



A MORPHOSYNTACTIC AND SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF PLACENAMES IN KWAHU IN THE EASTERN REGION OF GHANA

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Abstract:

African names, as signs of language, can be divided into two morpho-syntactic categories: they are either nominal, which means they constitute single words, or syntagmatic, implying they are made up of sentences or parts thereof. Therefore, understanding place names in general hugely depends on a critical look at the internal structure of the word(s) or placename(s). This research uses complete semi-structured interviews and documents to critically investigate 20 randomly selected placenames from Kwahu South and Kwahu East districts in the Eastern Region of Ghana. It analyses the syntax, morphology and meaning of these placenames. It applies the Frame Semantic (Fillmore, 1982) concept to ascertain whether the meaning-making elements in the individual names reflect the views or purposes of their 'namers' or otherwise, as (oral) histories have them. The selected placenames are then grouped using Tent and Blair (2011) model of Motivations for Naming. The semantic and morphological analysis reveal that some Kwahu habitation names could be realized from non-morphemic parts of words, single stems/roots, phrases, inflections (affixations), etc. Again, vowel elision, coinage, and backformation are used by the name givers, with the topography, environment and other factors being key in the naming process. The paper concludes that Kwahu placenames are useful linguistic sources. The study contributes to the body of knowledge on Kwahu placenames in particular, and Ghanaian toponymy in general. It is recommended that 'Kwahu', which also stands as an Akan dialect type, spoken by this speech community, be explored by future researchers.

Keywords: motivation, morphology, anthroponym, toponym, onomastics

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1. Introduction/Background

Naming occurs in any language in every human settlement under the universe. It occupies a special position in the vocabulary of any language. It is a special linguistic act, intimately linked with values, beliefs, traditions, hopes, fears and events in people's lives. Names reveal the many preferences and circumstances surrounding their owners or givers in terms of real life objects, actions, features and beliefs (Rosenhouse, 2002). These names (nouns) could either be proper nouns or common nouns.

The concept of proper names, specifically, the distinction between denotation and connotation could be traced to John Stuart Mill (Mill, 1964). According to this distinction, proper names are denotative terms, that is, terms which denote or refer to objects without signifying any attributes of these objects. In other words, toponyms (placenames) are generally considered at the level of the surface/literal meaning and are seldom consciously considered in their own right by the ordinary and non-native speakers. Yet, many toponyms can have frozen within them a wealth of information about the geographic nature of a named feature, when it was named, who bestowed the name, etc. They may also offer very deep insights into the belief and value systems of those who bestowed the names, and are a rich source of information about a region's history of exploration and settlement, as well as its linguistic and social history. Toponyms also supply information about altered topography. This normally occurs and becomes beneficial in a situation where the toponym of a place given by the earlier settlers does not tally with its current state and form (semantic features) due to several reasons that could account for the change, for example, hunger or war. Onomastics as a study has the potential of supplying all this information.

Houis (1983 cited in Batoma, 2009) aptly comments on African onomasticians' definition of proper names when he writes: *"it is necessary that names be first identified as signs of the language. They are practically not distinct from other linguistic signs at the level of form, signifiers and morphology. It is generally easy to explain their literal meaning"* (p. 8). Indeed, African names, as signs of language can be divided into two morpho-syntactical categories: they are either nominal that is, they constitute single words, or syntagmatic, meaning they are made up of sentences or parts thereof. Some methodological clarifications of Houis' statement provide a more accurate picture of the complexity of the onomastic meaning of African proper names. In adding his voice to this complex nature of names, Batoma (2009) puts it that the semantic transparency of names mentioned is not always apparent. The linguistic meaning of a name may be opaque for the following reasons enumerated by Kimeyi (1989): a name may be a loan-word, that is, a word borrowed from a foreign language; it may stem from a secret language, derived from a dialectal origin, or result from linguistic change. To these morpho-syntactic explanations which could be purely academic, one could add a more fundamental touch which is an explanation based on the oral nature or traditional modes of communication. In this case, the views of the inhabitants or settlers could be sought as, most of the time, their views give credence or nullify whatever has been read or researched.

African names are usually figurative and brief. Figuration and brevity, which characterize oral discursive practices, according to Diagne (2005, 2006), are used in the verbal act of naming. The latter is used mainly to awaken and capture the audience's attention while the former is meant to address the audience's limited capacity of memorization. It is therefore possible, in principle, to restore back the lost linguistic transparency of most names through linguistic means such as expansion, that is, by supplying the suppressed syntactic or syntagmatic elements (Pere-Kewezima, 2004). This confirms the fact that the meaning of a name in a language cannot be taken literally under an academic consideration (total formal or linguistic analysis in the classroom), but also by delving deeper through an interaction with the people as to how it is recognized or accepted in the cultural and traditional setting of the very people in question. Additionally, Batoma (2009) opines that the surface or linguistic meaning of a toponym can never exhaust the full meaning of that toponym; rather, it can only help to "*construct, deconstruct or understand it*".

Further, every linguistic structure of a name has two levels of meaning: the denotative and the connotative. The first level explanation is called, interchangeably, first meaning, semantic meaning or literal meaning. It is this surface meaning that leads people, mostly non-native speakers, into interpreting names wrongly. These non-natives just consider the lexical/morphemic formation of these words (names) and draw their own conclusions or interpretations which are often false because they might not know the historical antecedents of the names. The denotative linguistic structure of the name offers a basis for the first level explanation from which the second level will branch off. This second level or explanatory level is referred to as second meaning or connotative meaning. This (second) level is of paramount importance to the onomastician and is reached through a reconstruction of the motivations behind the name, that is, the reasons why a name has been bestowed on a name bearer by a namer. He, Batoma (2009), further stresses that *the aim of the onomastician is to recover, beyond and thanks to the linguistic meaning of the name, the original motivations of the name giver and this helps in order to establish a relationship between language and culture*. At the second meaning level, one might refer to the meaning as the cultural meaning of the name, for it is "*a window on the history and philosophy associated with the name*" (Batoma, 2009). For many African onomasticians, their task ends with the reconstruction of the cultural meaning which is based on what they interpret or see as an objective recovery of the motivations behind the name. This happens to be the core objective of this research work, which is to get to the connotative/cultural meaning of the selected place names. However, one cannot put the full blame on the user of the language should it happen that he/she is not able to explain the meaning of the town or village of residence. This is because they are less concerned about the main motivation for which the name givers gave such names to places. To the user, most of the names are purely symbols since their purpose is mere identification and nothing else because he is unaware of the namer's motives and message and sometimes the history behind the name itself.

Moreover, human naming, anthroponomastics, also proffer another line of the several reasons why one needs to learn about the name users and the background before the real interpretations of the names could be realized. These naming practices offer important insights into the patterns of social and cultural organizations of communities and can be a key to broader cultural changes. They tell us about the social group and the name-giver, and often give what is seen as significant about the background and the circumstances at the time of birth. In naming a new baby, the word(s) has enormous symbolic power. It identifies the person, and at the same time sends a message, express a hope or prayer, and perpetuate a cultural or religious tradition (Alford, 1987).

A primary requirement of Onomastics is the clarification of certain basic terms relating to the concept of proper names. In a casual usage, proper names, proper nouns and capitalized words are often regarded as the same thing. That assumption, however, can be misleading, because the three expressions refer to three different things, which partially overlap (Algeo, 1992).

Toponomastics operates on the notion that there is a strong interface between a people's language and their cultural practices. It mirrors how language is used as cultural resources and practices and how language is used as a powerful tool to view and understand the worldview and philosophy of a society. One can therefore use language as a microscopic lens to zoom in and understand the social practices and day-to-day activities of a society. As a microscope, the language travels beyond what is expressed and settles on what is practised in the real socio-cultural world (Agyekum, 2006).

The morphology, syntax and semantics inform the meaning of names to a greater extent in all languages (Batoma, 2006). This means that to understand place/habitation names, one needs to take a critical look at the internal structure of the words that make up these names. Put differently, the syntactic, morphological and semantic structures that constitute names, are a worthwhile exercise to undertake in trying to reveal their true meanings.

2. The Kwahu People

Unlike some areas or ethnic groups in Ghana that derived a good number of their habitation names as a result of their connection or influence of the Europeans or colonial masters as posited by Owuemie (2014), the place name narratives of the people of Kwahu take different dimension altogether. The place names in Kwahu largely came into existence through their founders and (Ghanaian) indigens that first discovered and settled at these places.

The Kwahu peoples are largely a group of Akan speaking community that live in south-central Ghana, on the west shore of Lake Volta. Kwahu people speak a dialect of Akan language called Twi. Specifically, they could be located at a portion of the many mountainous parts of the Eastern Region of Ghana. There are two common variant spellings to the name: 'Kwahu' and 'Kwawu'. The latter is the original spelling according

to the African Studies Centre, University of Ghana as cited in Bartle (2007). However, the two spellings have all now come to be accepted.

Demographically, Kwahu as an area currently has five districts and one municipal assembly out of the twenty-five Municipal/District assemblies in the Eastern Region. These are Kwahu South District with Mpraeso as the capital, Kwahu East, Abetifi; Kwahu West Municipal with Nkawkaw as the capital; Afram Plains North with Donkorkrom as the capital, and Afram Plains South having Tease as the capital. This research was however done in Kwahu South and Kwahu East districts.

3. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to identify the morphological and semantic make-up of selected Kwahu towns and villages names. The meanings that would be derived are then used as sources to investigate into the inspirations or frames that triggered the giving of the names by their 'namers' after having interacted with indigens who are opinion leaders and the elderly on the stories or oral histories surrounding how the names came into existence. These names are then categorised using Tent & Blair (2011) model of name motivation. This research is a toponomastic study of Kwahu habitation names from a morpho-semantic perspective.

4. Sampling Technique

We randomly sampled twenty (20) towns and villages from two out of the five districts in Kwahu namely; Kwahu South and Kwahu East. Complete semi-structured interviews and other data collection strategies such as the use of documents were then used to investigate and analyse the background stories of these selected placenames. The selected placenames are: Pepease, Nkwatia, Kotoso, Nteso, Oframase, Bokuruwa, Abetifi, Aduamoa, Adawso, Asakraka, Obomeng, Mpraeso, Atibie, Tafo, Twenedurase, Obo, Abene, Bepong, Kotoso, and Ahinase.

5. Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following questions:

- What are the morphological and semantic features in these selected placenames in Kwahu?
- What were the motivations for the giving of these (Kwahu) placenames by their 'namers'?

6. Theoretical Framework

This study uses two theories to enable the researcher dig to the very core of how the selected names came about as well as their morphological make-up. They are Filmore's

(1982) Frame Semantics or Semantic Framework, and “Motivations for Naming: The Development of a Toponymic Typology for Australian Names” (Tent & Blair, 2011).

Frame Semantics is a theory that has been explored mostly in the fields of syntax. It is a theory that operates on the notion that any word, especially nouns and verbs that is used when one is talking, represents a specific meaning or interest. Each word would have its own background knowledge which the user or speaker must be aware of before he or she can use it or be able to communicate effectively with it. This means that the background or the previous knowledge one has on a word or a phenomenon will determine the kind of interpretation that individual will give to that word or phenomenon.

With regards to word or name meanings, frame semantics research can be thought of as the effort to understand what reason a speech community might have found for creating the category represented by the word or name, and to explain the word’s meaning by presenting and clarifying that reason. This theory is used to help break the selected names into analyzable units (morphemes) after the detailed stories surrounding these placenames have been gathered from resource persons and documents. The purpose for this (gathering of background stories) is to better understand the names in order to pave an easy way for better classification, which the second theory takes charge of.

The toponymic typology developed by Tent & Blair (2011) is then adopted for the possible classifications after the necessary analysis has been done with Frame Semantics. The reason for selecting Tent & Blair (2011) is its comprehensive character and capacity for generalizability, which the authors considered for making their model universal such that it could be used to analyze toponyms of different groups of people and cultures as intimated by Klugah (2013).

7. Methodology

This research is a purely qualitative study. The researchers made use of the exploratory research design. Consequently, we visited each of the selected places for this study on two occasions. The first visit was to familiarize with the inhabitants and to informally interview them on the knowledge they had about their town names. Most of the interviewees did not know much about the names of their towns/places of residence. We took that opportunity too to identify opinion leaders (elders) who know the histories of the people or might have experienced or are knowledgeable about the era in question. On the second visit an interview was conducted with opinion leaders and the elderly. This was to enable researchers delve deeper into the inspirations for the various names but, this time, in a semi-structured way. The respondents were interviewed orally and with their permission, the interviews were recorded and later transcribed and analyzed. This move is inspired by the Fillmorean (1982) theory which basically operates on the grounds that any word (noun) that is used in a statement comes along with its own and unique meaning oblivious of which the user or the listener might not be able to encode

or decode the full meaning of an utterance. Hence the researcher gathered information through these primary sources (instruments) as verbal interactions using semi-structured interview with opinion leaders and elders, and secondary sources such as documents. The data realized in the form of the interpretations and meanings made by these participants were then subjected to analysis both at the morphological and semantic levels. These names were then grouped according to the motivations for the giving of those names, using Tent & Blair (2011) as a model.

8. Findings and Discussions

This paper analyzed the selected names at their morphological and semantic levels. The former deals with the internal structures (morphemes) that exist within the names (words) while the latter deals with the overall meaning these morphemes or basic meaningful units bring to bear. However, before these analyses, we (researchers) investigated into the background histories of the selected toponyms from the chiefs, opinion leaders and elders who are regarded as the ‘custodians of tradition and culture’. The summary of the histories (frames) and the morphological breakdowns of these place names are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1: A summary of the historical and semantic interpretation of the selected place names

No	Name of town/village	Gloss	(Frame) Semantics
1.	Bokuruwa	bo + kuruwa (stone + round/cup)	A cup-like stone. This name came about as a result of a fountain that gushed out from a cuplike stone. This was discovered by the indigenous people in their search for water.
2.	Abetifi	abe + atifi (palm tree + top)	The topmost part of a palm tree. This name was given to commemorate the place the original settlers stayed when they came to this area in Kwahu which was at the pinnacle of a mountain that was of the same height as the palm tree.
3.	Pepease	pepea + ase (pepea (tree) + under)	Under a ‘Pepea’ (tree). This name was given to commemorate the place the original settlers stayed when they came to this area in Kwahu which was under a tree called ‘pepea’.
4.	Aduamo	adu + ammoa (Adu + did not lie)	Adu did not lie. This name was to illustrate how Adu, one of the forefathers who were mostly hunters, was found to have told the truth, by leading the settlers to a newly discovered place which was comfortable for human settlement.
5.	Obo	obo (a truncate of ‘Oboobe’)	Truncated from river ‘Oboobe’. This was a river that helped the ancestors of the people of Obo on their way to discover the current location of the town. The name was truncated to differentiate between the river and the town, because the original settlers did not want the same name for two things or places.

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6.	Abene	Abene (suffering)	Suffering. The indigenous settlers suffered a lot before finding their way to the current location of the town. This name was used in commemoration of the ordeal.
7.	Bepong	abɔpɔn (buffalo)	Buffalo. This name came about as a result of the sizes of some types of animals/games that were common in the area. These animals, 'abɔpɔn' (buffalo) were huge in nature.
8.	Nkwatia	nkwaɛ + tia (forests + short)	Forests of short trees. This name was used to describe the nature of trees that made the forests 'nkwaɛ' in the area. These trees were relatively short 'tia'.
9.	Kotoso	koto + so (koto (squat) + on)	Squat on it. This name was given in commemoration of the historical directives that were given by the Ashanti King who gave a stool made of gold. The people were to 'squat' and not to 'sit' on it.
10.	Nteso	ntɛ + so (ntɛ (river) + on)	On the 'Nte' (river). This name was given to portray how beneficial the 'Nte' river was to the original settlers. They wholly depended on the river for their livelihood.
11.	Oframase	ɔfram + ase (ɔfram (tree) + under)	Under an 'Ofram' (tree). This is in historical reference to the source/type of shelter which their indigenous settlers had. This was under a tree by name 'Ofram'.
12.	Ankomah	ankoma (river)	Ankomah (river). This name was in commemoration of the river that the original settlers depended on when they first found their way onto the land.
13.	Adawso	ɛdɔn + so (bell + huge)	The bell is big/huge. This was a descriptive name referring to a bell that was brought to the land by a missionary. The size of this bell was really huge.
14.	Asakraka	asakra + ka (...have changed + say)	We have changed the way we say it. This name came as a result of a treaty or agreement that was signed/reached between the two indigenous groups that first settled on the land. They were to change the way they called their new place of settlement.
15.	Obomeng	ɔbɔ + men (...eat + full up)	s/he, they eat and get satisfied. This name signified the abundance of food (banana) which sustained the first settlers on the land. These settlers were hunters who always ate to the fullest whenever they went for game hunt.
16.	Mpraeso	(m)pra + yi + so ((m)pra (river)+ this + on)	On this Pra (river). This name was in commemoration of the river (Pra) that the original settlers depended on when they first found their way onto the land.
17.	Atibie	etire + no + bi + nie (head + the + some + this)	This is some of 'the head' (us). This name is in commemoration of the reunion of two brothers who separated after climbing the Kwahu mountain.
18.	Tafo	ta + fo (ɛta + ano + afo) (wooden masher /ladle + tip + wet)	The tip of the wooden masher/ladle is wet/soaked. This name was to depict the occupation of the founders of the land; hunting. Their success with hunting was

			always seen in the state of their cooking utensils; these were always soaked with oil.
19.	Twenedurase	tweneduro + ase (tweneduro (tree) + under)	Under the 'Tweneduro' tree. This is in historical reference to the source/type of shelter the indigenous settlers had. This was under a tree by name 'tweneduro'.
20.	Ahinase	ahina + ase (nhini + ase) (roots +under)	Under the roots of trees. This name was in connection with the source/type of shelter their indigenous settlers had. This was under the roots of trees.

Table 1 represents brief accounts of the main motivations that inspired the giving of the various place names by their founders. It must be admitted that some of these place names had more than one account with regards to how the names came about. Special mention must be made of Atibie, Adawso, and Abetifi in this regard. However, the researcher finally settled and agreed with these accounts as presented in this research after consulting widely and also subjecting these names and their morphological formations to some linguistic processes such as vowel harmonies and phonetic possibilities.

9. Morphological Analysis

The morphological formation of the names under study were analysed as follows:

9.1 Bokuruwa

Name: bokuruwa / bɔkuruwa/

Full realization of place name: 'εboɔ kurukuruwa' /εboɔ kurukuruwa/

Morphological processes involved: 'εboɔ' (rock/stone) undergoes vowel elision into 'bo' where the initial /ε/ and final sounds /ɔ/ respectively were deleted. There is also a clipping in the polysyllabic and reduplicative adjective 'kurukuruwa' (round) which then changes into 'kuruwa' resulting in the combination of the two clipped words 'bo' and 'kuruwa' to give 'bokuruwa'. Two processes are therefore realized here which are vowel deletion of the sounds /ε, ɔ/ as well as morph deletion which is /kuru/.

In sum, the morphological formation of *bokuruwa* is:

bo + kuruwa
N + Adj

9.2 Abetifi

Name: abetifi /abɛtifi/

Full realization of place name: 'abɛ atifi' / abɛ+atifi/

Morphological processes involved: The full complement of the first word 'abɛ' is maintained. However, that of the second word experienced initial sound deletion. The 'a' of the postposition 'atifi' also suffers vowel elision leaving 'tifi', representing 'topmost or upper part'. The two are then joined together to give 'abetifi'.

In sum, the morphological formation of *abetifi* is:

abe + atifi
N + postposition

9.3 Pepease

Name: pepease / pɪpɪase/

Full realization of place name: 'pepea ase' /pɪpɪa+ase/

Morphological processes involved: The second word which happens to be a postposition (ase) suffers an initial vowel clipping when joined to the headword 'pepea' tree which is a noun. This is because the last letter in the first word (vowel 'a') happens to be the same as the initial letter (vowel 'a') of the second word hence that of the second word has to undergo an initial vowel deletion. The final name then becomes pepea+se giving 'pepease'. Therefore, this town name is a compound of two words.

In sum, the morphological formation of *pepease* is:

pepea + ase
N + postposition

9.4 Aduamoa

Name: aduamoa /adua:moa/

Full realization of place name: adu amoa /adu+amoa/

Morphological processes involved: Adu suffers no change but the second word 'ammoa' which is a verb, meaning 'never or didn't lie' experiences a single consonant 'm' deletion. This is perhaps to make the pronunciation and spelling simple. This verb 'ammoa' comes from the root word 'ɔboa', a combination of two words; a third person singular pronoun 'ɔno' and a verb 'boa' which means 'lying'. So, the two words together means 's/he lies'. The contrast or the opposite of this word is realised by replacing the voiced bilabial plosive sound /b/ with double of its voiced bilabial nasal counterpart /m/. This goes through an assimilation process to give /ɔmmao/. Therefore, 'ɔboa' which means 's/he is lying' can have its opposite as 'ɔmmao' meaning 's/he is not lying' or, better still, 'is speaking the truth'. A tense (past) is realized on this verb by introducing an /a/ to take the place of the /ɔ/. So then 'ɔmmao' which means 's/he isn't (present) lying, changes to 'ammoa' /a:moa/ to mean 's/he didn't or wasn't lying' or better still 'never (past) lied. The inhabitants therefore ended up combining 'adu' which is a name of a person with 'amoa' to give 'aduamoa'.

Therefore, aduamoa = adu + a + m + boa

Noun+past+positive marker+verb

In sum, the morphological formation of *aduamoa* is:

adu + amoa
N + VP

9.5 Obo

Name: Obo /obo/

Full realization of place name: obo /obo/

Morphological processes involved: Obo is a coinage from the name of the river 'Oboobe' which served as the source of life for the original settlers at a separate location within the area (currently between Mpraeso and Bepong). The last syllable /obe/ got clipped leaving only the initial syllable 'obo'.

In sum, the morphological formation of *obo* is:

obo (Oboobe River)
N

9.6 Abene

Name: Abene /abene/

Full realization of place name: abene/abene/

Morphological processes involved: 'Abene' does not undergo any morphological process since it is an existing name which means 'suffering' and this name and connotation, or meaning was extended here in naming the town as a way of commemorating the historical struggles of the original settlers.

In sum, the morphological formation of *abene* is:

abene
N

9.7 Bepong

Name: Bepong /bɪpɔŋ/

Full realization of place name: abɔpɔŋ /bɔpɔŋ/

Morphological processes involved: Bepong undergoes an internal vowel change where the sound /ɔ/ found in first syllable of the original name of the huge animals, 'abɔpɔn', who were predominant in the area and after whom the place was named, is replaced with an /e/ sound. The initial sound /a/ also suffers vowel elision.

In sum, the morphological formation of *bepɔŋ* is:

bepɔŋ
N

9.8 Nkwatia

Name: Nkwatia /ŋkwa:tia/

Full realization of place name: nkwaɛ tia /N+kwaɛ+tia/

Morphological processes involved: Nkwatia is a compounding of two words 'nkwaɛ' literally meaning 'forests' and 'tia' which also means 'short', hence, semantically referring 'forests of short trees'. The /n/ that precedes the /k/ in 'n+kwaɛ' is a plural marker in that 'kwaɛ' means 'forest' and 'nkwaɛ' means 'forests'. The /e/ at the end of 'nkwaɛ' also gets deleted to become 'nkwa'. This is then joined with 'tia' to give 'nkwatia'.

In sum, the morphological formation of *nkwatia* is:

n +kwae + tia
Pl N Adj

9.9 Kotoso

Name: Kotoso /kotosu/

Full realization of place name: koto so / koto+so/

Morphological processes involved: Kotoso is a name that is a sentence (command) in nature. It is a compound of two words; 'koto' which means 'squat' and 'so' which is a postposition meaning 'on'. The two words put together will then mean 'squat on it'. The 'it' here is implied which in this case is a stool given to the people not to sit on.

In sum, the morphological formation of *kotoso* is:

koto + so
V + postposition

9.10 Nteso

Name: Nteso /ntesu/

Full realization of place name: nte so /nte+so/

Morphological processes involved: This name too is a compound of a river name 'nte' and the postposition 'so' meaning 'on'. When the two are put together they literally mean 'on the nte river'.

In sum, the morphological formation of *nteso* is:

nte + so
N + Postposition

9.11 Oframase

Name: Oframase /ɔframase/

Full realization of place name: ɔfram ase / ɔfram+ase/

Morphological processes involved: Oframase is a compound of two words which are 'ofram' which is a name of a tree type and 'ase' which is locative and a postposition meaning 'under' or 'beneath'. The two when put together will then give 'oframase' which means under the 'ofram' tree.

In sum, the morphological formation of *oframase* is:

ɔfram + ase
N + Postposition

9.12 Ankoma

Name: Ankoma /ankoma/

Full realization of place name: Ankoma /ankoma/

Morphological processes involved: Ankoma does not undergo any morphological change. It is a name of a river that served as a means of livelihood to the early and current settlers of the place.

In sum, the morphological formation of *ankoma* is:

ankoma
N

9.13 Adawso

Name: (Adɔɔso) /adɔ:so/

Full realization of place name: $\epsilon d\grave{o}n\ y\grave{i}\ so$ / $\epsilon d\grave{o}n+y\grave{i}+ so$ /

Morphological processes involved: Adawso is a full sentence describing a bell as being huge. It is made up of three words namely 'εdɔn' which means 'a bell', 'yi' meaning 'this' and 'so' which means 'huge' or 'big'. The initial /ε/ in /εdɔn/ is replaced by /a/ and the last syllable /ɔn/ is also bilabialized to give /ɔw/ which is written with 'aw'. The middle word /yi/ suffers a deletion leaving behind two words /εdɔn/ and /so/ which is written as 'adɔɔso' meaning 'this bell is huge' or 'a huge bell'.

In sum, the morphological formation of *adawso* is:

$\epsilon d\grave{o}n + y\grave{i} + so$
N + Det + Postposition

9.14 Asakraka

Name: Asakraka /asakraka/

Full realization of place name: $y'asakra\ k\bar{\alpha}$ / $jasakra+k\bar{\alpha}$ /

Morphological processes involved: There is clipping in the first person plural pronoun 'yen' (we) in "y'asakra" and the last nasalized vowel / $\bar{\alpha}$ / in the last word / $k\bar{\alpha}$ / which means 'to say' also suffers denasalization into /ka/ which also changes the meaning (total oral conversion). This is because the language is tonal. The /ka/ here means 'debt' so many inhabitants of this town and those around the area mistaken this town name to mean / $asakra\ ka$ / which literally mean 'people who alter owed amount or 'debt' or 'people who change the amount of debt they owe'.

In sum, the morphological formation of *asakraka* is:

$y\epsilon asakra + k\bar{\alpha}$
Pro + V + V

9.15 Obomeng

Name: Obomeng /ɔbɔmɛŋ/

Full realization of place name: $w\grave{o}b\grave{o}\ \epsilon men$ / $w\grave{o}b\grave{o}+\epsilon men$ /

Morphological processes involved: The third person plural 'wɔn' is combined with the verb 'bɔ' which means to eat. The two segments will give 'wɔn bɔ' (they eat). The final velar nasal sound of the pronoun 'wɔn' is deleted as a phonological requirement in the Akan language regarding the conjugation of pronouns and verbs to give 'wɔbɔ'. This same phonological rule is experienced when the initial sound /ε/ of the adjective 'emen' is attached to give 'wɔbɔmen' (s/he, they eat to satisfaction). This is because the focus was on the act 'bɔ' (eat). The meaning will change if the 'ε' preceding the adjective is maintained causing the deletion of the 'ɔ' in 'bɔ' to give 'wɔbɛmen' which means s/he or

they will be satisfied. Consequently, the initial labial-velar sound /w/ also suffers deletion resulting in 'ɔbɔmen' which means s/he, they eat to satisfaction.

In sum, the morphological formation of *obomen* is:

wɔn +bɔ+ɛmen
Pro + V + Adv

9.16 Mpraeso

Name: Mpraeso /mpraɪsɔ/

Full realization of place name: pra yi so /pra+yi+sɔ/

Morphological processes involved: There is the introduction/superimposition of the voiced bilabial fricative sound /m/ before the name of the river 'pra' giving 'mpra'. The determiner 'yi' (this) is also reduced in the force with which it is pronounced as an approximant /ji/ thereby making it to sound like the vowel /I/. The postposition 'so'/sɔ/ (on) is then added to sound as /mpraɪsɔ/ which means 'on this Pra River'.

In sum, the morphological formation of *mpraeso* is:

mpra+yi+sɔ
N + Det+Postposition

9.17 Atibie

Name: Atibie /atibie/

Full realization of place name: etire no bi nie / etire + no + bi + nie /

Morphological processes involved: The first word 'etire' which means 'head/family' suffers initial vowel sound /e/ deletion as well as the final syllable /re/. However, the initial deleted sound is replaced by /a/ leaving behind only /ati/. The determiner 'no' (this) is wholly deleted. The next word is 'bi' (some) is maintained and joined with the last sound /e/ of the last word 'nie'. The remaining parts; /a ti/ and /bie/ are then put together to give 'atibie' /atibie/.

In sum, the morphological formation of *atibie* is:

etire + no + bi + nie
N + Det + Det + Pro

9.18 Tafo

Name: Tafo /tafɔ/

Full realization of place name: eta ano afɔ /ɛta+ano+afɔ/

Morphological processes involved: There is a deletion of the initial vowel sound /ɛ/ of the /ɛta/ which represents the 'ladle or wooden masher'. The postposition 'ano' meaning 'the tip' also suffers total deletion leaving 'afɔ' which signifies/means soggy or wetness. The final /ɔ/ sound of 'afɔ' too suffers a replacement with an 'o'. So, a combination of the remaining segments 'ta' and 'fo'/fɔ/ will then give 'tafo' /tafɔ/ which still means: 'the tip of the wooden masher/ladle is wet/soaked/soggy'.

In sum, the morphological formation of *tafo* is:

eta + ano + afo
N + Postposition + Complement

9.19 Twenedurase

Name: Twenedurase /twInIdurase/

Full realization of place name: tweneduro ase /twInIduro+ase/

Morphological processes involved: 'Tweneduro' the name of the tree after which the town was named; the name has had every sound segment maintained with the exception of the final /o/. This is because the initial sound /a/ of the second word 'ase' also has a vowel sound /a/ so the two undergo vowel harmonization process, deleting the /o/ leaving 'twenedurase' meaning 'under the tweneduro tree'.

In sum, the morphological formation of *twenedurase* is:

tweneduro+ase
N + Postposition

9.20 Ahinase

Name: Ahinase /ahinase/

Full realization of place name: dua nhini (duhini) ase /dua+nhini+ase/

Morphological processes involved: 'dua nhini' (the root of trees) which is the main item the town was named after had the final vowel /a/ remaining and /hi/ truncated or clipped from 'hini' which means 'the roots of trees'. The two segments /a/ and /hi/ are joined to form /ahi/ which is then joined to the postposition /ase/ to form 'ahinase', meaning 'under the roots of trees'.

In sum, the morphological formation of *ahinase* is:

dua+nhini+ase
N + N + Postposition

10. Results from the Morphological Analyses

The selected placenames were analysed and the following morphological processes were found to be prevalent: Single stem placenames, Compounding, Coinage, Backformation, Vowel elision, and Clipping.

A.

i. Single stem placenames

Only two of the above-studied placenames had a zero morphological word formation process. In other words, nothing or no changes occurred to those words as already existing words that had their own meanings. The two names were Abene and Ankoma.

Table 2: Single stem placenames

No	Name of Town/Village	Gloss	Morphological Formation	Syntax	Free English Translations
1.	Obo	/obo/	obo	Obo (N)	Truncated from river 'Oboobe'
2.	Abene	/abene/	abene	Abene (N)	Suffering

ii. Compounding

Compounding involves the combination of lexical items or the putting of two or more words together to form one lexical item. From the morpho-semantic analysis, it was found that, out of the twenty selected towns, compounding as a morphological word formation process had the highest number of means by which place names were formed by their respective name-givers. Sixteen out of the twenty selected place names used this technique. They included Pepease, Nkwatia, Kotoso, Nteso, Oframase, Bokuruwa, Abetifi, Aduamoa, Adawso, Asakraka, Obomeng, Mpraeso, Atibie, Tafo, Twenedurase, and Ahinase.

Table 3: Compound names

No	Name of town/village	Gloss	Morphological Formation	syntax	Meaning
1.	Bokuruwa	/bokuruwa/	bɔ+kuruwa	bɔ(N) + kuruwa(N) stone + cup	A cup-like stone
2.	Abetifi	/ abetifi/	abe+tifi	abe (N) + atifi(Postposition) palm tree + top	The topmost part of a palm tree
3.	Pepease	/pɪpɪase/	pɪpɪa+ase	pɪpɪa (N) + ase(Postposition) pepea(tree) + under	Under a 'Pepea' (tree)
4.	Aduamoa	/aduamɔa/	adu+a+mɔa	adu(N)+ a(NEG) + mɔa(V) adu + do(past NEG)+ lie(past)	Adu did not lie
5.	Tafo	/tafɔ/	eta+ano+afɔ	eta(N) + ano(PREP)+ afɔ(N) marsh+ tip + wet(soggy)	The tip of the wooden masher/ladle is wet/soaked
6.	Ahinase	/ahinase/	ahina+ase	Dua(ADJ)+nhini(N)+ase(P) Tree + root + under	Under the roots of trees
7.	Atibie	/ atibie/	Etire+no+bi+nie	Etire(N)+no(Det)+bi(Det)+nie(Adv) head + this + some + here	This is some of the head/family
8.	Nkwatia	/ɲkwatia/	ɲ+kwaɛ+tia	n(PL)+kwaɛ(N)+tia(ADJ) forest(PL) + short	Forests of short trees
9.	Kotoso	/kɔtɔsɔ/	kɔtɔ+sɔ	Koto (V)+sɔ (Postposition) Squat + on	Squat on
10.	Nteso	/ ntesɔ/	nte+sɔ	Nte (N) + sɔ(Postposition) Nte(river) + on	On the 'Nte' (river)
11.	Oframase	/ɔframase/	ɔfram+ase	ɔfram (N) + ase(Postposition) ɔfram(tree) + under	Under an 'Ofram' (tree)
12.	Ankomah	/ aɲkɔma/	aɲkɔma	Ankomah(N)	Ankomah (human name)
13.	Adawso	/ adɔwsɔ/	adɔ +sɔ	ɛdɔn (N)+ sɔ(C) Bell + big	The bell is big/huge
14.	Asakraka	/ asakraka/	a+sakra+ka	yɛn(PRO)+asakra(V)+kã(N) We + changed + say	We have changed the way we say it

15.	Obomeng	/ ɔbɔmɛŋ	ɔbɔ+meŋ	Wo(PRO)+bɔ(V)+mɛ̃:(C) we + eat + full	You eat to satisfaction/get satisfied
16.	Mpraeso	/ mpraɪsɔ/	mpraɪ+sɔ	pra(N)+yi(PRO) +sɔ (Postposition) river + this + on	On this Pra (river)

iii. Coinage and Backformation

The former, coinage, is a situation where a new word is created without reference to the existing morphological resources of the language, that is, the creation is solely based on the sounds of the language. The latter, backformation, is the process that creates a new word by doing away with a rear morpheme/suffix. It was realized during the analysis that only one placename, Obo, resulted from these processes. It was truncated from the name of a river; ‘Oboobe’.

Table 3: Coinage and backformation names

No	Name of town/village	Gloss	Morphological Formation	Syntax	Meaning
1.	Obo	/obo/	obo	obo(N)	Truncated from river ‘Oboobe’

iv. Clipping

This is when a poly-syllabic word is shortened by deleting one or more syllables from the word. Four (4) place names, Asakraka, Obomeng, Tafo, and Ahinase, were identified to have gone through the process of clipping.

Table 4: Clipped names

No.	Name of town/village	Gloss	Morphological Formation	Syntax	Meaning
1.	Asakraka	/ asakraka/	a+sakra+ka	yɛn(PRO)+asakra(V)+kã(N)	We have changed the way we say it
2.	Obomeng	/ ɔbɔmɛŋ	ɔbɔ+meŋ	ɔno (PRO)+bɔ(V)+mɛ̃:(C)	s/he eats and gets satisfied
3.	Tafo	/tafo/	ɛta+ano+afɔ	ɛta(N)+ano(PREP)+afɔ(N)	The tip of the wooden masher/ladle is wet/soaked
4.	Ahinase	/ahinase/	ahina+ase	dua(ADJ)+nhini(N)+ase(Postposition)	Under the roots of trees

B. Phonological processes identified

The following phonological processes were also observed to be involved in the name formation process:

i. Introduction of consonant segment

There is the introduction of the voiced bilabial nasal sound /m/ before the name of the river 'pra' giving 'mpra' in the toponym Mpraeso. m+praIso

ii. Deletion of consonant segment

The place name 'Atibie' was found to have emerged after a deletion of some consonant segments. The full name is /etire+no+bi+nie/ (This is some of the head/family). Some consonant segments such as /r/ and /n/ was found to have been deleted in the process. This process indeed occurred in majority of the names with the exception of Twenedurase, Kotoso, Pepease,

iii. Conversion resulting from denasalization

One of the place names, Asakraka, was also found to have gone through a conversion and denasalization process. The full stretch of the name is y'asakra kã /jasakra+kã/ (we have changed how we say it). The last syllable / kã/ was denasalized into /ka/ which is literally be misinterpreted as 'to bite' or 'a debt'. It is therefore pronounced as /asakraka/.

iv. Zero phonological and morphological process

Ankoma and Abene were seen to have gone through no phonological/morphological process. This so happened because these names were names of real existing nouns, the former Ankoma /anjoma/ representing the name of the founder of the place (eponymous) while the latter, Abene /abene/ happens to be the name for 'suffering' in the local dialect.

11. Toponymic Typology using Tent & Blair (2011)

After the detailed analysis both at the semantic (frame) and morphosyntactic levels, the various placenames were grouped using Tent and Blair (2011) motivations for naming. The findings are discussed below:

- 'Occurent' is the most common motivation for naming among the 20 selected towns and villages for this research work. This was a clear indication that all the place names in this area of Ghana had their names as a result of some events, incidents, occasions, or as a means of commemorating some important dates or actions that did occur in history. These place names are Abene, Ankoma, Pepease, Twenedurase, Oframase, Ahinase, Nteso, Adawso, Mpraeso, Kotoso, Atibie, Obo, Bepong, Obomeng, Asakraka, Aduamoa, Bukuruwa, Abetifi, Tafo and Nkwatia.
- Linguistic Innovation. This means that most of the names came into existence as a result of linguistic manipulation of language. About seventeen out of the twenty selected place names had their names as a result of a combination of two or more morphemes, syllables or names to form a single word. They include Pepease, Twenedurase, Oframase, Ahinase, Nteso, Adawso, Mpraeso, Kotoso, Atibie, Bepong, Obomeng, Asakraka, Aduamoa, Bukuruwa, Abetifi, Tafo and Nkwatia.

- Eponymous is the next group of toponyms that was mostly used by the name givers. This means that most of the name givers gave names that could help them commemorate or honour individuals or other named entity that contributed immensely toward their current existence taking their history into consideration. They included towns like Pepease, Twenedurase, Oframase, Ahinase, Nteso, Adawso, Mpraeso, Atibie, Obo, Bepong, Oframase, Ankoma, Aduamoa, Bukuruwa, Tafo and Nkwatia.
- Associative Typology. In addition to the above, it was evidentially clear that six out of the twenty placenames were born out of the topographical, environmental or biological factors as well as the Local, Occupation/Activity and the Structures that existed at some moments in the historical time of the speech community. These six towns are Tafo, Bukuruwa, Atibie, Nteso, Bepong and Nkwatia.
- Indigenous, Erroneous and Evaluative typologies were the least motivations used as each of these had a name each assigned them, ie. Abene (Evaluative), Obo (Indigenous and Shift) and Asakraka (Erroneous).
- None of the studied placenames came under the Unknown classification type since all of them had their meanings, references, referents or origins known.

12. Conclusion

A morphosyntactic and semantic analysis of selected town names in Kwahu was the focus of this research. Twenty (20) selected toponyms were used. Data was collected through interviews which happened to be the primary source and some secondary sources such as the use of documents were also used to complement that. The study was done at the levels of morphology, syntax and semantics as well as the motivation for the naming of the various places. The morphosyntactic and semantic study revealed that the names have undergone some processes such as Compounding, Backformation, Coinage, and Clipping. The motivation for the giving of the various names reveals that majority of the placenames have been inspired by an occurrence in the history of the people, some eponymous individuals, Linguistic Instrument, and Geographical Location among others.

12.1 Recommendation

It is recommended that 'Kwahu', which also stands as an Akan dialect type, spoken by this speech community be explored by future researchers.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interests.

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