Ghana-ni* ‘one who comes from Ghana/a Ghanaian’
- iii. Member of a social unit/place e.g *a-kyerekyere-fo* ‘one who is a member of those who teach/teachers’
- iv. Experiencer of something/ a person in a situation/with a situation/associated with a situation e.g., *o-su-fo* ‘one who experiences or undergo the activity of crying/mourner’
- v. An association with e.g., *Basel-fo* ‘one who belong to the Basel group’

The distinct properties we have identified in the study, relative to bases, are that they have individual or personal attributes. This implies that the said attribute is

known to define an individual and cannot be said of or shared by everybody. For instance, the attributes encoded from an adjectival base *ɔkeseɛ* ‘one who is fat’ is a personal attribute of the referent. The attribute of the referent cannot be said of or shared by all. The second distinct property of bases identified in the study is their generic reference. Some bases are inherently generic, that is, they have a collective or group attributes. These attributes are shared and they are defining of a people. For instance, the base *Asante* ‘an Akan tribe’ (from which we derive *Asantefo* ‘people of Asante’) already connotes a group or a collective attributiveness.

We conclude on the attributive analysis of bases of *-ni* and *-fo* nominals that, derivatives of *-ni* and *-fo* should be labeled as personal attributes because the referent person is noted for what the base is in reference to or ascribes to it. Therefore *-ni* and *-fo* derive personal attributes by virtue of their attachment to their bases. This meaning of the derived *-ni/-fo* nouns is encyclopedic, holistic, nondecompositional (i.e., not composed of primitives) (Lieber 2004)).

#### **4.3 Semantic/functional contribution of affixes to nominal derivatives.**

“The meaning contributed by a morpheme may vary depending on other morphemes in the immediate environment” (Payne 1997:21). This emphasizes the roles that morphemes play in the meaning of simple and complex words. In this section, we deal with the semantic/functional contribution of affixes of *ni* and *fo* derivatives. In this subsection, we discuss the unique semantic and functional contributions affixes

including *-ni* and *-fo* make to the meaning of derived nouns in Akan. In the following subsections, we discuss the affixes in relation to the semantic contribution they make to the overall meaning of the derived nominal.

#### 4.3.1 *-Ni when added to an attribute (X)*

When *-ni* is added to an attribute/base X, the derivative denotes a person who is a member of a group with the attribute X. *-Ni* strictly goes with generic/attributes with singular reference. As a result, the derived noun has the meaning ‘a person who is in/with a situation’ and this situation is a nominal attribute which has a generic reference. We exemplify this in (6) below:

- (5) [(Pref.) +[Noun +ni]]
- Ø Asante + ni
- Asanteni* ‘a member of Asante’

In (6), we notice the attachment of *-ni* to a noun attribute/base. Keeping the prefix in a parenthesis implies that realization in the derivative is optional. The meaning derived thus is ‘a person who is/with a situation’ and situation here is the attribute/base *Asante*. We find instances of all *-ni* derivatives (as given in the study in chapter three) in Table 13 (a-n) in column I and their plural counterpart in column II.

**Table 13: -Ni and -fo when added to an attribute (X)**

Column I: -ni	Column II: -fo (plural of ni)
a. osikani 'a rich person'	asikafoɔ 'rich persons'
b. okontomponi 'a calumniator'	akontompofɔ 'calumniators'
c. ɔhantanni 'a proud person'	ahantanfo 'proud persons'
d. ohiani 'a poor person'	ahiafo 'poor persons'
e. osigyani 'a bachelor/spinster'	asigyafɔ 'bachelor/spinster'
f. ewiaseni 'a pagan'	ewiasefɔ 'pagans'
g. asaaseni ~ assasesoni 'a person of the earth'	asaasefo/asaasesofɔ 'persons of the earth'
h. efieni 'house mate'	efiefɔ 'house mates'
i. Ghanani 'a person from Ghana'	Ghanafo 'persons from Ghana'
j. osuani 'student/a disciple'	asuafo 'students/disciples'
k. ɔbantoni 'a mason'	abantofɔ 'masons'
l. oguadini 'a trader'	aguadifo 'traders'
m. ogyedini 'a believer'	agyedifo 'believers'
n. otukɔni 'an immigrant'	atukɔfo 'immigrants'

Again, referring to Table 13 column II, we can observe the plural counterparts of the items in column I. When -fo is added to an attribute/base, the resultant word denotes 'members of' that attribute. The form -fo here goes with generic bases/attributes with plural reference. Thus, the meaning of the derived nominal when a prefix, a

noun and *-fo* are put together, denote ‘persons who are in/with a situation’ and this situation is the nominal attribute/base which has generic reference.

#### **4.3.2 *a-* and *-fo* when added to an attribute (X)**

In column II of Table 13 above, a plural prefix [a-] (examples in column II) when added to an attribute derives a plural noun example *a-sikafo* ‘rich people’ (a), *a-hiafo* ‘poor persons’ (d) and *a-sigyafɔ* ‘bachelors and spinsters’ (e). The outcome has a meaning ‘persons (each) with X as an attribute. In other words, *asikafo* ‘rich people’ is not in reference to any particular or identifiable group who share the same attribute but rather, different individuals (dispersed or scattered) who possess the quality of *sika*, ‘money’ or being rich. When the prefix [a-], the attribute (a verb or an adjective) and the suffix *-fo* are added together, the meaning derived is ‘persons who engage in or are involved in a situation (individually)’. This situation is the verbal or adjectival attribute which has a non- generic reference. The form *-fo* is associated with a [-Generic] that is a non-generic with human reference. By non-generic bases or attributes, we mean verbal or adjectival bases. Therefore when *-fo* is augmented on non-generic bases, personal attributes are created. For example, in Table 13 (-m) *agyedifo* ‘believers’ connote persons who are members of a collective group who engage in or are involved in a situation/attribute (individually). It must be emphasized that the meaning tagged with a ‘situation’ mostly is in a context.

### 4.3.3 *ɔ-* and *-fo* when added to an attribute (X)

The prefix [ɔ-] when added to an attribute derives a singular noun. The meaning received is ‘a person with X as an attribute. For instance, in Table 13 (a) and (e), *ɔ-defo* ‘a wealthy person’ and *ɔ-twere-fo* ‘a writer’ (including all the examples in column I of Table (14) connote a singular noun of a person with *ade* ‘thing’ and a person with the ability *twere* ‘to write’ respectively. When the prefix [ɔ-], the attribute (a verb or an adjective) and the suffix *-fo* are added together, the meaning derived is ‘a person who engages in or is involved in a situation encoded by the adjectival or verbal attribute (base), which has a non-generic reference. Thus *ɔ-* and *fo* when added to an attribute (X) denote a person or a member of a group with the attribute (X). We will want to mention that the specific meaning assigned to an attribute has a socio-cultural relevance. This is to say the meaning of a derivative as given by a speaker, is defined by the speaker. For instance, when a speaker says a hypothetical word such as ‘*apregafo*’ in a certain context, the meaning of the derived *-fo* noun is in a situation or context that only the speaker and his or her audience has knowledge of. The derived form suggests the base/attribute as ‘*aprega*’, however, there is no vocabulary found in the language as such. But the users of the derivative have for themselves the meaning of such a form and all we are saying is that, the meaning of such a form suggests persons (different) with that attribute X, in this case *aprega*. In Table 14 below, in column I, we give examples of this phenomena

**Table 14: [ɔ-] and *fo* when added to an attribute (X)**

Column I <i>ɔ-/-fo</i> (with verbs and adjectives – singular)	Column II <i>a-/-fo</i> with verbs and adjectives- plural
a. ɔdefo ‘a wealthy person’	a. adefo ‘wealthy persons’
b. ɔhwefo ‘a guardian’	b. ahwefo ‘guardians’
c. ɔkɔmfo ‘a fetish priest’	c. akɔmfo ‘fetish priests’
d. ɔyarefo ‘a sick person’	d. ayarefo ‘sick persons’
e. ɔtwerefo ‘a writer’	e. atwerefo ‘writers’
f. obayifo ‘a witch’	f. abayifo ‘witches’
g. obusufo ‘a mischievous person’	g. abusufufo ‘mischievous persons’
h. odidifo ‘a glutton’	h. adidifo ‘gluttons’
i. odimafo ‘an advocate’	i. adimafo ‘advocates’
j. oduruyefo ‘a herbalist’	j. aduruyefo ‘herbalists’
k. okufo ‘a person with sores’	k. akufo ‘persons with sores’
l. okunafoɔ- ‘widow’	l. akunafoɔ ‘widows’
m. onokwafo ‘a truthful person’	m. anokwafo ‘truthful persons’
n. otorofo ‘a liar’	n. atorofufo ‘liars’
o. otufo ‘a musketeer’	o. atufufo ‘musketeers’
p. otumfo ‘a powerful being’	p. atumfo ‘powerful beings’
q. -	q. tuntumfoɔ ‘dark skinned people’
r. -	r. akesefoɔ ‘fat people’
s. -	s. akɔkɔfoɔ ‘fair/light skinned people’

Finally, from the data above, we observe that, when [a-] and *fo* are added to an attribute (X) they denote persons with the attribute. As seen in Table 14 (q,r,s). We can also realize that these attributes are adjectives.

#### **4.4 The Inflectional and Derivational Status of *-Ni* and *-Fo***

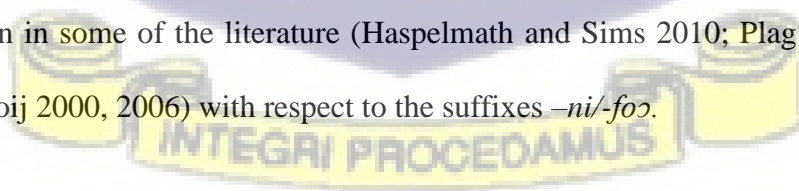
According to Haspelmath & Sims (2010:18) “... there are two rather different kinds of morphological relationship among words for which two technical terms are commonly used”. These they identify as inflection and derivation. These two concepts have been widely studied by many linguists across languages (Bauer 1983, 2004; Plag 2003; Booij 2004; Dixon 2010).

Haspelmath & Sims (ibid) describe inflection as “the relationship between word-forms of lexemes” and derivation as “the relationship between lexemes of a word family”.

We shall discuss five (5) of the properties of these morphological relations, using them as litmus tests to ascertain the inflectional and derivational properties of the suffixes under study.

##### **4.4.1 Inflectional and Derivational Properties of *-Ni* and *-Fo***

In this section, we shall look at the distinct properties of inflection and derivation as seen in some of the literature (Haspelmath and Sims 2010; Plag 2003; Bauer 2004; Booij 2000, 2006) with respect to the suffixes *-ni/-fo*.



#### 4.4.1.1 Syntactic Relevance

The first test we will employ to examine the inflectional or derivational properties of *-ni/-foɔ* is their syntactic relevance. According to the literature, relevance to syntax implies that the meaning given by a morphological pattern is involved in syntactic agreement, hence inflection is relevant to the syntax and derivation is not. Specifically, one word requires another word or phrase to have a particular inflectional value-agreement. We see an example in (7) in classical Mexican language, Nahuatl:

7. i-pam	noyac
3SG-on	my.nose
‘on my nose’	

Haspelmath & Sims (2010:91) cited in (Sullivan 1988:108)

In (7), there is agreement of preposition *panm* with complement NP in person and number. In comparison with Akan, we rather observe a derivational property with the nominal suffixes *-ni/foɔ* as agreement between constituents is not required in the syntactic construction. This is illustrated in (8) & (9).

8. a. Abusua-ni	no	a-ba	ha
Family-SG	DEF	PERF-come	here

‘the family member has come here’

b. mmusua-foɔ no a-ba ha

family- PL DEF PERF-come here

‘the family members have come here’

9. a. Osua-ni no m-pɛ aduane

Student-SG DEF NEG-like food

‘The student is not interested in food’

b. Asua-foɔ no m-pɛ aduane

student-PL DEF NEG-like food

‘The students are not interested in food’

In example (8), it can be realized that the perfect tense of the verb remains the same-*aba-* ‘has/have come’ in both (a -b) which have singular and plural subjects respectively. Unlike English, there is no change in verb form nor attachment of any affix to the base verb, nor any tense maker, yet the sentence remains grammatical. It can therefore be deduced from the examples that, the *-ni/-foɔ* derived nominal in the sentences, indicating number, does not affect the syntax of the construction hence they exhibit derivational properties.

Still in English, a singular subject will correspond with a singular tense marker-*has* and a plural subject will similarly take a plural tense marker-*have*. In (9), we observe that in (a & b), the examples in Akan do not make use of any corresponding auxiliary

verb ‘is/are’ to agree with the singular and plural subjects of the construction. Evidently, we can infer that, *-ni/-foɔ* derived nominals are not relevant to the syntax of a construction hence, they exhibit derivational properties.

#### **4.4.1.2 Obligatoriness**

The second property or criterion we will test against to find out the ‘inflectiveness’ and ‘derivativeness’ of *-ni/-foɔ* is obligatoriness: inflectional features are expressed obligatorily on all applicable word-forms, derivational meanings are not obligatorily expressed. For example, in English, according to Booij (2006:4) all nouns are marked as either singular or plural, thus the category number is an obligatory category in English, hence inflectional.

Likewise in Akan, as indicated in Tables 1 and 2 respectively, number is marked on nouns by the affixation of either a prefix, or a suffix or both. Specifically, *-ni/-foɔ* have number marking properties, with */-ni/* attaching to indicate individual humans and */-foɔ/* attaching to indicate plurality. According to the obligatory criterion, since they are expressive on all applicable nouns, their inflectional feature stands out. This point is illustrated in Table 7 (in chapter 3) above, where the singular and plural noun forms are respectively expressed by the suffixation of *-ni/-foɔ*.

Contrary to inflection, according to Haspelmath and Sims (ibid), derivational meanings are not obligatorily expressed. For instance, in English, the suffix *-er*

applies to verbs to derive nouns with the meaning of ‘agent’, e.g. *walker*. But it is not the case that all nouns must express an agentive meaning, as it is the case that nouns express number in most languages.

#### 4.4.1.3 Change of Syntactic Category

The third criterion we shall discuss in relation to the inflectional or derivational properties of *-ni/-foɔ* is change of syntactic category or word class change.

Canonical inflection does not change the word-class of the base, derivational affixes may change the word-class of the base. For instance in English, from the verb ‘walk’- *walks, walked, walking* could be realized, depicting number, case and tense of the verb. There is no meaning change in the output forms of the verb, only creation of different forms of the same lexeme.

Conversely, derivation determines the lexical category of the lexeme it creates as seen in Dutch in (10).

10. a. *hond* ‘N, dog’- *hond-je* ‘N-doggy’

b. *blond* ‘A, blond’ – *blond-je* ‘N, blonde girl’

c. *speel* ‘V, to play’ – *speel-tje* ‘N, toy’(Booij 2006:5)

In example (10 a-c), the different output of the derivational Dutch diminutive suffix *-je* is exemplified. We observe in (10a-c), that all the derived words of the diminutive suffix are nouns, from different word classes; noun, adjective and verb respectively.

There are, however, instances where there may seem not to be any change in category, for instance, when a derivational affix derives a noun from another noun (10a). Similar example is seen in the literature when the English suffix *-er* derives a noun, *Londoner* from another noun, 'London'. Booij (ibid) argues that this is a clear case of derivation since *Londoner* and *London* are two different lexemes, belonging to two different subcategories of nouns; a count noun (*Londoner*) and a proper noun (*London*). This he affirms that the fact that a morphological process does not change a word-class, is no proof of its inflectional nature.

Regarding *-ni/-foɔ* suffixes, they in the same way change the word class of the syntactic categories of the bases they attach to, hence have derivational properties. The evidence of this can be found in the literature, as already mentioned that they derive personal nouns from the bases they attach to. The spotlight of this evidence has been captured in sections (3.3), (3.4) and (3.5) of chapter 3, where personal nouns are derived from concrete, abstract, state and place noun bases, as well as verb and adjectival bases. In Table 15, we observe some more examples of the word-class changing/derivational property of the suffixes *-ni/foɔ*.



**Table 15. Class changing Examples of *-Ni/-Foɔ***

Stem	Gloss	Derived Nominal	Gloss
<i>awoɔ</i> (N)	‘birthing’	<i>awofoɔ</i> (N)	‘a parent’
<i>ɛka</i> (N)	‘Debt’	<i>ɔkafoɔ</i> (N)	‘a debtor’
<i>ɔko</i> (N)	‘war’	<i>ɔkofoɔ</i> (N)	‘a warrior’
<i>Sika</i> (N)	‘Money’	<i>Osikani</i> (N)	‘a rich person’
<i>Sigya</i> (N)	‘Singlehood’	<i>Sigyani</i> (N)	‘bachelor/spinster’
<i>Ekura</i> (N)	‘Village’	<i>Okurasini</i> (N)	‘an uncivilized person’
<i>Ase</i> (N)	‘Beneath’	<i>Aseni</i> (N)	‘a descendant’
<i>asubɔ</i> (N)	‘Baptism’	<i>osubɔni</i> (N)	‘a Baptist’
<i>ɔsuro</i> (N)	‘Heaven’	<i>ɔsorni</i> (N)	‘Heavenly being’

From the examples in Table 15, it can be deduced that, *-ni/foɔ* may be suffixed to noun bases to derive nominals from the same syntactic class. Though their derivatives are in the same class as their stems, they cannot be considered inflectional affixes by the *change of syntactic category criterion*. As far as the semantic change involved is concerned, the derivational qualities of the suffixes is reinforced.



#### 4.4.1.4 Order of Morphemes

The fourth criterion we will look at to find out the inflectional or derivational properties of *-ni/-foɔ*, though relative, is the order in which the morphemes appear. In other words, their position relative to the base. According to the literature (Haspelmath & Sims 2010; Booij 2000), canonical inflection is usually expressed at the periphery of words, canonical derivation is expressed close to the root. Examples are seen in (11) in English and Turkish.

11. a. English	king-dom-s	root- Status (D)- plural (I)
b. English	real-ize-d	root- Factitive (D)- past tense (I)
c. English	luck-i-er	root- Propreitive (D)- comparative (I)
d. Turkish	iç-ir-iyor	root-Causative (D)- imperfective (I)
	[drink-CAUS-IMPF.3SG]	
	‘make (somebody) drink’	

Haspelmath & Sims (2010:95)

In (11), we can see from (a-d) that the words in English and Turkish are made up of more than two affixes. All the derivational (D) affixes are closer to the root. The inflectional affixes (I) occur outside the derivational affixes.

Relatively we realize that, *-ni/-foɔ* derivatives may also be made up of two or more affixes like English but because the morpheme that derives personal nouns is the same that inflect for number, it is rather challenging to determine a sharp distinction of the inflectional and derivational properties of the suffixes using the

*order of morphemes* criterion since they both occur close to the root. We observe this in (12)

	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>
12 a.	apam-ni covenant-Person.SG 'confederate'	apam-foɔ covenant-Person.PL 'confederates'
b.	asaaseso-ni earth.on-Person.SG 'person of the earth'	asaaseso-foɔ earth.on-Person.PL 'people of the earth'
c.	asuano-ni river.mouth-Person.SG 'person living near a river'	asuano-foɔ river.mouth-Person.PL 'people living near a river'
d.	togye-ni tax.collect-Person.SG 'tax collector'	togye-foɔ tax.collect-Person.PL 'tax collectors'

In (12 a-d), we notice that, both the person marker and number marker is one and the same morpheme; *-ni* for person singular and its counterpart *-foɔ*, for person plural, all occurring close to the root. This suggests that the suffixes have inherent derivational and inflectional properties.

To determine the distinct derivational and inflectional properties of the suffixes, we identify with Bybee (1985), cited in Booij (2000) about the order of affixes that, affixal order is determined by the degree of relevance of the affix for the meaning of the word. Since derivational affixes such as *-ni/-foɔ* have a significant

and particular effect on the meaning of the word, and have a higher semantic relevance, they occur closer to the root, while the number sense remains at the periphery. Therefore, analyzing the derivational and inflectional properties of the suffixes using the morpheme order criterion, semantically, we are able to deduce that the suffixes under study are derivational suffixes since they occur closer to the root word (base) than the number sense.

#### **4.4.1.5 Abstractness**

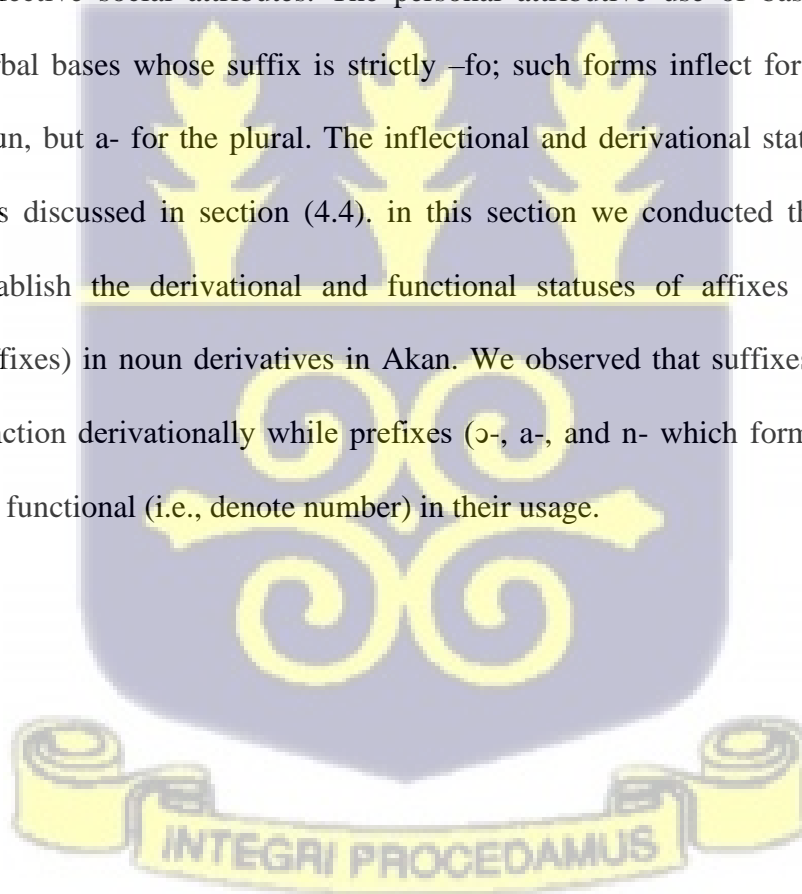
The fifth and final criterion we will measure the inflectional and derivational properties of *-ni/fo* against is the concept of abstractness which posits that, inflectional values express a relatively abstract meaning, derivational meanings are relatively concrete. According to Haspelmath & Sims (ibid), this criterion works quite well for inflectional meanings because all of them are highly abstract and derivational meanings are quite concrete.

Though, *-ni/fo* are number markers in Akan, they derive concrete human nouns (rather than abstract nouns), therefore, possess derivational qualities.

#### **4.5 Chapter summary**

In this chapter, section (4.1) introduces the chapter. We have discussed attributive analysis of *-ni/fo* in section (4.2) where we looked at the contributions that bases make to the overall meaning of derived *-ni* and *-fo* nouns. They become attributes

by virtue of *-ni* and *-fo* augmentation to them denoting/capturing some socio-cultural situation in the real world. In section (4.3), we discussed the semantic/functional contribution of affixes to nominal derivatives. Functionally, we identified two main attributes with *-ni* and *-fo nouns* in Akan, namely a collective social attribute and a personal/individual attribute. We observed that in domains where suffixes denote group membership, bases automatically acquire and express collective social attributes. The personal attributive use of bases is realized with verbal bases whose suffix is strictly *-fo*; such forms inflect for *ɔ-* for the singular noun, but *a-* for the plural. The inflectional and derivational status of *-ni/-fo nouns* was discussed in section (4.4). in this section we conducted the relevant tests to establish the derivational and functional statuses of affixes (i.e., prefixes and suffixes) in noun derivatives in Akan. We observed that suffixes (i.e., *-ni* and *-fo*) function derivationally while prefixes (*ɔ-*, *a-*, and *n-* which forms part of the base) are functional (i.e., denote number) in their usage.

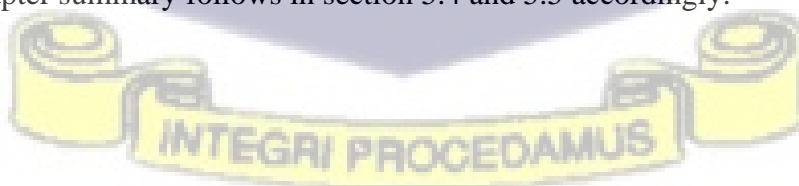


## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

#### 5.1. Introduction

The purpose of the present study was to examine the morphology and semantic (morpho-semantic) properties of two forms, namely *ni* /ni/ and *fo* /fo/, in the Akan grammar. Particularly, the thesis sought to find out the principles that motivate the formation of *-ni* and *-fo* nouns in Akan. Our primary aim was to examine the morphological strategies involved in the formation of *ni* and *fo* nouns in the Akan grammar. Also, the study sought to identify the semantic contributions of bases and the bound *-ni* and *-fo* morphemes to derived nouns in Akan, as well as identify the functional roles that *-ni* and *-fo* play in the derived noun outputs in Akan. The current chapter summarizes the key issues of all the chapters in the study, the findings of the study about *-ni* and *-fo* derivatives and also suggests areas of future study. In section 5.2, I present the summary of the chapters and in section 5.3, I present the contribution of this study to knowledge. Recommendations for future studies and chapter summary follows in section 5.4 and 5.5 accordingly.



## 5.2 Summary of Chapters

In chapter one, the focus of the study was introduced. I showed the wide attention in the literature by that the forms *-ni* and *-fo* and their predominant classification as being agentive number marking suffixes in Akan. The chapter showed that, be that as it may, much attention has not been given the forms *-ni* and *-fo* in the area of the morphological strategies involved in the formation of their derivatives as well as their unique semantic contributions. Therefore, the purpose of the study, research questions and objectives as well as methodology of the study was presented in chapter one.

In chapter two, the literature and theories that had relevance to the objectives and scope of this research were presented. Some semantic/functional positions of *-ni* and *-fo(ɔ)* gathered from the literature were that: *-ni* and *-fo(ɔ)* were being described as ‘person(s)’ deriving personal nouns from the stems they are suffixed to; for example, *ohia-ni* ‘a poor man’ is a combination of the stem *ohia* ‘poverty’ and *-ni* (Christaller 1875), that nouns ending with *-nyi* and *-fo(ɔ)* are descriptive of a person (e.g., *ɔafri-nyi* ‘fisherman’) (Balmer and Grant (1929) and the form *-fo(ɔ)* functioning as a plural suffix (Dolphyne 1988). We argued that, merely specifying an item as singular or plural - is not the primary reason for attaching either *nyi/ni* or *-fo(ɔ)* after some linguistic item in Akan. Also, we justified the need for a linear glossing approach to ascertain the exact syntactic categories functioning as bases of the derivatives. Some viewpoints on nominalization as a linguistic notion and processes

were discussed as it showed the process of forming nouns out of other syntactic categories. The existing works on *-ni* and *-fo(ɔ)* in Akan did not consider the bigger literature on derivation and inflection, and also did not subject the different uses of the two forms to the relevant derivational/inflectional testing. That is, they simply employed the two concepts in their functional/semantic definitions of these forms without any testing. Therefore, a review of the literature on the two concepts, and the choice to submit the two forms to derivational and inflectional testing in the current study to determine which of the two functions is applicable to which form in which morphological domain was in order. Finally, the basic tenets of the model of Morphology and Lexical Semantics (MLS) (Lieber, 2004), a model devoted to the study of how the meaning of complex forms are derived from those of smaller constituents was discussed.

In chapter three, which sought to address objective (1) and research question (1) of the study, we discussed morphological and syntactic properties of *-ni* and *-fo* in simplex and complex nouns in the Akan grammar and established the formal constraints on the distribution of *ni/fo* and prefixes in the formation of *ni* and *fo* nominal derivatives. We found out that, the prefixes of *-ni* and *-fo* derivatives, are subjected to the tongue root feature (+/-ATR), of the preceding vowel of the word. Thus prefixes [ɔ] and [o] can be described as allomorphs of the same morpheme {ɔ}, being realized differently due to the ATR specification of the vowel in the stems immediately before it. Also forms [a-] and [æ-] are allomorphs of the same

morpheme {a-} but are realized differently due to the ATR quality of the base to which they are attached. The base of *-ni* and *-fo* derivatives considered in the study (mainly taken from Christaller's dictionary of Akan) were subjected to a syntactic and morphological distribution to ascertain their right syntactic category, whether a noun, a verb or an adjective and also to have a clearer picture of their structural analysis. Subject to the bases identified and presented in the study, it was revealed that:

All bases take  $\text{ɔ-}$  for their singular with the exception of a place noun bases.

All bases take *-ni* in the singular with the exception of adjectival bases.

*-Fo* co-occurs with only some state, abstract, and nominalized verbal bases in the singular.

All bases inflect for *a-* and *-fo* in their plural forms

In chapter four, we investigated the semantic contributions of the bases and bound *-ni* and *-fo* morphemes to derived nouns in Akan. We defined attributes in the study as the quality or characteristics possessed by an entity; entities in this case are the nominal, verbal and adjectival bases which *-ni* and *-fo* attach to and the attributes were the bases that *-ni* and *-fo* attached. We found out that when *-ni* is attached to an attribute (base) X, it denotes a person who is a member of a group with the attribute X. Also, a plural prefix [a-] and *-fo* when added to an attribute X denote persons who are members of a group with the attribute X. The prefix [ɔ-] and *-fo* when attached to

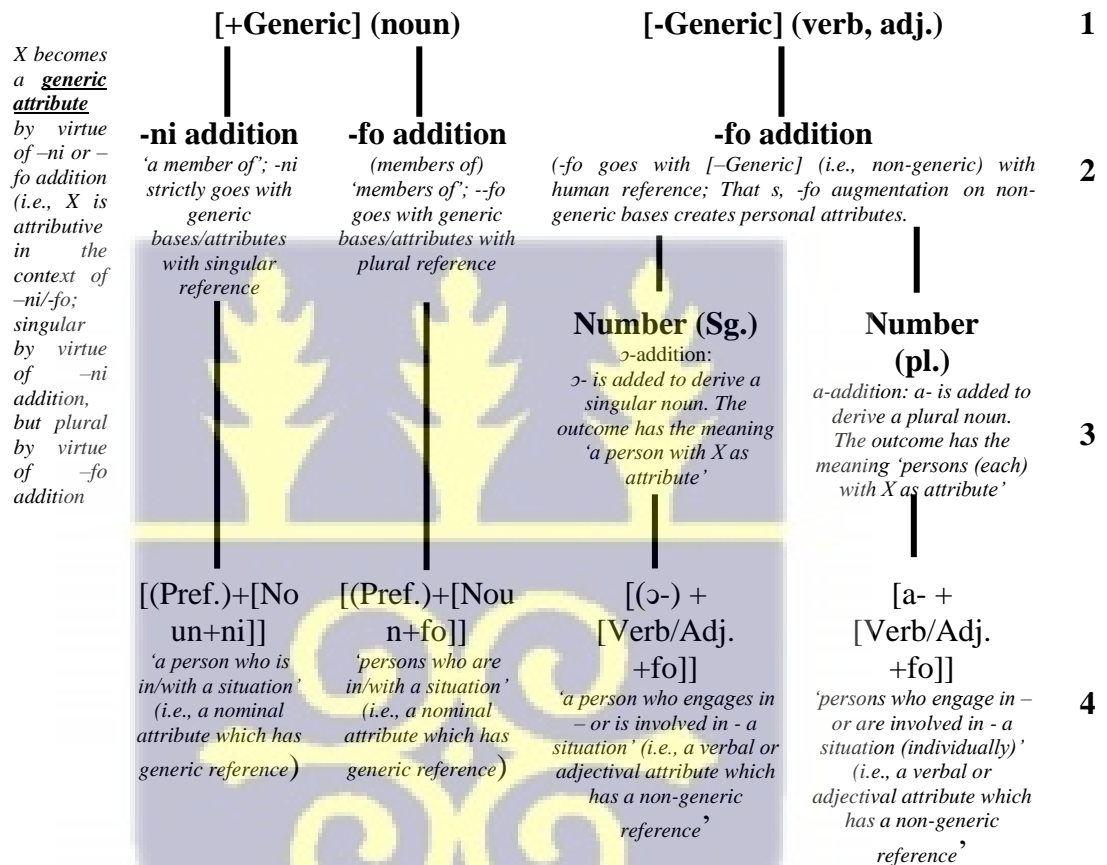
an attribute X denote a person with the attribute X. Finally, the prefix [a-] and -fo when attached to an attribute X, denote persons with the attribute X.

### 5.3 Contribution to Knowledge

The current has brought out a new approach of accounting for *-ni* and *-fo* derivatives in Akan, by giving a structural analysis of their derivatives. From the current study, a base performs one of two functions in a morphological context. That is, it either denotes a collective (i.e., social) attribute, or an individual (human) attribute. *-ni* strictly references a member of a collective social unit. The morpheme *-fo* has two basic functional uses depending on the morphological context as indicated below. (a) When *-fo* is augmented on nominal and adjectival bases, it presents them as collective social attributes; and in this usage presents its (i.e., *-fo*'s) referents as members of the collectivity that these attributes connote in the real world. (b) *-fo* is attached to a verbal base to qualify it (i.e., the verbal attribute) as an individual human/personal attribute. Number (i.e., singularity and plurality) here is signaled by prefixes, *ɔ-* for the singular noun and *a-* for the plural. Where a verbal base has additionally achieved a collective reference, the singular is either realized with a *-fo* final, or a *-ni* final, and there is a single, lexically ambiguous plural form for the two singular forms. We illustrate the findings of the study in Table 16 below:

**Table 16. Summary of Findings about –Ni/-Fɔɔ in study**

*'person(s) who engages in, or is/are in/with a situation'; Situation = X (a variable, i.e., a base, which is either generic (i.e., nominal) or non-generic (i.e., verbal or adjectival))*



**5.4 Recommendations for future studies.**

The current study has given a morpho-semantic approach in the analysis of –ni and –fo nouns in the Akan language. We however have identified some pragmatics and socio-cultural tendencies in discussing the semantics of the forms under study. It is my hope therefore that this work will be improved upon as other researches working

on the language or other language that has similar structures, will take up issues that may come up following this work, using different linguistic approach.

### **5.5 Chapter conclusion.**

In this chapter, we presented the chapter introduction in (5.1), summary of all the chapters in the study in (5.2), the contribution of knowledge that this study brings on (5.3), recommendations for future studies in (5.4) and the chapter conclusion in (5.5)



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