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## Asante Habitation Names: A Morphological Analysis

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**Leticia Asamoah**

Department of Languages, Foso College of Education  
Assin Fosu, Ghana

**Abdulai Akuamah**

*(Corresponding Author)*

Department of Languages, Bechem College of Education  
Bechem, Ghana

### ABSTRACT

This is a morphological exploration of certain Asante settlement names. Naming can be regarded as an indiscriminate cultural practice. Every society on Earth uses names recognising its members and locations. Moreover, the names' connotations differ according to society and culture. To the Asantes, naming practices is one of the essential customs and social institutions. Due to this, they attach so much importance to it, being naming of persons or places. The study investigates the morphological aspects of about one hundred and twenty-two (122) Asante habitation names. Additionally, it explores the typology of Asante habitation names through the lens of a morphological analysis. According to the morphological analysis, some Asante habitation names may be derived from single stems, compounds, affixation, or reduplication. The researchers supplemented the primary and secondary data sources with semi-structured interviews to establish the whole composition of the names, as some had been incorrectly written or had altered certain phonological procedures.

**Keywords:** *Habitation Name, Morphological Analysis, Asante; Toponomastic, Eponyms, Akan*

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## 1. Introduction

Naming is a cultural phenomenon that can be found all over the world. Every culture in the world assigns names to its people and places as identifiers. On the other hand, the names' meanings differ from one society to the next and from one culture. Naming is a unique linguistic act closely linked to people's beliefs, traditions, features, fears, and life events. Many people choose names that reveal their preferences (Rosenhouse, 2002).

The act of naming can shed light on social and cultural organisation tendencies in society and how cultural changes occur (Agyekum, 2006). They inform us about the social group and the name-giver and frequently provide information about the person's or place's background and situations at the time of birth. The name chosen purposefully refers to a new person with high symbolic power when naming a new baby. It uniquely identifies the individual while conveying a message, expressing optimism or prayer, and entrenching a cultural or religious tradition (Alford, 1987, p. 51).

The study of place names entitled "toponomastics" is a fascinating field of research that comes under onomastics. The study of onomastics is a domain of semantics. It is devoted to the study of the etymology of proper names (Crystal, 1999). On the other hand, the study of names is an interdisciplinary endeavour that has intrigued philosophers of language, anthropologists, linguists, and everyday people alike. The Akans put a high emphasis on names and naming customs. Akan names offer information about Akan society, ideology, thinking, environment, faith, language, and culture. Akan names' symbolic nature and interpretation depict Akan religious beliefs and their interaction with foreign cultures (Agyekum, 2006).

Since naming is an important part of Akan culture, this research focuses on habitation names among Ghana's Asante. Asante's toponyms are studied here by looking at morphological characters. The meaning of names is heavily influenced by the morphology, syntax, and semantics of the languages they are given (Batoma, 2006). This means that comprehending place



(habitation) names necessitates a close look at the internal structure of the words that make up the name and consideration of sociolinguistic, sociocultural, and ethnolinguistic domains. As a result, this study was done to provide more context for the study of place names.

### *1.1 The Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of this study was to determine the morphological characteristics of some Asante town names. The study examined the morphological characteristics of place names by raising the following question: What is the morphological features of various Asante habitation names? Although the study is not concerned with the town's historical aspects, the historical section was essential in putting the names in their proper contexts.

## **2. The Asante People**

Asante is a group of Akans. The locals speak Asante Twi, a Ghanaian language of Akan. It is a member of the Kwa language family. The Akans are Ghana's dominant ethnic group. Akan is spoken by approximately 49.1% of Ghana's population, and 44% speak it as a second language (See Agyekum, 2006; Akuamah, 2021). The Asantes, also known as Asantefoɔ, form the majority of the Akan society. History has it that the Adanse people, who now form part of the Asante Nation, formed the first kingdom and governed most of the Akan states among the Akans. The Adanse kingdom rose to its peak during the reign of their king Awurade Basa. The Denkyira Kingdom toppled the Adanse kingdom.

The Denkyira kingdom ruled with an iron hand; therefore, the Asante people came together to form a strong union with the sole aim of fighting the Denkyira kingdom. People of those days referred to the union's idea as "Because of war," i.e., "ɔsa nti foɔ" and this became the name given to the states which came together with the sole aim of fighting their tyrannical overlord. The name was polluted to "Asantefoɔ" (Osei, 2002). Some Asante towns include Obuasi, Bekwae, Anweankwata, Kumasi, Mampong, Ejisu, and others.

## **3. Theoretical Framework**

This research is classified as onomastic, which is focused on the study of names. Onomastics encompasses two subfields of study: anthroponomastics, which examines personal names, and toponomastics, which examines place names. Onomastics' recovery and restoration have influenced many cultures

and histories. African naming research and naming practices (including town names) have been paramount in reclaiming and preserving Africa's rich history. According to Batoma (2006; 1), "a major trend in African studies today consists of using traces of African culture embedded in African names and naming practices to recover or reconstruct African heritage." It can be deduced that ethnonyms and toponyms are the two types that have received much attention. Ethnonymy is the study of the names of individuals and ethnic groups, whereas toponymy is the study of place names. These two areas of interest of African onomastics are significant. Due to their endurance and fixed nature, toponyms are valuable data sources for research (e.g., historical). Batman's perspective is on the linguistic significance of names, often known as factual or inspired meaning (Batoma, 2006; Tent and Blair, 2011).

In this sense, Flom (1924:1-2) also addresses the importance of toponyms or the analysis of place names. "The study of place-names, more than any other discipline perhaps, links together those major lines of study that concern themselves with the past of peoples or nations, and is capable of being an aid to them all." It could be seen that the philologist has long ago recognised the significance of the names of persons and places in the study of the problems he was working on. Therefore, the ethnologist must carefully examine any piece of evidence provided by the names of ancient places and tribes.

The archaeologist can give us evidence of man's presence in certain places and certain periods, but he recognises in the place-names a possible important tool for tracing more in detail the course of settlements than can be done through archaeological finds.

Others also emphasise the importance of the study of toponyms. One of them is El Fasi (1978:18). According to him, knowledge of place names (towns, mountains, rivers, lakes, springs, and other physical features), referred to as toponymy, can tremendously aid history because place names rarely change. He illustrates how their phonetic evolution rarely results in significant changes and has a negligible effect on traditional pronunciation and spelling. Thus, the study of place names can reveal historical facts and provide information on the history, religion, and civilisation of the areas' original occupants.

Garra, Juliarena, and Rey (1999:8), also state it in this way “With toponymy, it is possible to analyse the relations between and among people, history, geography, and culture. As a discovery tool, cartography along with the closer investigation of place names facilitates a broader spectrum of information which has an important impact on education and pedagogical practice”. They indicate that toponymy and its interpretation can be a crucial tool for students and teachers to multiply their capacity for developing meaningful and multidisciplinary activities in this way. They assert that teaching students how to conduct name research and cultivating these critical abilities in an enquiring attitude enables them to gradually increase their understanding of history, culture, and individuals. Through toponymic techniques, knowledge of the location, time, and social order is imparted, instilling three key notions necessary for each individual's development.

Berry (1958) also expresses his great displeasure with documenting geographic names in Ghana and discusses the major issues and impediments to a genuine standardisation program. He defines place names and establishes the criteria for their use as real place names. He also examines two critical facets of Ghanaian topology: writing and spelling.

Different classifications exist for toponyms (place names). Flom (1924), writing on place names with a particular emphasis on Norway, categorised place names into a habitation, cultural, and natural names. He also remarked that habitation names also termed *oeconyms*, include houses, farmsteads, hamlets, villages, cities, parishes, townships, neighbourhoods, regional names, and country names. Fields, tilled areas, and grazing lands are all referred to in the culture. Additionally, it includes roadways, bridges, landing areas, fishing areas, dams, burial areas, and play areas. The third classification includes topographical terms such as hills, mountains, rivers, brooks, and lakes.

Additionally, place names can be classified according to their composition, whether composed of a single word or element or two elements; compounds. This categorisation is based on linguistics. The classification method that is vital and critical for this investigation is linguistic orientation.

Again, place names can be classified into two broad categories: those referring to natural characteristics and those referring to human settlements. This study is concerned

with Asante *oeconyms*, or the study of habitation/human settlement names. According to Humphreys (1993), Raper (1998), Roden (1974), Zwinoira (1984), and Yahyah and Feankl (1997), African ethnonymic and toponymic studies have focused primarily on historical, cultural, geographical, linguistic, archaeological, political, and sociolinguistic dimensions, with scant attention paid to the morphological study of place names.

Additionally, Akuamah (2021) discussed approximately 44 (44) Asante weed names. The study's data were gathered only from primary sources. We interviewed a total of twenty indigenous Asante speakers. The analysis uncovered various morphological processes occurring in the language, including affixation, reduplication, and compounding.

According to Batoma (2006), the meaning of African names consists of three layers: the lexical meaning, the onomastic meaning, which is based on each tradition's naming practices, and the socio-pragmatic meaning, which is based on cultural knowledge of the onomastic code of conduct, the interpersonal relationships of the onomastic communication partners, and the situation

In this study, the Asante people's naming conventions are analysed based on their morphological elements. This component deals with the specific words that comprise the name. This aided in the discovery of the various word-formation techniques employed.

#### 4. Methodology

In the qualitative study, a systematic examination of Asante settlement names, or *oeconyms*, is performed. Qualitative research is defined as an investigation process that starts with the intent of understanding, and then includes the following characteristics: it is based on clear methodology, which uses a social or human problem by using a complex, holistic picture, looks at the words of people, and is performed in the natural setting (Creswell, 1998). Again, it involves deriving information from observation, interviews, or verbal interactions and focuses on the meanings and interpretations of the participants (Wheeler, 1985 cited in Owu-Ewie 2012). This means that it involves the studying of things in their natural background/setting. It, therefore, seeks to understand people's interpretations of a phenomenon.



We worked with informants from the Asante communities to elicit and collect material relevant to the study. The informants were selected based on the knowledge they possess on the topic or the study. Unstructured methods to obtain maximum and accurate information on the establishment of place names from the informants. An unstructured interview is one in which the questions are planned, but the researchers can deviate from the plan, thus giving him the freedom to relate to the respondent. Unstructured interviews have non-standard responses. This allowed the respondents free room to operate and speak openly. The researchers drew attention to the main focus when a respondent is deviating from the focus. The researchers travelled to places like Obuasi, Fawoade, Mankranso, Mampong, Poano, Akropong, Anweankwanta, and many places, all within the Asante communities.

The sample size was determined using a purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique in which elements are picked according to the study's objective. The sample is chosen because it has the information required by the researcher. Purposive sampling is when we collect data with a specific objective in mind. Purposeful sampling may entail examining the complete population of a certain group (Asantes of the Akan). Like other non-probability sampling methods, purposive sampling may not produce a sample typical of the larger population, but it may be necessary in some case studies of schools, communities, or other specifically stated groups. Additionally, due to time and financial limits, researchers could not include all persons in the study; hence, it is critical to select a smaller sample to supply the information (data). A technique used to select to ensure that diverse perspectives of people are included in the study is purposive or purposeful sampling (Creswell, 2002).

The study gathered data from both primary and secondary sources. Secondary sources include Asante cultural books and town maps for the Ashanti Region's numerous districts. The researchers gathered primary data by travelling to cities and villages to collect names. Additionally, the researchers engaged with the locals to ascertain the story or history behind the towns' creation. This was advantageous since it enabled the researchers to ascertain the underpinning morphological characteristics of the habitation names, as some of the names may have undergone

alterations as a result of phonological processes or have been Anglicised. For instance, Kyirapatr and Dekymso have been Anglicised as Chirapatre and Dichemso, respectively. As Batoma (2006) and Tucker (1956) put it, the absence of writing during the establishment of some settlements resulted in outsiders imposing their orthography, which is why interviewing residents of towns and villages was critical for elucidating the etymology of several of the names. A researcher of place names conducts interviews with local individuals to ascertain established local usage. The researchers collected an estimated one hundred and twenty-two (122) settlement names for approximately four months. The names were collected from the various districts in the Ashanti region. This was done in order to obtain accurate information and also to achieve the desired result.

Following the collection of names, the researchers utilised an inductive and creative synthesis approach to classify and code the habitation names according to their morphological classifications. In an inductive qualitative analysis, responses are grouped based on the judgment that the responses are similar. This similarity is conceptually described, and domains are created into which responses can be grouped as analysis continues. The themes emerging from the data are looked at as they are coded and then put into conceptual categories that describe what is happening. The categories identified are re-examined to see how they are linked. Lastly, the conceptual models are translated into a storyline that will be meaningful to readers.

Categorising and coding analysis are mostly used in a qualitative study. It is a technique for analysing data and categorising units – each of which is designated by a label – a conceptual “code.” After getting to know the data, the researchers then categorises the information. Categorisation involves identifying themes and patterns in the data- ideas, concepts, behaviours, interactions, and incidents are used and organised into coherent categories that summarise and bring meaning to the text. A descriptive label (name) for each category created was provided. As done in the categorisation, other themes that served as sub-categories were identified and continued until all relevant themes were identified and labelled. For example, a broad category of Morphological analysis of Asante habitation names has sub-categories like single stem habitation names,

compound habitation names, and even within it, noun-noun names, and others.

## 5. Results and Discussion

The habitation names are analysed morphologically under the following components: single root morphemes, compounds, reduplication, and inflectional.

### 5.1 Single stem habitation names

The data analysis of the habitation names indicated that some of the habitation names are single stem nouns used to identify the communities that have these names. The names are composed of single root morphemes and have distinctive connotations. These towns are *Apa*, *Agona*, *Amoako*, *Gyakobu* (*Jacobu*), *Asiwa*, *Agogo*, *Atonsu*, *Gyaakye* (*Jachie*), and *Asem*.

The meanings and the history behind some of the names above indicated that they are single root morphemes that cannot be broken down further into morphemes without destroying the word. For instance, the name *Gyaakye* was derived as a result of the founder. According to my informant, a hunter by the name of *Agya Kwaku Gyaakye* came for hunting and found a small river and realised that behind the river would be a nice place for staying or a nice place to live, so he developed the place by putting up a hut for himself, and people started joining him. The place was developed into a town. The town or the place was named after the man (hunter) *Agya Kwagyakye*. This is an eponym since it was named after the founder of the place.

Single stem habitation names and their English gloss

(1a) *Agona* ‘name of a clan.’

(1b) *Amoako* ‘a person’s name.’

(1c) *Gyakobu* ‘a family name’

(1d) *Asokore*’s family name (one of the seven clans of Akan).’

(1e) *Agogo* ‘the name was derived from a river name (*Agogowa* river).’

(1f) *Atonsu* ‘the name was derived from a name of a river.’

(1g) *Gyaakye* ‘a person’s name’ (henceforth PN)

(1h) *Asem* ‘word, matter, case, problem, palaver, trouble.’

### 5.2 Compound habitation names

The data analysis also indicated that some of the habitation names are compounds. They are made up of two or more stems. According to Kurosaki (2009), compounding can be put into semantic and formal classifications. A semantic classification of compounds, he asserts, addresses the problem of the headword. This class of compounds is subdivided into four

subtypes. The first is an endocentric compound. This is composed of a head that contains the fundamental meaning of the compound and modifiers. The exocentric compound is the second type. This does not have a forward direction, and its meaning is frequently indiscernible from its constituent parts. The third type of compound is the copulative; it has two semantic heads. Finally, there is the appositional compound, which consists of lexemes with two opposed properties.

On the other hand, compounds are classed formally according to the word classes that comprise them. Because the majority of habitation names are nouns, this study used formal categorisation to classify them. This categorization allows for the formation of compounds using noun + noun, noun + adverb, adjective + adjective, adjective + participle, adjective + verb, noun + verb, preposition + verb, preposition + adverbs, and preposition + noun. The linguistic intricacy of Akan habitation names has a clear link with the diversity and depth of the semantic content and sociocultural information carried by the names. (2014) (Owu-Ewie).

Determined by the amount of data encoded, Asante (Akan) habitation names can be formed by combining nouns and other word classes. The following are the compound kinds determined from an analysis of Asante habitation.

#### 5.2.1 Noun + Noun

This category of habitation names comprises two independent nouns joined together to denote the name of the place. The result or the noun that can be got at the end of the combination can be a solid compound, hyphenated compound, or an open compound. The following are the analyses.

- Solid compounds: this category of habitation names is made up of two independent nouns which are combined as one. These are the data analysis for this category of a compound. *Bekwae* ‘forest of palm trees’ is derived from two independent nouns, *Abe* ‘palm tree’ and *Kwae* ‘forest.’

(2a) *Bekwae*

‘Forest of palm trees’

In this case, two different nouns are compounded to be one name for a place. When broken into morphemes, this noun phrase can have two independent nouns in which one serves as the headword of the phrase and the other a modifier. In this case, the *be* (palm), which is the stem which has



*Abe* as singular form and *Mme* ‘palms’ as a plural form of the same word becomes the modifier to the *Kwae* ‘forest.’ So the *kwae* ‘forest’ becomes the headword of the noun phrase *Bekwae* ‘Forest of palm.’

Many are such habitation names identified in the data (2b) - (2d). The following are some of these habitation names. Akumadan is also made up of two independent nouns.

(2b) *Akomadan* *Ankoma*  
 ‘PN’ *dan* ‘building’  
 ‘Ankoma’s building/camp’

(2c) *Amoaman* *Amoa*  
 ‘PN’ *man* ‘town’  
 ‘Amoa’s town/ town of Amoa’

(2d) *Nyameadom* *Nyame*  
 ‘God’ *Adom* ‘grace’  
 ‘God’s grace/grace of God’

• There are nouns when combined, remain open in the end resultant name. According to Owu-Ewie (2014), they are called open compounds. They are two separate names put together as one name, and there is space between the two names when written. (3a) - (3g) are examples of such names.

Name of place	Morphological analysis	English gloss	Free English translation
(3a) <i>Adanse Praso</i>	<i>Adanse - Pra-so</i>	‘Area name’ - ‘river name - ‘on.’	Praso in Adanse area
(3b) <i>Agona Asaaman</i>	<i>Agona - Asare-man</i>	‘Area name’ - ‘PN’ - ‘town.’	Asaaman in Agona area
(3c) <i>Asokore Mampon</i>	<i>Asokore - Man-pon</i>	‘Area name’ - ‘town’ - ‘great’	Mampon in Asokore area
(3d) <i>Asante Mampon</i>	<i>Asante - Man-pon</i>	‘Area name’ - ‘town’ - ‘great.’	Mampon in Asante area
(3e) <i>Konongo Odumase</i>	<i>Konongo - Odum-ase</i>	‘Area name’ - ‘name of a tree’ - ‘under.’	Odumase in Konongo area
(3f) <i>Sekyere Odumase</i>	<i>Sekyere - Odum-ase</i>	Area name - name of a tree - under	Odumase in Sekyere area
(3g) <i>Tano Odumase</i>	<i>Tano - Odum-ase</i>	‘Area name’ - ‘name of a tree’ - ‘under.’	Odumase in Tano area

These towns have their first names modifying the second names. The first name is a modifier to the second name. For example, *Konongo*, *Sekyere*, and *Tano* distinguish the three *Odumase* towns. It can also be realised that *Asokore Mampon* and *Asante Mampon* are made up of Noun - Noun - an adjective which is *Asokore* (Noun) - *oman* (Noun) - *pon* (adjective). The same way is *Tano Odumase*, *Konongo Odumase*, *Sekyere Odumase*, and *Adanse Praso* are made up of Noun - Noun - Postposition at which we can have *Adanse* (Noun) - *Pra* (a name of a river) (Noun) - *so* (on) postposition and *Konongo Odumase* is made up of *Konongo* (noun) - *Odum* (a name of a tree) Noun - *ase* (under) postposition. The same thing applies to *Sekyere Odumase*, and *Tano Odumase*.

Other examples of settlements with [noun- noun] open compound names indicate the activities performed or used to be performed in the area. The following are examples of such names.

(4a) *Anwiankwanta* *Anwia* ‘Sand’ - *Nkwanta* ‘junction’  
 ‘Sand junction/junction of sand’

(4a) *Bayere Nkwanta* *Bayeree* ‘yam’ - *nkwanta* ‘junction.’  
 ‘Yam junction’

As seen from (4a), *Anwiankwanta* is derived from *Anwia* ‘Sand’ and *Nkwanta* ‘junction’ because it is a junction where sand wining activity occurs. Similarly, because yam is sold at this junction, the activity is attached to the word junction hence the place name *Bayere Nkwanta* ‘Yam junction.’

### 5.2.2 Noun - Postposition

The study also indicated that some Asante habitation names are [noun and postposition] compounds. While prepositions are found in English, Akans do not have prepositions but rather have postpositions.

This category encompasses the majority of the habitation names obtained for this study. The noun is a name for an object or landmark, such as a river, mountain, tree, or structure, and the postposition is a location.

In this situation, the noun and postposition are combined into a single word (solid compound). This demonstrates that individuals who first settled there did so around or outside the object/landmark in question. For example, *Kofiase* town (under *Kofi*’s *onyina* tree), the history behind it indicates that the settlement started under the *onyina* tree (silk cotton tree). *Kofi* = ‘PN,’ *ase* ‘under’ *onyina* ‘silk cotton tree’: under *Kofi*’s *onyina* tree. According to history, Nana Oppong Kuma abandoned his senior brother Oppong Panin and settled behind an *onyina* tree named *Onyina Kofi* as a hunter. He came across a stream one day while hunting, and when he drank from it, he asked the stream to assist him that day, and within a short time, he shot and had game.

He simply called the stream "adom mmɔborɔ," which translates as "grace and pity." His visitors stated that they travelled to *Onyina Kofi Ase*, which translates as, ‘silk tree, *Kofi*, beneath’= "under the *Onyina Kofi* tree," which later acquired the name *Kofiase*, with the "adommmɔborɔ" stream served as their main source of water. The following are the analyses of these compounds.

(5a) *Abease* *a-* ‘SG-PREFIX’ *be*  
 ‘palm’ - *ase* ‘under.’  
 ‘Under the oil palm tree.’

(5b) *Boɔanim* *boɔ* ‘rock’ – *anim* ‘front/face.’

‘Front/face of the rock/stone’

(5c) *Boɔho* *Boɔ* ‘rock’ – *ho* ‘around’

‘Around the rock.’

(5d) *esereeso* *ε-* ‘3INANIMATE’ – *serε-* ‘grass/dessert’ – *so*

‘On the dessert/grass’

(5e) *Mmorom* *m* – ‘PLU PREFIX’ – *moro-* ‘maise’ – *mu* ‘in/inside.’

‘Inside the maise.’

All the names above are made up of a noun either in singular or plural form and a postposition. These names have the nouns coming first and the postpositions coming after the noun.

### 5.2.3 Noun - Noun - Postposition ‘mu.’

Certain Asante place names have a compound morphological structure consisting of a noun, another noun, and a postposition. A first noun is frequently a person or thing’s name, whereas the second noun is *Kuro*/man (town/village) and the postposition *mu* (in). The first term refers to the community’s possessor or owner, i.e., the individual who initiated the environment. For example, *Annɔkurom* was derived from; *Annɔ* ‘PN’ – *Kuro* ‘town’ – *mu* ‘in.’ ‘in Annɔ’s town.’

These compounds are combined to form the community’s name. One essential factor is that vowel elision or deletion occurs in the majority of circumstances. Vowel elision is a phonological process in Akan (Twi) that occurs when a vowel is eliminated in the combinative style. When [r] comes before the high close-back vowel [u], it is interchanged in Akan (Dolphyne, 2006). This is indicated in the second noun *Kuro* (town/village), so instead of *Kuro - mu*, it rather becomes *krom*.

In the same way, the high close-back vowel [u] is again elided or deleted when a word or a noun has *mu* ‘in’ as a postposition. For example, when we have a word like *afuo* ‘farm’ – *mu* ‘in,’ the resultant name is *afuom* ‘in the farm.’ This phenomenon also occurs in the habitation names, and the data analysis down here indicated a noun, followed by another noun and a postposition *mu* ‘in.’ Normally, the elision occurs between the second noun *Kuro* ‘town/village’ and the postposition (in) when combined, so instead of *kuro - mu* (*kuromu*) it rather ends up as *krom*. Most of the habitation names in this category are eponyms. Eponyms are the names of persons or a group of persons after whom a place is named. They can be founders. The examples (6a)-(6p) below illustrate this.

Name of place	Morphological analysis Noun - Noun – Postposition	English gloss	Free English translation
(6a) <i>Ananekrom</i>	<i>Anane - kuro - mu</i>	PN - town - in	In Anane’s town
(6b) <i>Annɔkurom</i>	<i>Annɔ - kuro - mu</i>	PN - town - in	In Annor’s town
(6c) <i>Akyawkrom</i>	<i>Akyaw - kuro - mu</i>	PN - town - in	In Akyaw’s town
(6d) <i>Adomakokrom</i>	<i>Adomako - kuro - mu</i>	PN - town - in	In Adomako’s town
(6e) <i>Baaniekrom</i>	<i>Baanie - kuro - mu</i>	PN - town - in	In Baanie’s town
(6f) <i>*Bronikrom</i>	<i>Broni - kuro - mu</i>	Whiteman - town - in	In Whiteman’s town
(6g) <i>*Bookrom</i>	<i>boɔ - kuro - mu</i>	Stone/rock - town - in	In stony/rocky town
(6h) <i>Debrakrom</i>	<i>Debra - kuro - mu</i>	PN - town - in	In Debra’s town
(6i) <i>*Kɔmfokrom</i>	<i>Kɔmfɔ - kuro - mu</i>	Priest - town - in	In priest’s town
(6j) <i>Manukrom</i>	<i>Manu - kuro - mu</i>	PN - town - in	In Manu’s town
(6k) <i>Oforikrom</i>	<i>Ofori - kuro - mu</i>	PN - town - in	In Ofori’s town
(6l) <i>Oseiokrom</i>	<i>Osei - kuro - mu</i>	PN - town - in	In Osei’s town
(6m) <i>Owuokrom</i>	<i>Owuɔ - kuro - mu</i>	Personal family name - town - in	In Owuo’s town
(6n) <i>Owusukrom</i>	<i>Owusu - kuro - mu</i>	Personal name - town - in	In Owusu’s town
(6o) <i>Pokukrom</i>	<i>Poku - kuro - mu</i>	PN - town - in	In Poku’s town.
(6p) <i>*Tikyakrom</i>	<i>Tikya - kuro - mu</i>	Teacher - town - in	In teacher’s town

The data indicated that all the habitation names in this category are mostly eponyms, except for examples (6f), (6g), (6i), and (6p). It also indicates that eponymous habitation names are very common among the Asantes, exclusively in rural areas. There are other habitation names under this category, also made up of noun + noun + postposition. In this case, the first noun also tends to modify the second noun, and there is a postposition *mu* ‘in’ or *ase* ‘under.’ These are not like the above habitation names, which have the names of the founders and *Kuro* ‘town/village’ and postposition *mu* ‘in.’ (7a) - (7c) are examples of these habitation names.

Name of place	Morphological analysis Noun - Noun – Postposition	English gloss	Free English translation
(7a) <i>Akwanserem</i>	<i>Kwan - sere - mu</i>	Path - grass - in	Path in the grass
(7b) <i>Petenyinase</i>	<i>pete - onyina - ase</i>	Vulture - silk tree - under	Under the vulture silk tree
(7c) <i>Efiduase</i>	<i>Efiada - dwa - ase</i>	Friday - market - under	Under the Friday market

### 5.2.4 Noun - Adjective - Postposition

Additionally, the data analysis revealed that several Asante habitation names are composed of a noun, an adjective, and a postposition. It is a noun-adjective - postposition from a morphological standpoint. This is a postpositional phrase, yet it is written as a noun. When preceded by the postposition *mu* ‘in,’ the high close back rounded vowel [u] is omitted. The following are two examples found in (8a) and (8b).

Name of place	Morphological analysis Noun - Adjective – Postposition	English gloss	Free English translation
(8a) <i>Akrofonso</i>	<i>Kuro - fon - so</i>	‘town’ – ‘deserted’ – ‘on.’	‘On the deserted town.’
(8b) <i>Kurofoforom</i>	<i>Kuro - faforɔ - mu</i>	‘town’ - new - in	‘in the new town.’

### Noun - Adjective

Additionally, certain habitation names were identified as [noun - adjective] compounds. The first word in the name is a noun, whereas the second word is an adjective. The adjective is a modifier to the noun, which is the headword. The following examples in (9a) - (9l) illustrate such habitation names.



Name of place	Morphological analysis Noun + Adjective/numeral	English gloss	Free English translation
(9a) <i>Aberewapon</i>	<i>Aberewa - pon</i>	'old lady - 'great.'	'The great old lady.'
(9b) <i>Akropon</i>	<i>Akwo - pon</i>	'towns' - great/big'	'Great/big towns'
(9c) <i>Amantia</i>	<i>Aman - tia</i>	'towns' - 'short'	'Short towns'
(9d) <i>Asuofua</i>	<i>Asuo - fua</i>	Water/river - only/one	The only water/river
(9e) <i>Barekese</i>	<i>Bare - kese</i>	A personal name - big	The big Bare
(9f) <i>Barekuma</i>	<i>Bare - kuma</i>	A personal name - little	The little Bare
(9g) <i>Nsuta</i>	<i>Nsuo - nta</i>	River - Twin	Twin river
(9h) <i>Dakoro</i>	<i>Da - koro</i>	Day - only/one	Only a day/one day
(9i) <i>Dukusini</i>	<i>Duku - sini</i>	Scarf - half	Half scarf
(9j) <i>Mampɔn</i>	<i>Man - pon</i>	Town - great/big	Great/big town
(9k) <i>Nkwantakese</i>	<i>Nkwanta - kese</i>	Junction - big	Big junction
(9l) <i>Patakro</i>	<i>Pata - koro</i>	Shed /Hut - single	A Single Shed/Hut

### 5.3 Reduplication

Reduplication is a morphological process in linguistics in which the root or stem of a word (or a portion of it) or perhaps the entire word is reproduced identically or with a little variation. Reduplication is a practice of recurrence in which the shape of a prefix or suffix reflects the root's phonological properties (Crystal, 2007). Dolphyne (2006) also describes reduplication as a compound formation that consists of the repetition of the whole or part of a stem. She further explains that reduplication is a common process of word formation in Akan. Reduplication in Akan (Twi) can refer to a permanent recurrence of the root. In Akan, a partial reduplication is a *ka* 'bite,' which becomes *keka* 'bite - in a repeated form,' but an entire comprehensive reduplication is *tu* 'uproot,' which becomes *tutu* 'uproot - in a recurrent form.' Some reduplicated forms are a simple repetition of the stem, as in *pá* 'good' *pápá*. In this example, the reduplicated form comprises two parts identical to the simple stem in consonant, vowel, and tone. Most reduplicated forms have a more complex structure. Nouns, verbs, adverbs, and adjectives are the open word classes that can be reduplicated. This study identified this word-formation process to exist in Asante habitation names. The examples (10a) - (10c) below were found in the data:

Name of place	Morphological analysis Noun Noun	English gloss	Free English translation
(10a) <i>Aboabo</i>	<i>abo - abo</i>	'rock' - 'rock'	rocky place
(10b) <i>Asuasu</i>	<i>asu - asu</i>	'water' - 'water'	Watery
(10c) <i>Atimatim</i>	<i>atim - atim</i>	'stack' - 'stack'	stacky place

All the examples above are complete reduplication where the base and the duplicate are the same.

### 5.4 Inflection

Inflexions are morphological processes that involve affixes. Affixation can be derivational or inflectional. According to Crystal (2007), inflectional affixes denote grammatical relationships such as plural, past tense, and possession.

This phenomenon is present in Akan (Twi). In Twi, the affix can be a prefix or a suffix. Some inflectional morphemes in Akan (Asante Twi) are *-ni* representing human and singular as in *okuani* meaning 'a farmer' (someone who farms) and *-foɔ* constituting human and plural as in *akuafɔɔ* meaning 'farmers' (people who farm).

It is realised that there were other affixes or morphemes like *o-*, *a-* attached to the root or the base which come before the base, and they are the ones called prefixes and the examples like *-ni*, *-foɔ*, *-nom* come after the base which is also known as suffixes. The *-nom* is also a plural marker displaying relationships among people, e.g., *anuanom* 'siblings,' *Enanom* 'mothers,' *yerenom* 'wives' and *kununom* 'husbands.' In the data (11a) - (11c), some few inflectional habitation names were identified.

Name of place	Morphological analysis Affix + Noun	English gloss	Free English translation
(11a) <i>Abɔfoɔ</i>	<i>a- bɔfoɔ</i>	'plural marker' - 'hunter'	'Hunters'
(11b) <i>Adwafoɔ</i>	<i>a- dwa -foɔ</i>	'plural prefix' - 'trade' - 'plural suffix'	'Traders'
(11c) <i>Abɔdɔm</i>	<i>a- bɔdɔm</i>	plural marker - dog	Dogs

### 5.4.1 Affixation

These names are habitation names nominalised from verbs and other nouns with affixations.

Affix	stem/base	Gloss
Nominalisation	Gloss	
(12a)	<i>a- dwira</i>	'to cleanse'
<i>Adwira</i>		'has cleansed.'
(12b)	<i>a- hwia</i>	'to beg for food'
<i>Ahwia</i>		'has begged for food.'
(12c)	<i>ɔ- bo</i>	'stone'
<i>ɔbo</i>		a stone

The example (12a) and (12b) are morphologically made up of affix + verb + affix. The resultant is a noun. However, the example (12c) is morphologically structured as affix + noun + affix. Thus, in Akan, affixes can be attached to nouns and verbs.

## 6. Conclusion

There is a perception that African ethnonymic and toponymic studies have focused primarily on historical, cultural, geographical, linguistic, archaeological, political, and sociolinguistic aspects, with scant attention paid to the morphological analysis of place names. As demonstrated by Humphreys (1993), Raper (1998), Roden (1974), Zwinoira (1984), and Yahyah & Feankl (1997). The researchers conducted a morphological examination of Asante habitation names using the theories and perspectives of these linguists. The purpose



of this study was to conduct a morphological analysis of Asante habitation names.

The study gathered data from primary and secondary sources. In total, 122 (122) habitation names were collected from Asante communities. The morphological component of these one hundred and twenty-two (122) Asante habitation names were analysed. The study addressed the typology of Asante habitation names through morphological analysis of a broad range of names. According to the morphological examination, certain Asante habitation names could be single stems, compounds, inflexions (affixation), or reduplications. Additionally, the study suggested that Akan names, whether geographical or personal, are multidisciplinary subjects for sociology, history, religion, anthropology, toponymy, linguistics, ethnography, and philosophy. It is a critical component of Akan culture and behaviours that should not be overlooked in sociolinguistic and toponymic investigations.

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