

EWE:
ITS GRAMMATICAL CONSTRUCTIONS
AND
ILLOCUTIONARY DEVICES

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Except where otherwise indicated,
this thesis is the original work of the author

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ABSTRACT

This thesis primarily provides an overview of Ewe grammar and a detailed investigation of the meanings of specific grammatical constructions and illocutionary devices in the language. The basic idea behind the study is that every grammatical and illocutionary construction or device encodes a certain meaning which can be discovered and stated so that the meanings of different devices can be compared not only within one language but across language boundaries. An attempt is made to explain the usage of grammatical forms from different perspectives. Priority is given to semantic, functional and discourse-pragmatic concerns although formal constraints and diachronic considerations are also invoked in the explanations. A major concern throughout the thesis is to characterise the communicative competence of a native speaker of Ewe.

Chapter 1 contains introductory material about the language, the theoretical and methodological assumptions and the aims and organisation of the thesis.

The body of the thesis is divided into four parts. Part 1 is a brief overview of the structural grammar of Ewe. It consists of three brief chapters. Chapter 2 describes the phonology while Chapters 3 and 4 provide information on the basic morpho syntax of Ewe. The other three parts are organised on the basis of three (macro) functions (Halliday's semantic metafunctions) of language: propositional, textual and interpersonal.

Part II is concerned with the grammatical coding of some cognitive domains: qualities or property concepts as coded by adjectivals (chapter 5); aspectual meanings, specifically the semantics of the ingressive and perfective aspect markers (chapter 6); and possession (chapter 7).

Part III examines the grammatical resources available to the Ewe speaker for structuring and packaging information in a clause. The constructions investigated here encode the different perspectives a speaker can assume with respect to how to present the message being conveyed or with respect to how a participant in the situation is conceptualised. Chapter 8 deals with scene-setting topic constructions. Chapter 9 describes “*nyá-inverse*” constructions and presents them in a typological perspective. Chapter 10 investigates the different ways of conceptualising an 'experiencer' in Ewe through the different grammatical relations such an argument can assume in a clause.

Part IV is concerned with the illocutionary devices and constructions used in interpersonal communication. The description of the illocutionary devices is preceded by two chapters that serve as background for the understanding of the other chapters. Chapter 11 discusses the ethnography of speaking Ewe.

Chapter 12 explores some theoretical issues in the analysis of illocutionary devices. The illocutionary devices are described in the remaining three chapters. Chapter 13 describes the modes of address in Ewe. Chapter 14 analyses various interactional speech formulae. This part and the thesis ends with an investigation of the significance of interjections (Chapter 15).

Each part is preceded by a short overview about the rationale for its organisation.

ABBREVIATIONS

A	Actor	ADD	addressive prticle
Adj	adjective	AdvER	adverbialiser
AP	adverbial phrase	AUGM	augmentative
COND	conditional	COMP	complementiser
COMPL	completive	compv	comparative
CQ	content question marker	DEF	definite article
DEM	Demonstrative	DET	determiner
DIM	dimunitive	aFOC	argument focus marker
FUT	future	HAB	habitual
INGR	ingressive	INDEF	indefinite
INT	intensifier	INV	inversion marker
IRR	irrealis	LOC	locative
LOG	logophoric pronoun	MOD	modal
N	nominal	NP	nominal phrase
NEG	negative	OBJ	object
OBLOBJ	oblique object	NER	nominaliser
NPRES	non-present	pFOC	predicate focus
PFV	perfective	PL	plural marker
POR	(=X) possessor	POSS(=Y)	possessum
poss	possesive linker	PRES	present
PRO	pronomional	PROG	progressive
purp	purposive	Q	question
RED	reduplicative	REL	relativiser
REP	repetitive	SBJV	subjunctive
segp	segmental particle	SER	serialising connective
SUBJ	subject	SG	singular
TP	terminal particle	TRIP	triplication
U	Undergoer	VP	verbal phrase
VS	verb satellite	1	first person
2	second person	3	third person
(*x)	unacceptable if x included	*(x)	unacceptable if x omitted

The following abbreviations are used for linguistic theories etc.

GB	Government and Binding
GPSG	Generalised Phrase Structure Grammar
LFG	Lexical Functional Grammar
RG	Relational Grammar
NSM	Natural Semantic Metalanguage

I have also used the following general abbreviations:

cf. confer cp. compare etc. et cetera e.g. for example
i.e that is lit. literally

In interlinear glosses fused morphemes are indicated by a colon between them
e.g. $n\epsilon$ is glossed as to:3SG 'to him/her'

The Ewe examples are mostly produced in ipatimes. For this reason capitals are not used when they might be expected to achieve consistency. Because the Ewe examples appear in a distinct font, they have only been made bold or underlined when necessary.

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OVERVIEW

This part provides a description of Ewe structural grammar. Chapter 2 is concerned with the phonology - the main sound system, tonal structure, and other phonological devices that are used in the language. Chapters 3 and 4 provide a quick overview of the morpho-syntax. This overview of the grammar of Ewe is necessarily sketchy, and there is not much in it that is new. Therefore anyone familiar with Ewe grammar from other descriptions can skip this part. Those who want to know more about the structure of Ewe should consult Westermann 1930, Ansre 1961, 1966, Clements 1972, Schadeberg 1985, and Duthie 1988 and in press.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preliminaries

This study is a descriptive analysis of several grammatical constructions and illocutionary devices in Ewe, a major dialect of the Gbe subgroup of the (New) Kwa branch of Niger-Congo spoken in West Africa (Stewart 1989). (All comments about genetic classification of the Niger-Congo languages mentioned in this work are based on the classification found in Bendor Samuel ed. 1989.) 'Ewe' is the English or European spelling of the name of the language. In the indigenous orthography of the language, it is spelled 'Eve'. It is pronounced [əβə]. Another spelling 'Vhe' has been recently proposed within the framework of a common Gbe orthography (see Capo 1981, 1988). The common Gbe orthography is what is used on the map. The English spelling is used throughout this work, unless the name occurs in the language examples.

This introductory chapter is in two parts. In the first part some background information on the language and its speakers is provided. It covers the location, genetic affiliation, sociolinguistic status, dialects and typological features of the language. This is followed in the second part by a presentation of the theoretical assumptions and the analytic framework of the study. The chapter concludes with a statement of the aims and organisation of the thesis.

1.2 Background to the language

1.2.1 The Gbe language complex- dialects, areal and genetic affinities

The name Ewe [əβə] as used in this study refers to the western-most major dialect of the language or cluster of dialects spoken in an area that extends from Lower Volta (in southern Ghana) across into Togo, Benin and as far as Western Nigeria to Lower Weme; that is, from the Greenwich Meridian to 3^oE and from the Atlantic coast to about 8^oN which has been called Gbe since 1980. Gbe is the word for 'voice/language' in all the lects spoken within the geographical boundary outlined above. Other major dialects of Gbe are Gen [gɛ], including the dialects Glidji, Anexɔ and Agoe, spoken in southern Togo along the coast and is used as a lingua franca in towns (see Kangni 1989 and Lewis 1989 for some recent descriptions); Aja [adʒa], including Dogbó, Hwe and Tádo, spoken in central and inland parts of Togo and Benin; Xwla & Xwela [x^wla x^wela], including the dialects Saxwe, Ayizɔ and Gbesi, spoken in parts of southern Benin, and Fon [fɔ] including the dialects Glexwe, Alada, Gun and Agbóme, spoken in Benin across to parts of western Nigeria, particularly in the Ogun and Lagos states. Each of the major dialects has sub-dialects as indicated (see the

map) and some have their own standards e.g. Ewe, Gen, Fon and Aja (see Capo 1981, 1982, 1983a for a diachronic phonology of these dialects). For a long time, the name Ewe has been used to designate this language complex. For example, Ellis (1890:8) says that the Ewe [proper F.A.]. Gen, Aja, Fon etc. 'speak dialects of one language, Ewe ...'. The use of Ewe for the whole language complex has not been acceptable to the speakers of the other major dialects outside Ghana. The name Gbe proposed by Capo has been in use since the formation of a Gbe working group at the West African Languages Congress in April 1980 at Cotonou. An International Laboratory of Gbe lects (LABOGBE) has been formed with its headquarters at Cotonou and directed by Capo. Its main aim is to investigate and co-ordinate research on the linguistics of the Gbe lects and determine their groupings etc. (see LABOGBE Bulletin 1).

Other names such as Tadoid and Mɔ́ńɔ́ have been suggested recently (see Duthie 1990) because of some misgivings that have been expressed about the name Gbe by some Ewe speakers from Ghana. The debate about which name should be adopted continues and the question is an open one. (Capo 1990). In the meantime these three names should be borne in mind. Throughout this study, however, I use the better established term Gbe for the language complex.¹

The basic unity culturally, politically, historically and linguistically of the language and the people is undisputed (see e.g. Ellis 1890, Westermann 1930, Pazzi 1980 and Capo 1983, 1988). The question arises as to whether Gbe forms one language or a group of languages. The main criterion that linguists use to decide whether the speech of two or more different communities form one language or not is mutual intelligibility. That is, do the speakers from the different communities understand each other when they speak their respective dialects? Although a useful test, it is not without its problems. The most relevant problem for the Gbe situation is that dialects which are separated by geographical distance may not be mutually intelligible, and such speech forms can only be grouped together in terms of what is called chain intelligibility.

There is a high degree of mutual intelligibility between geographically contiguous dialect divisions. Thus there is mutual intelligibility between Ewe and Gen, between Gen and Aja, between Aja and Fon and between Fon and Xwela etc. In places where three or more of the dialect divisions are contiguous, they are also mutually intelligible e.g. in Benin. But the dialects of Ewe in the

¹ Personally, I don't have anything against the term Gbe especially since it is based on an indigenous word in the language. I have my reservations about Tadoid even though it conforms with an academic linguistic practice. Its structure goes against the structure of words in all the lects. Mɔ́ńɔ́ is the name of the river in the middle of the area where these dialects are spoken. The use of this name for the cluster conforms with the principles of nomenclature of language groups postulated in Williamson (1989: 18 -19). But I wonder how many speakers of Ewe in Ghana for example know of this river.

west and the dialects of Fon (e.g. Gun) do not have a high degree of intelligibility. These can however be claimed to be mutually intelligible via the other dialects which are between them. What is more, if a speaker of one of these dialects resides in an area of another dialect division whether they are geographically close or not, the person is able to grasp that dialect within a very short time. For instance, it has been reported that the Fon and Gen speakers who come to Accra in Ghana acquire Ewe in less than two weeks just as Aja and Fon speakers pick up Gen quickly when they go to Lome in Togo (see Capo 1983). These pieces of evidence suggest that the dialect groups of Ewe, Gen, Aja Fon and Xwla etc. belong to one language complex or form a cluster of major dialects.

1.2.2 Ewe

1.2.2.1 Dialects and areal distribution

As stated earlier, Ewe properly refers to the group of (sub) dialects spoken in the south-eastern part of the Volta Region of Ghana across to parts of southern Togo as far as and just across the Togo-Benin border. For some time in the past, 'Ewe' was confusingly used both for the entire language (i.e. equivalent to Gbe) and for the major dialect (i.e. Ewe proper). This study is about Ewe in the narrow sense. The most recent estimates I have seen indicate that there are about 2 million speakers of Ewe with 1.5 million in Ghana and about 0.6 million in Togo (cf. Duthie 1988 for the Ghana figure).

Some of the sub-dialects that fall under Ewe are: Aɲɔ (Clements 1972), Avenɔ, Tɔŋú, Waci [Wat^ɰ í], Kpele, Dzodze, Kpedze, Dodóme, Ho, Awudome, Pekí, Aɲfɔe, Sovie, Botoku, Kpándo (Stahlke 1971), Gbi and Fódome. Sometimes, these dialects may be grouped geographically into coastal or southern dialects e.g. Aɲɔ, Tɔŋú etc., central e.g. Ho, Kpedze, Dodóme and northern dialects e.g. Gbi, Kpando, Fódome etc. The central and northern dialects may be referred to as the inland dialects as opposed to the coastal dialects. In the course of the discussion some of these distinctions may be referred to.

A written standard was developed in the last century (Ansre 1971; Adzomada 1979). It is a hybrid of the regional variants of the various sub-dialects. With it has also emerged a standard colloquial variety (spoken usually with local accent), that is very widely used in cross-dialectal contact situations such as in schools, markets, churches etc. This is the variety on which this study is based although the dialect biases of any of the specific forms discussed are indicated in places.

Ewe is distinguished from the other Gbe dialect divisions by the following phonetic innovations. First, Ewe is the only dialect cluster in which the bilabial fricatives [ɸ] and [β] are found. Second, the schwa vowel [ə] is also found only

in Ewe. All the other dialects have sounds corresponding to these phones, for example [β] is a reflex of *h^w.

Linguistically speaking, Ewe is bordered to the west by Ga-Dangme and Akan which belong to the Nyo sub-branch of (New) Kwa, to the north by the Togo languages some of which belong to Nyo and others to the Left Bank branches of (New) Kwa, for example, Siwu, Siya, Adele etc. and Gur languages such as Kabiye. To the east are the Gbe dialects Gen, Aja and Xwla - all of which have degrees of intelligibility with it (see Capo 1979 and the map and cf. Stewart 1989 on the sub-branches of (New) Kwa).

1.2.2.2 Sociological Status:

Ewe is used in Ghana as a second language in most of the Togo languages' area (cf. Ring 1983). It is also one of the three most important languages in southern Ghana. It is taught in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions (The latter being universities and diploma awarding colleges). It is used for broadcasting and in some community newspapers e.g. Kpodoga. It is also used in adult literacy programmes. There is a fair amount of published material in the language (see Duthie and Vlaardingerbroek 1981 part 2).

In Togo, it has been declared one of the two national languages being promoted for official use as well as for use in education, mass media, etc. Ewe is thus an important language in that region of West Africa. There is a commission in Togo which has been working to devise Ewe words for new technological terms.

1.2.2.3 Previous Work on Ewe

Ewe is one of the most intensively studied languages of West Africa. It has been the subject of linguistic investigation for over a century, starting with the work of German missionaries in the 1860s. The literature on the linguistics and related aspects of the language is quite large (see Duthie and Vlaardingerbroek 1981). From this point of view one may well wonder what the point of the present study is. Indeed when I started my doctoral studies in 1986, a colleague told an Africanist colleague of his that my thesis was going to be on Ewe. This Africanist exclaimed: 'Oh Ewe was described twenty years ago!' I think this person was referring to the first description of Ewe on modern linguistic principles by a native speaker that was produced in 1966 (see Ansre 1966). But does that mean that new descriptions should not be attempted? New grammars of English which, one could say, was described several centuries ago continue to be produced (see e.g. Dixon 1991). However, I take the point that some other languages which have not yet been described need to be investigated. This is what seems to be implied in the retort of the Africanist.

Although there is a lot that has been written on Ewe to date, the present work differs from its antecedents in its orientation and approach to linguistic description. At the appropriate places in the study, the relevant previous studies are discussed. Here, I will only mention some of the works which I consider to be landmarks in Ewe linguistics and point out some of the current research on Ewe. For a review of some of the other earlier works see Clements (1972).

Perhaps the best known author on Ewe whose work is both authoritative and of great influence in Ewe linguistics is Dietrich Westermann. His grammar, first published in German in 1907 and translated into English in 1930, is a comprehensive traditional description which is full of insights. I am always fascinated by the perceptive analyses that abound in the grammar. Westermann's dictionaries of Ewe - Evefiala (Ewe - English) and Gbesela yeye (English - Ewe) - remain the only complete dictionaries of Ewe available.

The works by Ansre on the phonology (1961) and grammar (1966) together constitute a first description of Ewe by a native speaker on linguistic principles (see Schadeberg 1985 for a succinct summary of Ansre 1966). However, the theoretical framework employed in the grammatical description - Scale and Category, a precursor to Halliday's Systematic functional grammar (see e.g. Halliday 1985) - is outmoded and makes the work less accessible and relevant today. Nevertheless, it provides a good account of the structural properties of the language. Clements' The verbal syntax of Ewe (1972) is similarly couched in a theoretical framework - the Extended Standard Theory - which is out of fashion. However, Clements' description is valuable in the sense that it focuses on one dialect - the Anɔ dialect - and makes some comparisons with the standard. The works by Nyomi on the phonology (1976) and the grammar of Ewe (1977) are significant for two main reasons. First, because they are bilingual with parallel English and Ewe texts of description. Second, because the author indulges in some linguistic engineering. He attempts to coin Ewe words for linguistic terminology. For example, a vowel is rendered in Ewe as *ablɔɔ gbedɔɔ* literally, a 'free sound' as opposed to a consonant which is *gbedɔɔ xaxa* literally 'a sound which is not free'. These labels are intuitively correct from a linguistic point of view, but some refining needs to be done in order for the terms to catch on. Apart from this the description is a straightforward structural analysis of Ewe.

Duthie's (in press) recent description of Ewe is written in structural-functional terms with a section on semantics. The question that motivates the description in the semantics part is what structure(s) or forms are used in Ewe to express particular semantic notions. For example, what structures are used for questioning, or for ordering etc., or, how is negation expressed in Ewe etc.

Duthie's approach like that of most functional grammarians is to identify the structures that are used to serve particular communicative purposes in the language. From this point of view, it is an improvement on pure formal structural descriptions. However, Duthie does not go beyond identifying these structures. One cannot readily tell therefore how two structures which have the same communicative function are different from one another in the meanings they convey.

The present study builds on the kind of work done by Duthie. It goes beyond merely identifying the structures to investigating the meanings that the individual forms which serve a particular function within a semantic or conceptual domain have. These meanings when discovered are represented in a way that would make them easily comparable to one another and to similar structures across languages.

In recent times, Bernd Heine and his colleagues at Cologne have been doing some work on the cognitive basis of the diachronic as well as synchronic grammar of Ewe (see e.g. Claudi and Heine 1986, Heine and Claudi 1986, Heine and Reh 1984, Heine and Hünemeyer 1988, Heine, Claudi and Hünemeyer 1988, Heine 1989). To some extent, the present study shares the spirit of their research in as far as they seek to explain linguistic phenomena whether synchronic or diachronic. However, the present study differs from the work of the Cologne group because it does not accept metaphor or tropes as explanations. The present work takes the view that 'the roots of grammar lie in semantics' (De Lancey 1979) and that semantic explanations must be sought for linguistic phenomena (see Chapter 7 for an opposition between the metaphorical and the semantic bases of grammar).

Apart from these works which are specifically devoted to Ewe, one should also mention some of the work that has been done on the comparative linguistics of Gbe dialects. Pazzi (1980) is a thesaurus-like work on the lexicon and culture of the major dialects of Gbe. His comparative sketch grammars of the major dialects are also invaluable (Pazzi 1977). Above all, the work of Capo (e.g. 1981, 1988 and other works) on the comparative phonology of Gbe is very relevant to an understanding of the phonology not only of Ewe but of the other Gbe dialects.

Current interest in generative grammar in contrastive linguistics and parametric variation in particular has inspired some of the research on Gbe dialects. I am aware of a comparative project on Fon and Haitian Creole in which reference is sometimes made to Ewe (see e.g. the papers in Lefebvre 1990). I am also aware of work in progress by Chris Collins on aspects of a comparative syntax of Anɔ (Ewe) Kpele (Ewe) and Gen. Fabb (1990) is a comparative syntactic analysis of aspect and gerunds in Gbe dialects. There is

also an Ewe dictionary project at the University of Ghana under the direction of Alan Duthie which is meant to provide information on other Gbe dialects as well. It is hoped that the results of these projects will enhance our understanding of Ewe and Gbe dialects in general.

Ewe has indeed been intensively studied and it continues to be investigated from different viewpoints. The present study is offered as a contribution to the understanding of the language. Its scope and approach are the areas in which it may make some contribution. It has a semantic approach and its coverage includes areas of language that have often been treated as belonging to the periphery of linguistics and have consequently been neglected for the most part in linguistic descriptions (see especially Part IV). Above all, this study is humanistic in orientation. It seeks to understand the nature of the people who speak Ewe through a prism of their language (cf. Sapir [1929] 1949, Lakoff 1974, Yngve 1975, Hagège 1990 among others)

1.2.2.4 A typological description of Ewe

Phonologically, Ewe is a register tone language like most African languages with high and non-high tonemes. It does not have downstep. It has a seven vowel system. Each of these has both an oral and a nasalised counterpart. It also has double articulated labial velar stops. There is a contrast between bilabial fricatives and labio-dental fricatives in the language. Similarly there is a voiced apical post-alveolar stop which contrasts with a voiced dental stop.

Morphologically, Ewe may be said to be an isolating language with agglutinative features (Sapir 1921). It makes use of compounding as well as reduplication and triplication and affixation processes in the formation of new words. In terms of lexis, Ewe has ideophones - a set of words with interesting phonological and syntactic properties - like many other African languages. It also has words borrowed from other languages such as English, French, Portuguese and Akan, with which it has come in contact.

Ewe is a grammatical word order language with basic SVO syntax (and subject and object are morphologically unmarked). Alternative orders of OSV, OVS and SOV are systematically linked to this basic one, determined by semantic and pragmatic factors. In general, the possessor precedes the possessum. 'Alienable' possession is indicated by a possessive marker $\phi e'$ which is interposed between the possessor and possessum. Body parts have 'alienable' syntax. Relative clauses and other modifiers generally follow the noun head.

Ewe is a serialising language. In a serial verbal construction, each verb in the series has the same subject, tense, mood and aspect. Subject is only expressed with the first verb. In some of the serial verbal constructions, serialising

connectives may be used to link the verbs: he' for simultaneous or sequential relations and da' for purpose relations.

The language has both prepositions, which evolved from verbs, and postpositions, most of which have evolved from body part nominals, for expressing relational meanings. Ewe also has a number of utterance particles which signal the illocutionary force or the attitude of the speaker. In addition there are particles for indicating the status of the information units and for framing discourse.

1.3 Theoretical and methodological preliminaries

This study is concerned with the description of a natural language, Ewe. Linguists have for a long time been concerned with the task of linguistic description. I believe most linguists would agree with Lehmann ((1989: 135 - 136) and in press) that language description consists of the following four parts:

- description of the language system
- lexicon
- text corpora
- historical and social situation of the language

Many would also agree that 'the description of the language system comprises:

- a. the phonology with its interface to phonetics and orthography
- b. the grammar *stricto sensu*, i.e. morphology and syntax
- c. the semantics with its interface to pragmatics and stylistics.'

(Lehmann 1989: 136)

These are the levels of linguistic analysis that have been recognised over the centuries. However different linguists go about the task of describing these levels in different ways. Underlying the different ways that are employed in the description of the language system are different theoretical positions with respect to the nature and the task of linguistic investigation. For example, are the levels of language autonomous or should they be described in a unified way? The several approaches that have been taken with respect to the language system in terms of its description are outlined in this section. This is followed by a characterisation of the 'ecumenical' rather than eclectic approach adopted in this descriptive study of Ewe. Since this approach is based on the assumption that language is a tool for expressing meanings and therefore should be described primarily from that point of view, the method for investigating and representing the meanings of linguistic devices is explained. This part of the chapter ends with a recapitulation of the aims of the study and a statement of the organisation of the thesis.

1.3.1 Different approaches to grammatical description.

Theories of grammar and approaches to grammatical description and analysis have one or more of the following perspectives:

structural, formal
functional, discourse-pragmatic
notional, semantic, cognitive
diachronic

I have listed these perspectives to reflect the relationships between the different approaches. I will attempt to outline the dominant characteristics of each of these perspectives.

1.3.1.1 Structural and formal approaches

Nichols (1984: 97) compares structural, formal and functional grammars with clarity and is worth quoting in extenso:

Structural grammar describes such grammatical structures as phonemes, morphemes, syntactic relations, semantics, interclause relations, constituents, dependencies, sentences and occasionally (...) texts and discourse. Formal grammar analyzes the same range of phenomena, but does so by constructing a formal model of language. The model itself is the object of description, and the language phenomena only the means of description. (...) Functional grammar broadens its purview beyond these structural phenomena. It analyzes grammatical structure, as do formal and structural grammar, but it also analyzes the entire communicative situation: (...) Functionalists maintain that the communicative situation motivates, constrains, explains or otherwise determines grammatical structure. Functional grammar (...) differs from formal and structural grammar in that it purports not to model but to explain; and the explanation is grounded in the communicative situation.

From these observations by Nichols, one gets an inkling of the underlying claims associated with the different approaches. A structural approach is concerned with describing language structure. Fries (1952) is a good example of a structural approach to English. The main dissatisfaction about such a grammar is that it does not provide any explanations.

Formal theories and approaches to grammar are concerned with modelling, be they principle-based as most theories are today, or rule-based as Transformational grammar was. The current influential models are GB, LFG, and GPSG (see Sells 1985 and Horrocks 1988 for an overview of these theories). In spite of their differences, they share their concern for formalism and they seek to explain linguistic phenomena in terms of mental or cognitive foundations of language rather than the social basis of language. These models also share the view that syntax is autonomous. This view is not shared by

many linguists today. As Hagège (1990:167) puts it: 'The autonomy of syntax is a fantasy'. The interdependence of linguistic levels and the non-autonomy of syntax is what many semantic and cognitive approaches to grammar have in common. As will be noted below, the present study is founded on the view that grammar is neither arbitrary nor autonomous.

There are some formal approaches to grammar however that make use of functional explanations. This is the approach taken by people like Kuno (see e.g. 1987), Petr Sgall and his colleagues (see e.g. Sgall et al. 1986) and Starosta in Lexicase theory (see e.g. Starosta 1988 and Ameka 1989 for its review). These approaches fall into the same trap that functional theories fall into, namely, they circumvent semantics even though a semantic approach to grammar is not incompatible with a functional one.

1.3.1.2 Functional approaches

There are several functional approaches to grammar (see Nichols 1984 for an overview and see Dirven and Fried 1987). One can mention here Dik's Functional Grammar (see e.g. Dik 1978 and several publications in the Functional Grammar Series of Foris Publishers), Foley and Van Valin's Role and Reference Grammar (see e.g. Foley and Van Valin 1984, Van Valin in press and references there) and Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (e.g. Halliday 1985). What unites these functional approaches is the belief that language has the form it has because of the uses to which it is put in communication. One of the problems of functional approaches is that they fail to make a clear distinction between 'function' and 'meaning'. There are several senses of 'function' in use in the literature such as function equals 'use' or function equals 'context' (see Nichols 1984 for a summary of these senses). However functionalists tend to circumvent semantics and attempt to map structures directly onto the communicative situation (see Wilkins 1989: 64). They tend to assume that function is meaning even though it is clear that different structures can have the same function but different meaning (see Ameka 1987 [MS]). Some of them even argue that one cannot define the semantics of grammatical categories or describe grammatical constructions semantically (see Halliday 1988).

In my view there is a difference between the function of a linguistic structure and its meaning. For instance, a language may have a number of forms for asking questions, but each of these forms will have its distinct meaning. A semantic approach to linguistic structures will not stop at indicating that the form has a question function, it will go on to show what the forms mean. I also take the view that grammatical constructions and categories can be described from a semantic perspective.

One particular variety of functional approaches to language should be noted. It may be called the discourse-pragmatic approach to syntax. This approach is exemplified in the works of Givón, Paul Hopper and Sandra Thompson and their colleagues (see e.g. Givón 1979a, 1979b, 1983, 1984, 1988; Hopper and Thompson 1980, 1984, 1985; Du Bois 1987; Fox and Thompson 1990; Thompson 1988). These people are concerned with the discourse basis of grammatical properties because they believe that everything finds its explanation in discourse. In the words of Givón:

Syntax cannot be understood or explained without reference to BOTH its evolution ex-discourse and the communicative parameters and principles that govern both its rise out of the pragmatic mode and its selective use along the register of human communication. (Givón 1979:109).

This perspective is not incompatible with a semantic approach, but most of the time the meaning of linguistic structures is subordinated to its use in discourse. It seems to me that linguistic structures are used in discourse because of the meaning they have and because of the meaning a speaker wants to convey. From this point of view semantic approaches to grammar are needed to lay the foundation for explaining the discourse uses of various items.

1.3.1.3 Semantic perspectives on grammar

There are a number of approaches to grammar that may be characterised as semantic. They all seem to share the belief that '(...) we cannot understand grammar, and the way speakers use grammar, unless we approach the matter from a semantic angle' (Dixon 1984:583). Although what has come to be known today as cognitive grammar could be said to fall under this domain, I will devote a separate section to it. Here, I will only outline some of the tenets within this broad perspective which are relevant to our concerns. The common feature of the semantic approaches is that they insist on seeking semantic explanations for grammatical phenomena. They also share the view that grammar is not arbitrary, but is semantically motivated. The methods of attaining these goals differ from researcher to researcher.

The basic assumption, however, of the semantics of grammar approach is very aptly stated by Wierzbicka (1988:3) as follows:

Grammar is not semantically arbitrary. On the contrary, grammatical distinctions are motivated (in the synchronic sense) by semantic distinctions; every grammatical construction is a vehicle of

a certain semantic structure; and this is its *raison d'être* and the criterion determining its range of use.

Similar views are echoed in the works of people like Jakobson, Bolinger 1977, Gárcia 1975, Dixon 1982, 1991, Haiman 1985, Sangster and Waugh 1978, Fillmore, Kay and O'Connor 1988 among others. The other dimension of the semantic basis of grammar approach is that a speaker chooses a particular construction according to the meaning s/he wants to convey (cf. Gárcia 1975:300; Bolinger 1977: ix; Kirsner 1985).

Notional grammar may be said to fall within the semantic approaches. It is the form of description that occurs in traditional grammar. It is said to be semantically determined or rather ontological and universal (see Lyons 1989, Anderson 1989 on recent reflections on notional grammar).

The notion of "grammatical construction" which appears in the title of this work seems to be central to semantic and cognitive approaches. But one framework derives its name, so to speak, from it. This framework is that of Construction Grammar (see e.g. Fillmore, Kay and O'Connor 1988, Kay 1990, Fillmore and Kay 1987). Construction Grammar seeks 'to characterise all the structures of the language as opposed to those that fit some classical corpus of standard problems.' (Fillmore and Kay 1987:1). It finds the syntax - semantics and semantics - pragmatics distinctions and interfaces usually assumed in linguistic literature inadequate. Furthermore, "constructions" are defined 'by identifying features of form and pairing these with features of content' (ibid). The features of form include the syntactic patterns and whatever morphological or prosodic features are necessary to identify the construction. Features of content in this perspective pertain to information that is relevant for the semantic interpretation of the construction and for the use of the construction to achieve particular pragmatic ends.

In many ways the methodology of Construction Grammar is akin to the way grammatical constructions are analysed in this study. What is different is the way in which meanings of constructions are represented (see below).

1.3.1.4 Cognitive grammar

Cognitive grammar can be considered a special variety of semantic approaches to grammar. The notion of grammatical construction is used extensively in this framework as well (see e.g. Lakoff 1987, Langacker 1987 Rudzka-Ostyn ed. 1988, Taylor 1989). The different approaches that fall under cognitive grammar share a number of assumptions. They claim that grammar is not autonomous. As Langacker (1988:5) put it: 'grammar is intrinsically symbolic, having no independent existence apart from semantic and phonological structure'. From

this point of view the present study shares some of the assumptions of cognitive grammar.

However, there are at least two reservations which one may express about cognitive grammar methodology. First, analyses conducted in the cognitive grammar framework with its reliance on prototype theory are not readily verifiable. They seem to be unfalsifiable since it is impossible to construct a counter example. Any example which seems to be counter evidence to the analysis can be explained away as an extension of the prototype. (It is interesting to observe in this connection that there is a re-thinking going on in Psychology and Cognitive Science in general on the role of prototypes in categorisation - the so-called post Roschian era).

The second reservation concerns the way in which meanings of linguistic constructions and items are represented in cognitive grammar. Typically meanings are represented in image schemas and metaphorical models which are not readily interpretable without further verbal explications. Metaphors are semantically complex and their use in definitions or explanations obscure rather than elucidate the meaning of the construction in question, a point noted by Aristotle long ago (cf. Aristotle Topica IV; and see Chapter 7 for illustration).

1.3.1.5 Grammaticalization

It has become increasingly clear that grammaticalisation, that is the development of grammatical morphemes and constructions, can play an important role in explaining synchronic grammatical facts. As Bybee (1987:11) noted: '... to understand grammar, grammatical morphemes and grammatical meaning we should understand how they evolve, both how they come into existence and how they continue to develop' (cf. Bybee 1988). Several studies have appeared in recent times that reflect on grammar from a diachronic or dynamic perspective (see for example Traugott and Heine (in press) and see also Heine and Reh (1984) on African languages). While I accept the view that grammaticalisation can help us understand grammar (see Chapter 9 for an example), it seems that once grammaticalisation is completed the grammaticalised form assumes a specific semantics which determines its range of use (see Chapter 7 on possession for further elaboration).

In the foregoing, I have outlined the major perspectives that are adopted in the description of grammatical structure and linguistic structure in general. In spite of the fact that there is a plethora of perspectives one can adopt in describing a language, they are not mutually exclusive. They seem to be supplementary viewpoints on grammar. It should be noted that the

practitioners of each approach all seek to understand grammar and linguistic structure (see the parallelism in the statements quoted from Givón, Dixon and Bybee in earlier sections). It should be observed that all the approaches above seek in one way or another to make statements about typological and universal features of language. It seems to me that for a proper and holistic understanding of grammar and linguistic structure one should draw on the unifying features of all these viewpoints. This should be done not in an eclectic way, that is picking and choosing a framework when it suits the analysts' whims, but in an 'ecumenical' way. That is, in a way that draws on the strengths of the various approaches and presents them in an integrated fashion.

1.3.2 An 'ecumenical' approach

Jespersen ([1924] 1964:345) observed several years ago that 'grammatical phenomena can and should be approached from different (often supplementary) points of view'. He also argued that a grammar can be written in one of two ways viz: "we may start from without or from within; in the first part ... we take a form as given and enquire into its meaning or function; in the second part ... we invert the process and take the meaning or function and ask how that is expressed in form ...the two parts supplement each other and together give a complete and perspicuous survey of the general facts of a language." (Jespersen [1924]1964:39 - 40; see also Lehmann 1987, 1989; Mosel 1990).

The perspective adopted in this study is very much in the spirit of Jespersen's views. First, it is assumed that semantics is the foundation of language. And it is assumed that "[l]anguage is an integrated system, where everything 'conspires' to convey meaning - words, grammatical constructions and illocutionary devices (including intonation). Accordingly linguistics falls naturally into three parts which could be called lexical semantics, grammatical semantics and illocutionary semantics" (Wierzbicka 1988: 1). In this study I take the view that each of these domains can be described along the lines suggested by Jespersen either from the point of view of the form or from the point of view of the function and meaning that the linguistic device may have. The approach taken here is a three step procedure. First, the broad domains of grammatical and illocutionary semantics are taken as the starting point. Then some functional domains are identified e.g. attribution, or possession or information packaging etc. We then ask how these are expressed in form in the language (Ewe). Having established the forms, we ask what the individual forms mean. Since the focus of this study is on grammatical constructions and illocutionary devices rather than lexical items the meanings of lexical forms as

such are not investigated. Thus in the chapter on adjectivals the emphasis is on the forms that express adjectival concepts and the mechanisms by which they are created. The investigation does not go on to spell out the meanings of the individual items. Another aspect of the approach adopted here is that an attempt is made at every stage to provide explanations for linguistic phenomena. This is the area in which the 'ecumenical' approach is more in evidence. Formal, functional, discourse-pragmatic, socio-cultural, diachronic, cognitive and semantic as well as typological and language universal explanations are offered where relevant for the linguistic structures described. These help to give a coherent picture of the language. It is hoped that through the use of the different approaches in an 'ecumenical' way one can present a 'natural' description of the language.

However, since primacy is given to semantics in this work, one needs to have a way of representing meanings. In the next section, the method of semantic description favoured in this study is explained.

1.3.3 Natural semantic metalanguage and linguistic description

This section provides an overview of the method of semantic analysis adopted in this study which may be described as the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) and reductive paraphrase approach. Essentially, the method of analysis involves paraphrasing the linguistic item being described - a lexical item or a grammatical morpheme; a syntactic construction; or an illocutionary device - in a metalanguage of hypothetical semantic primitives based on a natural language. The principles governing the method and the current trends within the NSM programme are discussed and exemplified. It is argued that the method has a wide range of application and offers some hope for empirical and descriptive semantics.

The underlying assumptions of the framework could be summarised in the words of its chief advocate, Anna Wierzbicka, as follows:

Language is a tool for expressing meanings. The meanings we express constitute complex and culture-specific configurations of a restricted number of elementary concepts - conceptual building blocks. To be able to decode meanings with precision, to state them, to compare them across language boundaries, to study their growing complexity in child language, and so on, we must know what these elementary units are. To discover them, we must proceed by trial and error. A revealing semantic description is impossible without a well justified set of semantic primitives. But a set of well justified primitives cannot be found by mere theorizing. It can only be found on the basis of large scale lexicographic research. (Wierzbicka 1989a:118).

Since the present study is interested in discovering the meanings that are encapsulated in grammatical constructions and illocutionary devices and in the comparison of these meanings within Ewe and where possible across languages, this framework provides a useful descriptive tool for our purposes. The study may further provide empirical evidence for some of the assumptions that underlie the methodology.

1.3.3.1 Principles of the method.

There are two main methodological issues that any semantic framework must address: the first is what the metalanguage of semantic description should be, and the second concerns how linguistic items should be analysed. Different frameworks have different answers for these questions. Componential analysis, for example, makes use of an ad hoc set of binary features which theoretically can be multiplied ad infinitum as its metalanguage (cf. Burling 1969) and decomposition as its method.

The NSM approach has sometimes been described as a ‘semantic primitives and reductive paraphrase approach’ (see e.g. Wierzbicka 1972, 1980a). The two parts of this description constitute the framework’s response to the fundamental questions of semantic analysis. As can be gleaned from the quote above, the metalanguage of explications, or definitions, in this framework comprises a set of elementary semantic units or primes. In addition, the primitives are not just a set of abstract symbols based on formal logic, for instance, they are derived from natural language itself, hence the label Natural Semantic Metalanguage (Goddard 1989). The appropriateness of using a natural language metalanguage for semantic analysis has been commented on by several people (cf. Allan 1986 vol 1:326ff). It has at least one advantage over formal languages since the formal language has to be translated into natural language for it to be understood by ordinary speakers of the language. On this point Lyons (1977:12) notes as follows: ‘Any formalisation is parasitic upon the ordinary everyday use of language in that it must be understood intuitively on the basis of ordinary language.’

Before turning to the primitives themselves, the claim of the method must be stressed: complex terms should be defined in simple terms not vice versa. Since the metalanguage consists of a relatively small set of terms which are simple, it is hoped that the definitions would not be circular. The definitions themselves are paraphrases which should be substitutable for the analysandum (in stages, if required) *salva significatione* that is, without a change in the sense. This constitutes the test of the adequacy of the definition (see Wierzbicka in press c).

These paraphrases are arrived at by decomposition, hence the term ‘reductive paraphrase’. As Wierzbicka (1987c:12) explains: “The ‘reduction’ in question consists in a radical pruning of the vocabulary which is allowed to appear in the definitions.” In this framework therefore the method of analysis is intimately linked with the metalanguage. Decomposition as a method of semantic analysis is quite widespread in linguistics and lexicography and it is an aspect of NSM methodology which is less controversial (cf. Geeraerts’ (1989:588) remark that ‘there can be no semantic description without some sort of decompositional analysis.’) Perhaps a more controversial aspect of the method is the natural semantic metalanguage, whose features are outlined next.

1.3.3.2 The metalanguage:

A foundational principle of NSM methodology is the Leibnizian assumption that if nothing can be understood by itself nothing at all can ever be understood: *si nihil per se concipitur, nihil omnino concipietur*. (see Wierzbicka 1980a). In other words, there must be some concepts which are clear and simple in terms of which other complex terms can be defined. Unless there are such concepts, definitions would always be circular. One should therefore search for and discover these simple and clear concepts. In one sense then research within the NSM framework can be seen as a continuation of the project which Leibniz started - the search for the ‘alphabet of human thought’ - a *lingua mentalis* (see Wierzbicka 1972 and 1980a for example for the historical and philosophical background to her programme).

Apart from Leibniz, NSM research also adheres to the principles of a good definition spelled out centuries ago by Aristotle in his *Topica* (VI. 3). He advocated that one should “make definitions through terms that are *prior* and *more intelligible*. For the reason why the definition is rendered is to make known the term stated and we make things known by taking not any random terms but terms that are *prior* and *more intelligible* (...) accordingly it is clear that a man [or woman F. A.] who does not define through terms of this kind has not defined at all”.

The major question is: how does one discover these simple and clear terms? Wierzbicka’s answer and approach is that they can be discovered by trial and error. One has to construct a set and then experiment with it in descriptive work across languages until one hits upon the optimal set. There are however some conditions which the elements which constitute the hypothetical set of primitives must satisfy:

First it is required that each of the elements must be clear. That is, it must be self-illuminating and comprehensible in itself.

Second, the item must be simple. That is it must be indefinable. Any attempt to define such a term must ultimately lead to circularity or obscurity. It is argued for example that 'I', one of the better established candidates, cannot be decomposed with paraphrases such as 'the person who says this' because it is semantically inadequate and because the relative pronoun 'who' has an 'I' in it hence circularity (cf. Wierzbicka in press a and b).

Third, the primitive must be a universal word. That is the semantic unit must have linguistic exponents in all languages. This allows for translatability of concepts across languages (cf. Grace 1987 who takes an extreme position that there cannot be any cross-language translation, see also Givón 1988 and Hagège 1990 on some views of cross-language translatability).

Fourth, it is required that the term must prove itself in extensive descriptive work as a 'versatile building block' for other concepts. In other words it should be a useful concept in explicating terms from several semantic domains. Thus FEEL which was proposed as a primitive in 1972 by Wierzbicka has since been dropped from the list partly because it is definable and partly because it is not a versatile building block. It is useful mainly in explicating words from the emotions domain.

Wierzbicka began her programme of the search for semantic primitives in the mid sixties inspired, I believe, by the work of her teacher Andrzej Bogusławski (see e.g. Bogusławski 1970). Different versions of the hypothetical primitives have been proposed and experimented with in semantic investigations of various languages by Wierzbicka and her colleagues (see for example Ameka 1986, 1987; Chappell 1980, 1986a and b; Evans 1985, 1991; Goddard 1979, 1985, 1989; Harkins 1986; Hudson 1986; Neumann 1987 and Wilkins 1986, 1989, 1991 and the works of Wierzbicka). Currently, the hypothetical set of primitives comprises the following (see Wierzbicka in press a and b):

'Pronouns' <i>ego,</i> <i>tu,</i> <i>quis,</i> <i>quid,</i>	'Classifiers' <i>genus,</i> <i>pars</i>	'Determiners' <i>hic,</i> <i>ipse,</i> <i>duo,</i> <i>omnis</i>	
'Predicates' <i>velle,</i> <i>nolle,</i> <i>dicere,</i> <i>cogitare,</i> <i>scire,</i> <i>facere,</i> <i>fieri</i> <i>bonus,</i> <i>malus</i> <i>magnus</i> <i>parvus .</i>	'Modals' <i>potest,</i> <i>(non)</i> <i>si</i>	'Linkers' <i>sicut,</i> <i>propter(ea)</i>	'Place' and 'Time' <i>locus (ubi)</i> <i>tempus (quando)</i> <i>post,</i> <i>(sub)</i>
	'Intensifier' <i>valde</i>		

In talking about the equivalents of the primitives across languages, it is important to note that the equivalence between the terms is meant to be semantic rather than pragmatic. For example, Wierzbicka (in press b) suggests that although there are several forms for the primitive 'I' in Thai, for instance, its semantic equivalent is *chán*. The other forms have added pragmatic nuances which are not part of 'I'.

In addition, it is allowed that a language may have a number of variants or 'allomorphs' or 'allolexemes' as exponents of the same conceptual unit. Thus in the Latin list above *quando* and *tempus* are treated as variants of the same semantic unit. Similarly, *-tai* and *hoshi* in Japanese could be thought of as allolexemes of the semantic unit WANT.

My own investigations have led me to postulate the following Ewe version of the same conceptual set of primitives:

Table 1.3 Ewe version of NSM lexicon

'Pronouns' <i>nye,</i> <i>wò,</i> <i>ame</i> <i>nu' (nañe)'</i>	'Classifiers' <i>tɔ̀gbi,</i> <i>akpa'</i>	'Determiners' <i>sia,</i> <i>nenema,</i> <i>eve,</i> <i>kafa~</i>
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'Predicates'	'Modals'	'Linkers'	'Place and Time'
di',	ne',	abe'... ene',	afi'(teɸe'),
gbe',	(ao),	ta	ɣeyiyi,
gblɔ, (do), (be),	te ŋu'		megbe'
bu,			gɔme
nya'	'Intensifier'		
wɔ,	ɲufɔ'		
dzɔ,			
nyo',			
baɗa,			
ga',			
vi'			

Each of the hypothetical primitives in the metalanguage have their own mini-syntax or combinatorial properties. For instance, it is suggested that the personal 'pronouns' in the lexicon could combine with the personal predicates to yield configurations like this:

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{c} \text{I} \\ \text{YOU} \\ \text{SOMEONE} \end{array} \right\} \left\{ \begin{array}{c} \text{think (S)} \\ \text{say (S)} \\ \text{know (S)} \end{array} \right\}$$

Other combinations involving other elements are:

because of this
 this someone i.e. this person
 a kind of something
 something happened like this
 I did something etc.

The Ewe equivalents of these combinations of elements are:

eʃiata
 ame sia
 naŋe ʔɔgbi
 naŋe ʔdzɔ ale
 me-wɔ naŋe' etc.

Because of the cross-language translatability of the primitives and their combinatorial properties, meanings of different constructions in various

languages can be easily rendered in different languages and compared (see the appendix to Chapter 10 for an Ewe version of explications in that Chapter). The method continues to be used to provide insights into the cultural and linguistic universe of different languages. Its results and applications testify to the fact that the programme has something to offer empirical semantics. Some of these results are outlined in the next section.

1.3.3.3 Applications and exemplification

Indeed there are several uses for primitives, not only in linguistics but in other disciplines as well. Smith (1985:134) summarises the motivation for conceptual primitives as follows:

To the practising lexicographer, the search for primitives is motivated by a need to formalise a metalanguage for definitions and to eliminate circularity in the set of definitions in a dictionary. To the linguist part of the motivation for positing primitives is to be able to make generalisations about the semantics of a language. The anthropologist is interested in comparing concepts and concept structures across culture types (...). The psychologist would like to identify primitives which reflect the structure of human intelligence.

Thus descriptions couched in a metalanguage of semantic primitives can allow for the dissemination of findings across disciplines. Consequently, a method of analysis that is based on primitives would have a potentially wide range of applicability.

It is assumed in NSM that meanings cannot be compared within the same language, let alone across languages if they are not stated in terms which would allow for such a comparison. The method is very useful for displaying and discerning minute differences between closely related elements within one language and across languages. The practical value of this approach to semantic description for language learning and the teaching of second and foreign languages should be quite evident.

Let us illustrate some of these points with examples of analyses of different linguistic structures from different domains and different languages. Consider the semantic representations posited for the Japanese *ni-* and *o-* causatives which have received great attention in the literature (see Wierzbicka 1988:238 - 240 for detailed justification):

X *ga* Y *o* V-*asetu* ==>
 X did something
 Y did V because of that

not because of anything else

This formula applies to sentences in which the causee is animate as in the following:

Taroo ga Ziroo o ik-ase-ta
 Taroo SUB Ziroo DO go-CAUS-PAST
 'Taroo made Ziroo go'

For *o-* causative sentences in which the causee is inanimate, a different formula is proposed to account for them. Consider this example and the explication below:

*Taroo ga yasai o (*ni) kusaraseta* ==>
 'Taroo let/caused the vegetables to rot.'
 X did something
 V happened to Y (the vegetables rotted) because of that
 not because of anything else

For the *ni-* causative, Wierzbicka proposes the following semantic representation:

X ga Y ni ikaseta ==>
 'X had/let/got Y to go'
 X did/said something to Y
 Y did V because of that
 Y wanted it

A comparison of these three formulae shows the differences between the constructions. At one level the difference between the *ni-* and *o-* causatives is quite apparent. The volition of the causee is crucial for the *ni-* causative. What is even more interesting is to compare the meaning of say the *ni-* causative in Japanese with the meaning of its closest translation equivalent in English. For instance the *ni-* causative may be rendered with an English *have* causative construction, but when one compares their meanings, it is obvious that each of the structures encodes specific meanings which are not identical with each other. The NSM approach makes such comparisons possible. Compare the explication of an English *have* causative with that of the Japanese *ni-* causative (see Wierzbicka 1988:241):

X had Y do Z
 Hilary had Robin type the letter ==>
 X wanted this: Y will do Z
 X said this: I want this: Y will do Z

Y did Z because of that

X knew this:

Y will not say this: I don't want it

Y cannot say it

Similar analyses could be cited from different domains of the lexicon such as the meanings of natural kinds and cultural kinds, kinship and the meanings of key cultural concepts of different societies (see e.g. Wierzbicka 1980a, 1985, 1989b and in press d and e)

But perhaps one last example from the area of pragmatics would suffice to illustrate the methodology. Consider these explications proposed for the titles of address *Mr X*, in English, *Monsieur* in French and *Pan* in Polish (see Wierzbicka (1989c:744 - 750 for discussion):

Mr Brown

I want to speak to you the way people speak
to men whom they don't know well
and the way people don't speak to men whom they don't know
I want to show that I feel something good towards you
of the kind that people show they feel
toward people whom they don't know well

Monsieur

I want to speak to you the way people speak
to men whom they don't know or whom they know well
or to whom they don't want to speak the way people speak
to children and to people whom they know well
I want to show that I feel something good toward you
of the kind that people show they feel
toward people whom they don't know well

Pan

I want to speak to you the way people speak
to men whom they don't know or whom they don't know well
or to whom they don't want to speak the way people speak
to children or to people whom they know well
I want to show that I feel something good toward you
of the kind that people show they feel
toward people whom they don't know well
and whom they think of as people who can do what they want

A comparison of these explications reveals that although these titles are rough translation equivalents, each encodes a culture-specific meaning. In addition, the explications capture the prototype concept of these terms and makes predictions about the possible range of their use. For instance, the formula for Mr X in English predicts that the addressee must be vaguely at least known to the speaker for this term of address to be used. This is not the case for *Monsieur*, for example. This difference follows from the fact that *Monsieur* can be used by itself to address a stranger in the street while *Mr* cannot (at least not in the standard dialects of English) be used in such a context. Note that *Mr* is always used with a surname, while *Monsieur* can be used without a name. Such a difference, though subtle, is an important piece of knowledge that language learners would have to be aware of. The usefulness of a method of analysis that is able to capture and lay bare these minute but significant differences for language pedagogy and contrastive linguistics cannot be over-emphasised.

1.3.3.4 Format of explications

The reductive paraphrase of the meanings of linguistic items in NSM are called explications or semantic formulae. There is an assumed structure of these explications which is not always made explicit in the NSM literature. In this section, I would like to clarify some of these assumptions as I apply them in the explications that are used in this study.

Indeed this aspect of NSM methodology has been criticised for some time. Part of the reason for no clear statement on the issue is that NSM research concentrated on the lexicon for a long time (see Goddard 1989). The metalanguage only came with a lexicon and no explicit statement on its syntax nor on the format of the explications (see e.g. Wierzbicka 1972 and 1980a). As McCawley (1983:655) pointed out: 'W[ierzbicka] does not make fully clear what formal nature she ascribes to her analyses. Are they to be regarded as strings of words? as trees? as dependency structures?' This is a question about the layering of components in the explications. The syntax of the primitives has now received some attention as indicated above (see also Wierzbicka in press a, and b). What has not yet been explicitly stated as far as I know is what the principles are for the format of explications. The status of punctuation marks, for example the colon; the role of indentations etc. have never been spelled out, yet explications make heavy use of them. As Maclaran (1984:145) observed: 'W[ierzbicka] is very careful how she sets her semantic representations on the page and how she punctuates them, using several degrees of indentations, commas, semi-colons, colons and full stops. These are unexplained yet are presumably important in showing degrees of syntactic relatedness.'

For the purposes of this study and in general, a line in an explication is meant to represent a component of the meaning. But a component of meaning may have a complex structure. Very often such meaning components contain another proposition. This situation is represented by colon and indentation where necessary. For example, in some of the explications cited above one line of the explication contained a further meaning chunk. In such a case what is embedded is introduced by a colon as in the following:

X said this: I want this: Y will do Z

In this component of meaning of the English causative construction, colons are used to show that what follows is embedded within the first one. Thus there are two levels of embedding. Another way of laying the same component on the page is by indentation as follows:

X said this:
 I want this:
 Y will do Z

The single line representation is preferred for this particular component because it is more economical in terms of space. However some components have elaborate contents which have to be set out on separate lines as in the alternative representation. This happens especially in spelling out the thoughts or feelings of people. Indentation and colons therefore have the same function of indicating embedding. Of course if a whole meaning component cannot go on one line, on the next line the rest of the component is also indented. In other words each component is treated as though it were a paragraph. Sometimes individual components are labelled alphabetically for ease of reference.

Commas are sometimes used to set molecules that indicate connections apart from the rest of the component. For example, a component of the following kind may be punctuated with a comma:

Because of this, X did something

Ordinary brackets (...) are used to indicate optional items; either a component of meaning or an item within a component as is the practice elsewhere in linguistics. Square brackets [...], however, are used to show that a particular component in an explication is not clearly part of the meaning of the item being analysed. Variable arguments in explications are indicated by capital letters like A, U, X, Y, Z, W etc. These comments, I believe, may facilitate an understanding of the explications.

1.3.3.5 Further issues in NSM practice

NSM explications hardly ever make use of only the hypothetical set of primitives as the defining metalexicon. This is evident even from the few explications that have been presented above as illustrations of the method. It is demonstrated in a systematic way in Wierzbicka's semantic dictionary of English speech act verbs (1987). At that stage there were about twenty hypothetical primitives but the metalexicon of the dictionary had more than 170 elements. Wierzbicka defends the use of such an enhanced metalexicon as being necessary for practical purposes. She observes that ideally and from a purely semantic point of view, the semantic metalanguage is a minimal one containing only the hypothetical primitives and their associated mini-grammar. 'From a practical point of view, however, a mini-language based exclusively on the "alphabet of human thought" and on the mini-grammar associated with it is far from ideal, because semantic formulae couched in such a mini-language are necessarily very long and hard to read. For purposes of readability and intelligibility, less radical versions of a semantic metalanguage must often be used. For purposes of language teaching, lexicography or descriptive grammar, a metalexicon of one hundred or two hundred items is undoubtedly more useful than a truly minimal one of fifteen or twenty.' (Wierzbicka 1988:11). It should be remembered that the length of explications is inversely proportional to the size of the defining metalexicon. There is thus always a tension between what is theoretically desirable and what is practically and pragmatically useful. Nevertheless, all the terms which are used in definitions are assumed to be relatively simple 'molecules' which can or would have been defined elsewhere.

Since this is a descriptive grammar in the broadest sense I have not restricted myself to only the terms in the NSM mini-lexicon. I have used an enhanced defining vocabulary which contains several molecules which are judged to be relatively simple and which have been defined in other works. In particular, words like mother, father, man, woman, married etc. appear in explications in Chapter 13 on address. Although these are definable, they are plausible universal terms at least in their primary senses.

Another issue that deserves to be mentioned is that in the NSM literature there is no clear articulation of how different elements in a construction especially a grammatical construction contribute to the overall semantics of the structure. That is, not much attention has been paid to compositionality, although it is recognised that language is an integrated system in which words, constructions and illocutionary devices 'conspire' to convey meaning (see Wierzbicka (1988:1), and see Wilkins 1986 for a dynamic view of interpreting NSM explications and Andrews 1990 for an initial attempt to resolve the issue of compositionality in NSM). In the present study, I have informally alluded to

what elements contribute what components of the meaning of the structure where necessary. This is however far from making any claims about the compositionality issue.

1.3.3.6 Summary

In the foregoing, an attempt has been made to summarise the basic principles underlying the Natural Semantic Metalanguage approach to semantic and linguistic description, in general. The applications of the method and the problems that are associated with it were also outlined. Some of the claims and philosophical underpinnings may be controversial; some of the analyses carried out within the framework may be challenged, but it has to be remembered that these are always put forward as hypotheses which should be tested and modified as required. However it cannot be denied that the framework is attractive as a tool for the description of the semantics of natural languages.

It remains to be stated however that NSM method is a unified approach to linguistic meaning. The meanings of any linguistic device and strategy can be explicated within this framework including intonation (see Deakin 1983). In the present work we are mostly concerned with grammatical semantics and illocutionary semantics, we therefore approach the task for elucidating the semantics of Ewe grammatical constructions and illocutionary devices using the principles of NSM methodology.

1.4 The aims and organisation of the thesis

This thesis primarily provides an overview of Ewe grammar and a detailed investigation of the meanings of specific grammatical constructions and illocutionary devices in the language. It may thus be viewed as a study in the grammatical and illocutionary semantics of Ewe. The basic idea behind the study is that every grammatical and illocutionary construction or device encodes a certain meaning which can be discovered and stated so that the meanings of different devices can be compared not only within one language but across language boundaries. In addition, an attempt is made to establish correlations between forms and their meanings and to explain the usage of grammatical forms from different perspectives. Priority is given to semantic, functional and discourse-pragmatic concerns although formal constraints and diachronic considerations are also invoked in the explanations. The specific constructions investigated were chosen either for their theoretical and typological interest and/or because they have not been very well studied in Ewe grammar. The illocutionary devices have been investigated here because of their general neglect in many linguistic descriptions.

A major concern throughout the thesis is to characterise the communicative competence of a native speaker of Ewe. From a practical point of view, the study may contribute towards an understanding of a communicative grammar of Ewe, not only of its grammatical constructions but also of its illocutionary devices which constitute its illocutionary grammar. In terms of general theoretical issues, the study may constitute an empirical base for an understanding of the nature of 'grammatical semantics', the discourse functions of grammatical constructions and in general the non-arbitrariness of grammar.

The body of the thesis is divided into four parts. The first is an overview of the structural grammar of Ewe. The other three are organised on the basis of three (macro) functions (Halliday's semantic metafunctions) of language: propositional, textual and interpersonal (cf. e.g. Halliday 1985, Fawcett 1980, Duthie 1984). Part Two is concerned with the grammatical coding of some cognitive domains: qualities or property concepts as coded by adjectivals (Chapter 5); aspectual meanings (Chapter 6); and possession (Chapter 7). Part Three examines the grammatical resources available to the Ewe speaker for structuring and packaging information in a clause. The constructions investigated here encode the different perspectives a speaker can assume with respect to how to present the message being conveyed or with respect to how a participant in the situation is conceptualised. The structures described are: scene-setting topic constructions (Chapter 8); 'nyá-inverse' constructions (Chapter 9) and 'experiencer' constructions (Chapter 10). In Part Four, illocutionary devices and constructions used in interpersonal communication are investigated: modes of address (Chapter 13); interactional speech formulae (Chapter 14) and interjections (Chapter 15). These are preceded by a discussion of the ethnography of speaking Ewe (Chapter 11). There is also an exploratory survey of linguistic routines from a general theoretical and descriptive point of view in Chapter 12.

It should be pointed out that the organisation of the material around the semantic functions of propositional, textual and interpersonal or illocutionary is for descriptive convenience. The meaning of any utterance in context has components of meaning that relate to these functions simultaneously (cf. Hagege 1990: 163 ff on the three viewpoints theory of an utterance). However each of the topics discussed under the broad functions can be viewed as having a dominant feature that can be described in propositional, textual or illocutionary terms. This thesis could in fact have been designated "A propositional, textual and illocutionary grammar of Ewe". If one wanted to be extravagant one could add 'structural' somewhere. I decided against such a title because it might give a false impression to some people about its contents. For instance, the treatment of topics in Part Three does not conform with the

ideas people have about a textual grammar. I have approached the topics in Parts Two and Three more from the view of the lexico-grammatical resources that serve a particular function and what they mean than from a purely discourse perspective.

It may be useful to state here that people familiar with Ewe grammar can skip Part One. Each of the chapters in Parts Two and Three can be read independently and in any order. However it is useful to read the chapters in Part Four in the order in which they appear. As is well known an academic thesis is never quite what the author envisioned it to be. I would like to share some of the regrets I have about this work with the reader by way of conclusion. I regret that I have had to cut back on what I have included in the thesis. It was my intention to provide a comprehensive structural grammar in part one and to provide detailed comments on the semantics of the constructions which were not going to be treated in the other parts. For reasons of space, this has not been possible. What I have provided is more or less a sketch grammar of Ewe. I have also had to put on hold three topics that I had intended to include in Parts Two and Three. Thus a chapter on comparison which should have appeared as a chapter in Part Two has been left out. Similarly, two chapters on focus constructions and intensifiers respectively have had to be eliminated from Part Three to meet the length requirements of a thesis. Nevertheless, I hope what has been included here can shed some light on the language of the Ewes of West Africa.

1.5 A note on orthography and linguistic examples

The normal orthography of Ewe based on the African alphabet is used throughout the thesis with the following modifications:

- i) all high tones are marked with an acute accent [´] in addition to the low tones which are customarily marked by a grave accent [˘].
- ii) ϕ is used for *f*
- iii) hyphens are introduced to show morpheme boundaries where relevant.

Apart from the correspondences outlined below between the orthographic symbols and their phonetic value, the rest of the letters have their ipa value.

- i) υ is the form for the phonetic β .
- ii) q is the orthographic form for *d* - a voiced apical postalveolar plosive.
- iii) ny is the orthographic form of η
- iv) γ is the form for the phonetic υ
- v) e is the symbol used for both [e] and [ə] which are allophones

Examples used in this study are drawn from both spoken and written standard Ewe. Some of the examples have been culled from prose fiction and drama written by native speakers of Ewe (see references). Others come from

radio and television news broadcasts and other programmes such as drama and discussions, and some also come from casual conversation. The author, being a native speaker, has also constructed some of the examples. Most of the examples have been checked with other native speakers for their acceptability and semantic interpretation. All interlinear and free translations are those of the author unless otherwise stated.

Chapter 2

PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY

2.1 Phonemes and their realisation

2.1.1 Consonants

The following chart (Fig 2.1) shows the inventory of Ewe consonants:

	bilabial	labio-dental	dental	apical alveolar	alveolo-palatal	palatal	velar	labial velar
plosives	p		t̪				k	kp
	b		d̪	ɖ			g	gb
nasals	m			n		ɲ	ŋ	
approximant						j	w	w
trill				r				
lateral				l ɭ				
fricatives	ɸ	f		s			x	
	β	v		z			ɸ	
affricates				ts	tʃ			
				ɖz	ɖʃ			

Fig 2.1 Ewe consonants

Some of these sounds are in complementary distribution with one another. In general nasals only occur before nasalised vowels. Thus [b] and [m]; and [d] and [n] are in complementary distribution. Similarly [ɲ] and [j] are allophones of the nasal phoneme. In the northern dialects the palatal approximant may be nasalised and in this case it alternates in free variation with the palatal nasal. Thus the word for 'be black' may be either [ʃɔ̃] or [nyɔ̃]

[ŋ] and [ɲ] occur before oral front vowels, and [w] occurs before oral non-front vowels. There is some dialect variation with respect to these sounds. In the southern dialects [w] only occurs before back vowels but in the northern dialects it may occur before the central vowel [a]. Thus the word meaning 'do' is **wɔ** in Anɔ and the standard dialect, but **wa** in the northern dialects. In the northern dialects also there is a nasalised allophone of the labial velar approximant which alternates in some contexts with the velar nasal. For instance, the word for 'worm' in the southern dialects is **ɲɔ̃** while in the northern dialects it may be realised as [wã̃]. Apparently the northern dialects are the more conservative dialects and the velar nasal seems to have had a narrower distribution in proto Gbe.

[l] and [ɭ] are in complementary distribution along the oral nasal dimension. (Compare: **lɔ** 'leopard' and **ɭɔ** 'remove from fire'). Both laterals are in complementary distribution with the trill. First, the trill does not occur as an initial consonant in a syllable while the laterals do as in the examples above. Second, when they occur as the second consonant in a cluster, the laterals occur after grave sounds (bilabials, labio-dentals, velars and labial-velars) while the trill occurs after non-grave sounds (dentals, alveolars, palatals). However the laterals and the trill do not occur after the apical postalveolar plosive [d].

It should be noted that the voiceless plosives are produced with aspiration which is not distinctive. The bilabial voiceless plosive /p/ is a phoneme borrowed into the language.

2.1.2 Vowels

The vowel sounds of Ewe are shown below:

i	ĩ			ũ	u
	e	ẽ		õ	o
	ɛ	ẽ	ə	ã	ɔ̃
			a		

Fig 2.2 Ewe vowels

There are seven oral and seven nasalised vowel phonemes in Ewe. All the vowel phonemes except /ə/ and /ã/ have one allophone each, that is themselves.

/ə/ and /ɛ̃/ have two members each and their distribution may be stated as follows:

[e] / [+ HIGH] __ /ə/ [ə] / elsewhere	[ɛ̃] / [+ HIGH] __ /ɛ̃/ [ɛ̃] / elsewhere
---	--

In the orthography, 'e' is used to represent these phonemes. I follow this practice in presenting the Ewe examples but I indicate the phonetic form where necessary. Historically speaking /ə/ and /ɛ̃/ are innovations in the Ewe dialects and some of the words with original /ɛ/ have merged with them. In the southern dialects the original /ɛ/ sound has disappeared and is replaced by the /ə/ sounds. In these dialects a word like /pepe:pe/ is pronounced [pepe:pe] 'exactly'.

2.2 Tones.

Like many other languages of Sub-Saharan Africa, Ewe is a tone language. Every syllable has a tone. It has two basic tonemes: a high and a non-high. In 'etic' terms, the non-high may be realised as low or mid, while the high may be realised as high or rising. In context a high and low may merge to yield a falling tone. Typically mid tones at sentence final position become low. A mid tone also becomes low after another low tone.

The tones of nominals are affected to some extent by the consonant of the stem. Thus nominals with a non-high toneme, may be realised as mid if the nominal root has a sonorant or a voiceless obstruent. For example: āmē 'person'; āmī 'oil, pomade'; à fī 'mouse'. It is low if the consonant of the nominal root is a voiced obstruent, for instance, è dà 'snake'. For high tone nominals, the tone of the nominal root is high if the consonant is a voiceless obstruent or a sonorant as in: ā tí 'tree' and ā yí 'skin'. If the stem consonant is a voiced obstruent the tone is a low-high rising tone as in: a-vǔ 'cloth'. In context, this rising tone may change to low tone. This may happen when the word occurs before another syllable which is high. For example, note that the tone of the noun in the following is low as opposed to rising: av̀ lá 'the cloth'. (For further details on tone in Ewe see especially, Ansre 1961, Smith 1976, Clements 1977a and b, Stahlke 1971, Nyomi 1976, Sprigge 1967, Clark 1983 Duthie 1988 and in press).

2.3 Phonotactics

2.3.1 Syllable structure

The structure of a basic syllable in Ewe may be represented in CV terms as follows:

$$(C_1) (C_2) V^T (C_3)$$

C_1 may be filled by any consonant in the language except [r]. C_2 may be filled by a liquid as in $\nu\text{lē}$ [βlɛ̃] ‘struggle’, tró ‘turn’; or a palatal or a labial velar approximant as in sjá ‘to dry something’ and sue [swə] ‘small’. V or the nucleus may be filled by any of the vowels or the bilabial or velar nasal, in which case they carry tone. For example, $\eta\text{dí}$ ‘morning’, yó m̀ ‘call-me’. C_3 is only filled by a nasal as in the following words. The syllable boundary is indicated by ‘=’ where relevant: $\text{só}\eta$ ‘several’, $\text{kam}=\text{pé}$ ‘scissors’, $\text{kran}=\text{té}$ ‘cutlass, machete’. Each syllable has a tone which may be analysed as being carried by the nuclear element.

2.3.2 Syllable types

From the structure above the following syllable types may be identified:

- i) nucleus and tone only, i.e., vowel only (V^T) as in the first syllables of $\text{a}=\text{tí}$ ‘tree’; $\text{e}=\text{te}$ ‘yam’ or nasal only (N^T) as in $\eta=\text{dó}$ ‘afternoon’ and $\text{tá}=\text{m̀}$ ‘drawing (progressive)’.
- ii) CV^T. which is by far the commonest syllable type in Ewe. Some of the syllables given above are of this type. Several monomorphemic verb roots are also of this type, for example: zɔ ‘walk’, ɔ̀ ‘consume, eat’ and tɔ ‘respond’.
- iii) $C_1C_2V^T$. As we have noted there are two types depending on what element fills the C_2 slot. They may be of the CLV^T type, for example, kplɔ ‘sweep’, trɛ ‘bachelor’, xlē ‘count, read’ or of the CGV^T type, for example: fja ‘chief’, sue [swɛ] ‘small’.

There are other syllable types and some of these are only found in borrowed words, ideophones or interjections. They are:

- iv) nasal final where the initial consonants are either single or are a part of a cluster of consonants, and are followed by V+N, for example: $\text{kán}=\text{tʃi}$ ‘iron sheet’, $\text{kran}=\text{dɔ}$ ‘padlock’.
- v) double nucleus, that is, the nucleus may be filled by two vowels which are the same, yielding a long vowel, or different, yielding a diphthong (see below on sequences of sounds). For example: atúù ‘welcome’, dzáà ‘welcome’, kpáò ‘no’, yoo ‘OK’.

2.3.3 Consonant and vowel sequences

In the description so far we have noted that consonant sequences are allowed within syllables. Consonant clusters consist of up to two consonants, the second of which may be a liquid or a glide. Some other consonant sequences are also encountered but these are always separated by syllable boundaries, as some of the examples have shown. Typically, and given the constraint that the final margin of a syllable be a nasal, and given that there can be syllabic nasals, one can find a sequence of a nasal and a plosive either at the beginning of a word or in the middle of a word. Some of the examples above have this structure; other examples include: a=ŋ=trɔ 'arrow', ŋ=ke=ke 'day', and ám=pe 'a jumping and clapping girls' game'.

Sequences of vowel occur but in most cases there is a morpheme boundary between successive vowels. The only cases where vowel sequences occur within a syllable are in ideophones and interjections as we have seen above (see Stahlke 1973 for further details). Typically vowel sequences occur where a grammatical morpheme consisting of a vowel alone is affixed to a stem. (Morpheme boundaries which coincide with syllable boundaries in the following examples are indicated by '+': $\phi o+e$ 'beat it' (or the same forms expressed in other dialects as $\phi u+i$); $k p \acute{o}+á$ 'sees habitually'.

2.4 Morphophonemics and morphotonemics

2.4.1 Tonal changes

Some of the changes that occur with tone in relation to the consonants of nominal roots have been noted above. It was also noted that some tones are assimilated to the following syllable's tone (see §2.2 above). However, it is also important to note tonal coalescence or fusion. Typically when morphemes come together the tones of the two morphemes may be fused in much the same way that the vowels may fuse. Let's take examples of tonal morphemes fusing with other morphemes. To express first or second person singular possession, in the order of possessor followed by possessum, the link is expressed by a high tone which is probably a relic of the possessive marker $\phi \acute{e}$. This high tone possessive morpheme fuses with the low tone of the independent forms of the pronouns to yield a rising tone. For example $ny \check{e}$ $agbal \check{e}$ 'my book' $w \check{o}$ $sr \check{o} \check{d} \check{e} \check{d} \check{e}$ 'your marriage' etc.. Similarly, certain adjectives may be nominalised by a low tone and when the original tone of the adjective is a high tone, the two tones fuse to produce a rising tone on the form. For example, the adjective $g \check{a}$ 'big' when nominalised by a low tone becomes $g \check{a}$.

2.4.2 Vowel changes.

Different kinds of changes affect vowels when they are in context. They may be elided or they may be assimilated to other vowels. Vowel elision typically occurs in the formation of words involving nouns, where the vocalic prefix of a noun is dropped. For example, when the three forms *ame* ‘person’, *φo* ‘beat’, *atí* ‘stick, tree’ are compounded to form one noun meaning ‘whip, cane’ the vocalic prefix on *atí* is elided, as is evident in the word: *ameφotí*. The vowel of a root can also be elided. For instance, the vowel of the word *gbe* ‘day’ is elided when it is in construction with *ádé* INDEF and the word *gbe* is iterated after it as in the form: *gbaδέgbe* ‘some day’.

Vowels may also be assimilated to other vowels in context. This occurs when a morpheme is realised as a vowel. For instance, the third person singular object pronoun has the underlying form *-í* (see Capo 1985 for further details). This vowel is either assimilated to the vowel of the predicate, or the vowel of the predicate is assimilated to it. Roughly speaking, when the assimilating vowel is high the object pronoun vowel stays high. For example: *qu-i* ‘eat it’, *dí í* ‘look for it’. When the assimilating vowel is half close, the object pronoun is realised as the front half close vowel [e]. For instance, *qó e* ‘planned it’, *se-e* ‘heard it’. In the southern dialects, the object pronoun vowel assimilates the half close stem vowel to itself making it high. Thus these words would be *qú í* ‘planned it’ and *si-í* ‘heard it’ in *Aṅlɔ* for example. When the vowel of the stem is low the object pronoun is realised as [ɛ]. For example: *dó ε* ‘send him/her/it’. Other morphemes which are single vowels change in context as does the third person object pronoun. There are perhaps only two exceptions to this. First, the argument focus marker *-é* is never assimilated to the following vowel. This may be because it is a clitic rather than an affix. Second, single vowel particles such as the second part of the discontinuous negative morpheme *o* and the question particle *-à* are not assimilated to the preceding vowels.

2.4.3 Consonant changes

In the southern dialects, palatalisation of alveolars in the environment of a high front vowel occurs (see Capo 1987 for a diachronic perspective on palatalisation in Gbe). Thus the words on the left below which are the northern dialects forms are said in the south with palatalised consonants as shown on the right.

NORTHERN	SOUTHERN	
<i>tsi</i>	<i>tʃi</i>	‘water’
<i>azi</i>	<i>aʒi</i>	‘peanut’
<i>atí</i>	<i>aʃí</i>	‘tree’

2.5 Notes on the phonology of special types of words

Apart from the sounds described in §2.1 other sounds which are not part of Ewe's basic phonemic inventory occur in ideophones, interjections, particles, and loanwords. Some clicks are used as interjections. For instance, a double articulated lateral and dental click ɔ̠ occurs as an interjection of contempt. There is also a palatal click with nasal release ɕⁿ which is used to signal agreement. As stated earlier, the syllable types that occur mainly in these types of words, are those with a double nucleus, and final margins realised as nasals.

Vowel lengthening is a feature especially of ideophones, and is used to indicate emphasis. For example, the vowel of the word fũũ... may be prolonged to get a word which means 'ple...nty' (the same way in which the vowel of the English word may be lengthened).

The tones of these words especially ideophones may be varied to express emotive and attitudinal meanings. For instance, to describe a smell, the segmental form lĩlĩlĩ may be used. If the smell is bad, the syllables are marked with low tone, if it is a nice smell high tone is used. Similarly taste may be described by ŋanaŋana. With a high tone, it expresses sweetness and with a low tone it indicates sour or bad taste. The sound of a big drum is captured with pòtòpòtò (note the low tones) and a small drum sounds like this: pótópótó. Thus with these words high tone may indicate good taste or smell and smallness or high sound while low tone may be exploited to indicate bad smell or taste and bigness or deep sound. These variations are not available to other types of words.

In this chapter the phonology of Ewe has been surveyed very briefly. In addition to the references cited earlier, the reader may also consult Duthie 1986, and other publications by Capo for further information. It is hoped that the information provided here will be sufficient for an appreciation and understanding of the subsequent chapters in the thesis.

Chapter 3

SIMPLE SENTENCES AND PHRASES

A simple sentence may be made up of a verbal main clause, or an equational sentence, or a locative sentence, or of verbless clauses. In this chapter, I outline the structure of a basic clause and the different elements that may function in this structure, namely, nominal phrase, verbal phrase and adverbial phrase. I will also provide an overview of utterance types, that is the speech-act distinctions that are made in the clausal syntax of Ewe.

3.1 Basic clause structure

An unmarked main clause has the following elements of clause structure arranged according to the linear order in which they appear:

SUBJect PREDicate OBJect ADJUNCT

The SUBJ and OBJ slots are always filled by Nominal Phrases, the PRED by a Verbal Phrase and the ADJUNCT by an Adverbial Phrase (including temporal and locative NPs) or a prepositional phrase. There can be several ADJUNCTs in a clause

It is useful to think of PRED as being filled by the following structural types:

- i) simple verb roots alone, e.g. dzó 'leave'; víví 'be sweet'.
- ii) phrasal predicates made up of a verb root and its inherent nominal complement. Some of these can be thought of as semi-lexicalised. The main thing is that the nominal behaves syntactically as an independent nominal, e.g. $\phi o \text{ } \dot{d}i$ [lit. strike dirt] be dirty; mló (anyí) 'lie down'.
- iii) compound verbs made up of two verbs which together colexicalise a verbal meaning, e.g. $\dot{d}ó \text{ } kpó$ 'wear see = taste'; $xo \text{ } se$ 'get hear = believe'.
- iv) a verb root and its satellite¹ eg: $se \text{ } \dot{d}á$ 'listen'; $kpló \text{ } \dot{d}ó$ 'follow'.

The subject and verb occur obligatorily in an intransitive clause. In a simple transitive clause, a subject, verb and an object are obligatory. If the verb is a

¹ I use the term 'satellite' following Talmy (1985: 102 -103). He comments on the term as follows: 'Present in many, if not all languages, satellites are certain immediate constituents of a verb root other than inflections, auxiliaries or nominal arguments. They relate to the verb root as periphery (modifiers) ...' The sorts of meanings that satellites express include path, directional and manner, cause, aspect etc. In Ewe the satellites tend to express direction and may have nuances of aspectual meanings. The satellites in Ewe may have developed from verbs (see Westermann 1930 and Heine and Reh 1984).

ditransitive verb, a second object is also present. These obligatory constituents form the core of these clauses.

Some of the simple clause patterns that are used in Ewe are the following:

- [1a] SV: ami- a vɔ
 oilDEF finish
 ‘The oil is finished’
- [1b] SVA: kofi dzó kába
 K.leave quickly
 ‘Kofi left quickly’
- [1c] SVO(A): ama ɸle avɔ (etsɔ)
 A.buy cloth yesterday
 ‘Ama bought a piece of cloth (yesterday)’
- [1d] SVOO: papá ná ga kofi
 father give money K.
 ‘Father gave money to Kofi’

3.1.1 Weather clauses

Typically, weather clauses have a full subject NP which denotes a meteorological element. Ewe does not use dummy subjects in such sentences:

- [2a] tsi dza
 water fall
 ‘It rained’
- [2b] ŋɔ vu séšie etsɔ
 sun shine hard yesterday
 ‘The sun shone hard yesterday’
- [2c] avuvɔ do
 cold appear
 ‘It has become cold’

The patterns described so far are the unmarked patterns in terms of the elements that occur in a simple clause. For this reason Ewe is described as an SVO language. However, marked patterns can occur. For example, in imperfective aspect, the order of elements is S Aux O V. Other marked patterns are the result of various syntactic processes. The two main processes are preposing and fronting, which are described in the subsequent sections.

3.1.2 Preposed constituents

An NP or AP may be preposed to the clause. The main function of such a constituent is to set the scene for the rest of the clause. Typically such a constituent is separated from the rest of the clause by a pause. It is also typically marked by a discourse framing particle *lá* or *dé* (see Chapter 8 for further details). Thus one could prepose a temporal NP or adjunct to the clause in [1d] above as follows:

- [3] *etsɔ lá papá ná ga kofi*
 yesterday TP father give money K.
 ‘Yesterday, father gave money to Kofi’

If the preposed constituent is coreferential with a core argument of the clause, the relationship between the constituent and the argument is indicated by an anaphoric pronoun in the clause. For example:

- [4] *kofi lá papá ná dɔ ɛ*
 K. TP father give work 3SG
 ‘Kofi, father gave him work’

3.1.3 Fronting of arguments

An argument of the clause may, for emphasis, be front-shifted to the pre-core clausal position, that is before the subject slot but after the preposed constituent slot. The fronted element is marked by an argument focus marker *-(y)é*. Typically a gap is left in the slot within the clause structure where the fronted element would have occurred.

- [5] *ga- é papá ná kofi*
 money aFOC father give K.
 ‘MONEY father gave to Kofi.’

3.1.4 Predicate focus

Theoretically, any argument in the clause can be focus-marked. The means of doing this for arguments has been described above. For verbs, there are two dialectally varying strategies. The verb may be copied, as happens in the Anlo dialect. Consider the following example:

- [6a] *kofi sí*
 K. escape

'Kofi escaped'

[6b] sí kofí sí
 escape K. escape
 'Escape Kofi did'

[6a] is an unmarked clause while in [6b] the verb is focused by preposing a copy of the verb to the clause. In the standard and other dialects, the verb is focussed by the use of a predicate focus marker, as in [6c] below.

[6c] kofí dè wò sí
 K. pFOC 3SG escape
 'Kofi did escape'

Note the effect of the pronominal copy of the subject after the predicate focus marker. The marker is put before the predicate, and a pronominal subject copy is added. Thus one can think of the rest of the clause as a full predication.

Dependent and embedded clauses may be introduced by various conjunctions and connectives. They fill the first position in the clause preceding all the other elements.

3.2 The nominal phrase

The nominal phrase may function in different slots in clause structure, as either a preposed or fronted constituent, or as subject, or object, or even adjunct. The latter is true of locative and temporal phrases especially. The internal structure of a simple nominal phrase may be represented as follows:

$$\text{NP} \rightarrow (\text{INT}) \left\{ \begin{array}{c} \text{N} \\ \text{PRO} \\ \text{QT} \end{array} \right\} (\text{ADJ})^* (\text{QT}) (\text{DET}) (\text{PL}) (\text{INT})^*$$

From the above structure, one can infer that a nominal phrase can be made up of a noun alone (e.g. *nj́tsu* 'man') or a pronoun (see below) or a quantifier. For example:

[7] dèkà gblě
 one spoil
 'One is spoilt'

These are the elements that can function as the nucleus of a nominal phrase. If any of the modifiers were to occur as the head of the nominal phrase, they would have to be nominalised (see below for the situation with each modifier).

A number of modifiers can occur in an endocentric NP, namely: adjectives (ADJ), quantifiers, including numerals (QT), determiners (DET) (which can be realised by either the definite article (DEF) or the indefinite article (INDEF) or demonstratives (DEM), or content question markers (CQ), the plural marker (PL) and intensifiers (INT). The subclass of intensifiers that can precede the noun head are: *neném*, *alé sigbe*, all meaning ‘such’. All other modifiers come after the noun. The linear order of these items in relation to the noun head in an NP is as represented above. Consider the following example in which all the slots are filled:

- [8] NP[*neném* *ɖeví* *baɖa* *eve* *má* *wó* *kón*]NP
 such child bad two DET PL INT
dí mí wó le.
 seek PROG 3PL PRES
 ‘It is those two very bad boys they are looking for.’

The elements that fill the adjective slot are described in Chapter 5. It should only be noted that there can be more than one adjective within the NP. The quantifier slot is filled by numerals such as *ɖeká* ‘one’, *etɔ̃* ‘three’ etc., ordinals, for example *adé liá* ‘six-th’, *mlɔɛ* ‘last’ etc. and other quantity words such as *geɖe* ‘several’. All these can also occur as the nucleus of the noun phrase (see example [7] above).

The DETERMINER slot in the NP structure is filled by DEFINITENESS markers, INDEFINITE markers, DEMONSTRATIVES, Content Question markers and the RELATIVE clause introducer. The DEF marker may be realised as *lá* or *á*. It is realised as *á* if there is a plural morpheme following. For example:

- [9a] *nyónu* (l)*á* *dzó*
 womanDEF leave
 ‘The woman left’
- [9b] *nyónu-* (*l)*a-wó* *dzó*
 womanDEF PL leave
 ‘The women left’

Note that *lá* and *-á* are in free variation when the NP is singular but in the plural only *-á* is acceptable.

INDEF markers are *áɖé* ‘a certain’ and *aɖéké* ‘any’.² The initial vowel of both items may be elided in context. These two items seem to be in complementary

² The generic nominal *nú* ‘thing’ has become lexicalised with these indefiniteness markers to form the words *náɖé/náné* ‘something’ and *náɖéké/nánéké* ‘nothing’.

distribution: *áǎké* tends to be used in negative declarative or imperative sentences, and in non-first person subject negative interrogatives, while *áǎé* is used elsewhere. Compare the following:

[10a] *me- biá nya áǎé/*áǎkéwò a?*
 1SG ask word INDEF 2SG Q
 ‘Did I ask you anything?’

[10b] *mé biá nya áǎké wò o a?*
 NEG:3SG ask word INDEF 2SG NEG Q
 ‘Did s/he not ask you anything?’

DEMONstratives *sia* ‘this’ and *má* ‘that’ and their dialect variants are mutually exclusive with the DEF and INDEF markers in the standard colloquial dialect. In the northern dialects they may co-occur. The DEMs may be nominalised by the prefixation of the 3SG pronoun *é*. The product of this nominalisation is used anaphorically in discourse and such a form may also occur as the head of NPs. Consider the following examples:

[11a] *ǎeví sia nyó*
 child DEMgood
 ‘This child is good’

[11b] *é sia nyó*
 3SG DEMgood
 This is good’.

The RELative marker *si* introduces relative clauses which are embedded within an NP. It can be argued that structurally it occurs in the DET slot in the NP. Support for this contention comes from the fact that if the head of the relative clause is plural the plural morpheme occurs attached to the REL marker before the rest of the clause follows. Similarly, an INT can follow the REL before the other constituents of the relative clause. Consider the following examples:

[12a] *ǎeví kókó si dze anyí etsò lá...*
 child tall REL fall ground yesterday TP
 ‘The tall child who fell down yesterday ...’

[12b] *ǎútsu si- wó katã vá teǎé má lá...*

man REL PL INT come placeDEMTP
'All the men who came there ...'

The distal DEM, *má* can co-occur with the REL but the proximate DEM, *sia*, cannot (see example [13] below). This is perhaps due to the fact that the semantics of the REL implies the semantics of 'this', a view which would appear to be supported by the partial identity of the form of the two morphemes in Ewe. It has been suggested in the literature (e.g. Westerman 1930, Heine and Reh 1984) that the REL evolved historically from the proximate DEM.

[13] *ɔɛví má si ɔé ŋkú gba*
child DEMREL poss eye break
'That child whose eyes are bad'

The PLural marker occurs after the DETerminers. In general the PL does not immediately follow a numeral or ordinal quantifier. But if there is an intervening DET, the PL can occur in the same NP.

[14a] *xevi eve le así nye*
bird two be:PRES hand1SG
'I have two birds'

[14b] *xevi etɔ́ má wó nyá kpó ná*
bird three DEMPL INV see HAB
'Those three birds are beautiful.'

The post-nucleus intensifiers are the last items in a simple NP. The forms that occur in this slot have multiple categorisation. They may also function as adverbials and some function as connectives as well. An example of one of them with the REL marker has already been given in [12b]. One or more of these may occur in one NP. For example:

- [15] ɖevi ɖeka pɛ ko me- hiã
 child one exactonly 1SG need
 ‘One child only I need’.

3.3 The verbal phrase

The verbal phrase functions as the nucleus of the clause. The structure of elements that occur in the VP can be represented as follows:

(IRR)	(REP)	(MODAL)	(TENSE)	<NP>	VERB	(ASPECT)
(l)á FUT	ga	ká	le PRES		mí	PROG
(n)á SUBJV		xa	nɔ NPRES		gé	INGR
		nyá...			(n)a	HAB

In transitive sentences with imperfective aspect, that is, the progressive or the ingressive, the object1 NP comes between the auxiliary verb, which indicates tense (or direction), and the main verb. It thus interrupts the sequence of the elements in the phrase. Note the roles of the elements in the following ditransitive verbal sentence with progressive aspect:

	SUBJ	TENSE	OBJ1	VERB	ASPECT	OBJ2
[16]	é	le	akónta	fiá	mí	ɖeví á wó
	3SG	be:PRES	arithmetic	teach	PROG	child DEF PL
	‘S/he is teaching arithmetic to the children’					

The IRRealis markers, the FUTure and the SuBJunctiVe markers, both have the allomorph á. When this is their realisation, the context helps to disambiguate them. The future is used to indicate that something will happen at a time after the moment of speech. The subjunctive is used to show that something can possibly happen. It occurs mainly in dependent clauses

ga is the marker of REPetitive action or process. It can co-occur with any of the other elements in the verbal phrase.

- [17] kofí ga- le avi fa- mí
 K.REP be:PRES cry cry PROG
 ‘Kofi is crying again’

The repetitive sense of the morpheme may be reinforced by an adverbial áké which may be optionally added to a sentence in which it occurs, e.g.:

- [18] mi- ga - gblɔ- e áké

2PL REP say 3SG again
 'You(pl) say it again'

The repetitive is also used in expressing the prohibitive (see the section on the prohibitive).

A closed class of items function in the verbal phrase and express various modal meanings (see Chapter 9 for a description of the *nyá* modals). Other modals include *ká* 'to become better' and *kpó* 'to have opportunity or time to do V'. This item always occurs in the negative. It is like a 'not yet' tense-aspect marker. For example:

[20] nye- mé kpó wɔ dɔ lá o
 1SG NEG MOD do work DEF NEG
 'I have not had the opportunity to do the work'

The TENSE auxiliary verbs co-occur with the imperfective aspect markers. *le* appears in the present tense and *nɔ* in the non-present, i.e either future or past (see example [17] for an illustration of *le*).

The PROGressive is used to signal activities that are on-going at the moment of speech or in relation to the temporal reference point (see example [17] above). The INGRessive is described in Chapter 6. It is used to express intentional purposive and inchoative actions as well as attempted situations and approximations (see the discussion in Chapter 6).

The -(n)a suffix is attached to the main verb or to the non-present tense marker to indicate HABitual action - an event that is customarily performed. It signals a habit or a disposition of the participant. Its implication is that the subject participant in the predication has the potential to perform the activity or undergo the process. For example:

[21a] tsitsi-a- wó dɔ á ló bé.
 elderDEF PL say HAB proverb COMP
 'The elders say (in a proverb) that...'

[21b] xe- wó dze- na dɛ atí dzí
 bird PL land HAB at tree top
 'Birds perch on trees'

The habitual morpheme does not have an inherent tone of its own. It assumes the tone on the last syllable of the verb. Thus in example [21a] above,

the tone of the HAB morph *-a* is high since the verb has a high tone. But in example [21b], its tone is low since the verb has a low tone.

The alternation between *na* ~ *a* tends to be syntactically determined. If the verb is followed by an object the habitual is realised as *-a*, as in example [21a] above, but if it is not, then it is realised as *na*, as in example [21b] above. However, this is a tendency rather than a hard and fast rule because *na* is sometimes used in writing as well as in speech when there is an object.

With verbs of motion, the habitual morpheme may be used to express current motion.

- [22] *dadá gbɔ- na dá*
 mother come HAB DIR
 ‘Mummy is coming’

3.4 The adjunct phrase

I use the term adjunct phrase to cover two types of phrases: the adverbial phrase and the prepositional phrase. Prepositional phrases behave like adverbial phrases in some contexts and have sometimes been described as adverbial phrases.

Adverbial phrases are of two types: (i) Adverbial phrases which are made of different adverbs, as in [23], and (ii) those that are realised as temporal nominal phrases, as in [24]. These function as adjuncts in clause structure.

- [23] *é fɔ́ kábá*
 3SG rise quickly
 ‘S/he got up early’

- [24] *tsi dza egbe*
 water fall today
 ‘It rained today’

Prepositional phrases are those phrases headed by prepositions. The object of the prepositions is a nominal phrase. They may be used to express the ideas expressed by adverbials etc. The prepositions in Ewe include the dative *ná* ‘to, for’, the allative *dé* ‘to’, the instrumental *kplé* ‘with’, the perlocative *tó* ‘through’, the locative *le* ‘at’ and a couple more. More than one of these prepositional phrases can occur in a clause.

- [25] *é ɸle avɔ ná mí kplé dzidzɔ*
 3SG buy cloth to 1PL with happiness

lit.: 'S/he bought a piece of cloth for us with joy'

3.5 Utterance types

Most of the examples given so far are declarative sentences. However, there are other types of utterances. The imperative and the interrogative types, for example, are outlined below.

3.5.1 The imperative

There are different kinds of imperative sentences:

(i) second person imperatives whether singular or plural, for example:

[26a] va !
come (sg)

[26b] mi- vá
2PL come
'You, come'

In the singular the bare predicate is the imperative. For the plural the preverbal pronoun is attached.

(ii) First person hortatives. There are different forms of this. Typically this involves the 1PL pronoun and the verb is preceded by a hortative or permissive causative marker:

[27] na mí - dzo
GIVE:2SG 1PL leave
'Let's go'

Sentences involving first person hortatives can also be of a complex kind, where the first part is a second person imperative directed to the addressee and the second part is what the speaker and the addressee may do together. The first part is what the addressee has to do in order that the speaker and the addressee can perform the other action. These two parts are optionally linked by the purpose clause introducer né. This form should not be confused with the homophonous third person hortative form né discussed below.

[28] va mí- ɖu nu
come 1PL eat thing
'Come and let's eat'

[29] wɔ- e né mí kpɔ
do 3SG purp 1PL see
‘Do it and let’s see’

(iii) The third person hortative construction has the following structure:

NP né VP

Roughly it means “Let NP V”, that is, the speaker wants the subject NP to V. The implication is that the speaker wants someone else to cause this to happen.

[30] gli né- vá
story IMP come
‘Let the story come’

[31] ame néɖi ame négé ɖé é me
person IMP descend person IMP enter to 3SG in
‘Let someone get down and let another enter’

(iv) The prohibitive is made up of the negative morpheme, the repetitive morpheme and the predicate. It roughly means “don’t V again”.

NEG REP PRED (X) NEG

[32] me gatsi dzi o
NEG:2SG REP remain heart NEG
‘Do not worry’

[33] me gaxa nú o
NEG:2SG REP suffer thing NEG
‘Do not mourn’

3.5.2 Questions

Content questions are formed by the question markers ka ‘CQ’ and néne ‘how many’. These occur as determiners in the questioned noun phrase. Typically the questioned noun phrase, containing the question word, is fronted and marked with the argument focus marker. For example:

[34a] afi- ka é kofí yi
placeCQ aFOC K. go
‘Where did Kofi go?’

[34b] te néne- é ama dzrá egbe
yam how many aFOC A.sell today
‘How many yams did Ama sell today?’

The questioned constituent need not be fronted nor focus-marked if it is used to ask echo questions, as in the following example:

[35] e- bé nú ka?
2SG say thing CQ
‘What did you say?’

Propositional questions are marked by question particles that occur at the end of clauses or phrases. The general propositional question marker is **à**. It is used to ask questions that seek confirmation or denial of a proposition. For example:

[36a] kofí dzó a?
K.leave Q
‘Has Kofi left?’

Propositional questions that are focussed may be introduced by the particle **dě**, as in the following example:

[36b] dĕ kofi dzó a?
Q K.leave Q
‘HAS Kofi left?’

The **dé** particle may be used at the end of phrases to ask topic-only questions similar to ‘How about X’ questions in English (see [37a] below). However, at the end of clauses it is used to ask conducive propositional questions, as in [37b]. Consider the following:

[37a] ama dé
A.Q
‘Where is/How is/ What about Ama?’

[37b] é me kò dĕ
3SG in clear Q
‘Is it clear?’ (I expect a positive answer)

The particle *máhã* may be added to any of the questions discussed so far to add an emotional overtone or emphasis to the question.

- [38] *ama dɛ́ máhã*
 A Q Q
 'Where can Ama be?'

The disjunctive particle *lóó* in propositional questions asks for an alternative to the proposition put forward. The other disjunctive marker *aló* can also be used as a tag to questions. A proposition containing these disjunctive markers may be marked by *à* to form alternative questions.

- [39a] *má vá fiē sia lóó*
 1SG:IRR come evening DEMQ
 Should I come this evening or?

- [39b] *dɛví á wó aló*
 child DEF PL or
 'The children, or?'

3.5.3 Other utterance modifiers

Three are markers called 'addressive' particles which may be used to signal other illocutionary forces of utterances or to modify the primary illocutionary force of an utterance. They usually indicate the speaker's attitude towards the utterance. For example, the particles *ló* and *hee* may be put at the end of a declarative sentence to show that the speaker intends it to be interpreted as an advice. The particle *là* may be tagged on to an imperative to signal the speaker's exasperation and so on. (For a detailed semantic analysis of these particles see Ameka 1986 Chapter 3).

- [40] *náné gbɔ- na ló*
 something come HAB ADD
 'Something is about to appear, I advise you'

3.6 Word classes

From the brief description so far, one can discern some form classes. One can identify for Ewe the major word classes of Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives and Adverbs. Adjectives are described in Chapter 5. There are distinct word formation process for the derivation of nominals, adjectives and adverbs.

Nouns may be broadly subclassified into simple and complex. The simple nouns are those that are made up of a root and a vocalic prefix **a-** or **e-**. For example, *a-tí* 'tree', *a-me* 'person', *e-te* 'yam'. Complex nouns are derived from other words. For example, verbs may be nominalised by reduplication, as in *dzo-dzó* 'leaving', or by suffixation of various forms such as *lá* 'agent', *ɸé* 'place' etc. For example, *dzi-lá* 'bear-er, i.e. parent', *ɸu-ɸé* 'literally eat-place, i.e. portion (for consumption)'. Nouns may also be formed from verbs by a combination of reduplication and suffixation, for example, *dzodzó lá* 'one who is leaving'.

Similarly, adverbs may also be simple such as *kábá* 'quickly', *kéj* 'completely' etc, or derived. Adverbs may also be formed from other word classes by either reduplication and/or suffixation. For example, an adverb may be formed from a noun by the suffixation of the suffix *-tɔɛ* '-ly, (manner)', as in *kalɛ tɔɛ* 'courageously'.

There are no productive means of forming verbs, but predicate meanings as described above (§3.1) can be formed from a combination of verbs or verb and nominal or verb and satellite.

Interjections are a semi-closed class. The semantics of several interjections are described in Chapter 15. Various theoretical questions are also raised then.

There are several closed classes of words that can be identified for Ewe. The classes of items described above that fill slots in the noun phrase and verb phrase all form individual word classes. The nominal related ones are Intensifiers, Quantifiers, Determiners (including the definiteness and indefiniteness markers, the relativiser, the content question markers and the demonstratives), and the Pluraliser. These have a fixed number of members. The verb related classes are the Irrealis markers (i.e. the Future and the Subjunctive), the Repetitive marker, and the Modals. Other closed classes are the Utterance Particles described above for forming questions, and indicating the illocutionary force of the utterance (see §3.5), Conjunctions and Clause introducers such as *éye* 'and', *gaké* 'but' etc. described in Chapter 4, and other particles such as the negative marker described in Chapter 4.

Prepositions are another closed class. These introduce and head prepositional phrases. They have been described in §3.4 above.

Pronouns are another class of words. The table below is a display of the contextual and syntactic variants of the personal pronouns found in Ewe:

	1SG	1PL	2SG	2PL	3SG	3PL
Preverbal	me-	mí(é)	(n)è	mi(e)	wò/é	wó
Prenominal/ Independent	nye	miá(wó)	wò	mia(wó)	é	wó
post verbal/ preposition	-m	mí	wò	mi	-í	wó
logophoric				ye	yewó	ye yewó

Table 3.1 Pronouns

The variants of the pronouns are syntactically determined. It should be recalled that pronouns can occur as head of noun phrases. The preverbal series are the forms that are cliticised on to verbs when they function as subject in a clause. The prenominal and independent series are used in emphatic contexts such as before the argument focus marker (y)é or before another nominal in apposition or in a possessive construction. The post verbal series are the objective forms of the pronouns and thus occur as arguments of verbs and prepositions. The logophoric pronouns are used primarily in reportive contexts to represent the individual (except for the first person) whose speech, thoughts, feelings etc. are reported or are reflected in dependent clauses introduced by bẹ ná 'that' (cf. Clements 1979).

Chapter 4

COMPLEX PHRASES AND SENTENCES

This chapter provides a quick overview of aspects of Ewe syntax beyond the clause. Processes of clause and phrase combining are noted and a description is offered of the different types of negation found in Ewe.

4.1 Serialisation

There are two types of clauses involving the concatenation of verbals. These are the serial verb construction and the overlapping clause.

4.1.1 Serial verb construction

In the serial verb construction each verb in the series has the same subject, tense, mood and aspect. Subject is only expressed with the first verb. Some of the verbs may share objects as is the case for 'dig', 'cook' and 'eat' in the sentence below. Serialising connectives may be used to link verbs in a series: hé for simultaneous or sequential relations and dá for purpose relations. For example:

[1] é fɔ́ dogo le zā me dzáá
 3SG arise go outside at night in quietly
 ɖa- kute ɖa ɖu.
 purp dig yam cook eat

'He got out quietly at night, dug up yams, cooked them and ate them.'

In serial verb constructions in which the first verb is one of accompaniment such as kplɔ 'lead', or instrument such as 'take' etc. there is an optional element which may be called SERIAL -i (Lewis 1985) that occurs with the second verb to show that the events are concomitant or simultaneous rather than consecutive or consequential. Consider this example:

[2] é kplɔ ama dzó é
 3SG lead A.leave SERIAL
 'S/he lead Ama away'

4.1.2 Overlapping clause

In the overlapping clause, the subject of the second clause is coreferential with the object of the first clause. Typically it is used to express simultaneous events. For instance:

- [3] é da tú í wè kú
 3SG throw gun 3SG 3SG die
 'S/he shot it dead.'

4.2 Co-ordination

4.2.1 Clausal co-ordination

Two clauses may be conjoined by juxtaposition without an explicit conjunction.

- [4] é kú mé ga le agbe o
 3SG die NEG:3SG REP be:PRES life NEG
 'S/he is dead, s/he is not alive.'

However, conjunctions may be used to link two or more clauses: *éye* 'and' for additive conjunction, *loo alo* 'or' for disjunction, *gaké* 'but' for contrastive co-ordination and *élabéna* 'because' for causal co-ordination. For example:

- [5] wó dzu- i éye wó φo- e gaké mé fa aví o
 3PL insult 3SG and 3PL beat 3SG but NEG:3SG cry cry NEG
 'S/he was insulted and beaten but s/he did not cry'

4.2.2 Compound and complex phrases

Compound nominal phrases may be additive or alternative. If additive the NPs are linked by the form *kplé* 'and, with'. To indicate that the members of the set of entities being co-ordinated have been exhaustively listed the form *kpakplé* 'and' is used to link the last NP to the rest. For example:

- [6] kofí kplé ama kpakplé kwami wó yi agble
 K. and A. and K. 3PL go farm
 'Kofi and Ama and Kwami (and no other person) have gone to the farm'

Note that when the compound phrase functions as subject, as in the above sentence, an anaphoric pronoun is used to mark its function on the verb.

The intensifier *siáa* 'both, all' is used with a compound phrase to show that all the items listed are included. It is like 'both' in English but the Ewe form can be used with more than two phrases.

- [7] nye kplé wò siáa
 1SG and 2SG both
 'Both you and I'

The alternative compound nominal phrase is one in which two or more phrases are linked by the disjunctive markers *lóo* and/or *aló*. Note that the same forms are used to co-ordinate clauses. For example:

- [8] ñútsu aló nyónu
 man or woman
 'Man or woman'

Complex nominal phrases involve two or more phrases linked by various connectives in which one of the phrases is the head and the rest are modifiers. A common type is the appositive phrase where two NPs are juxtaposed without an overt linker. Nominal phrases in apposition may have different relationships between them but typically one is the head and the other the modifier. For example:

- [9] núfiálá kofí
 teacher Kofi.
 'Kofi, the teacher
 Modifier Head'

Possessive phrases are another type of complex phrase. These are described in detail in Chapter 7. Typically two phrases are linked by the possessive linker *ɸé* and its dialect variants if the relationship is construed to be an 'alienable' one. For example:

- [10] ama ɸé awu
 A. poss garment
 'Ama's garment'

A distributive construction is marked by the linker of tokens of the same nominal by the form *siáà* 'every':

- [11] ɖeví siaa ɖeví
 child every child
 'every child'

Similarly, to express the pejorative sense that an N is not a “real” N, one can link the same token of NPs by the postposition gbó ‘side’. This construction seems to be restricted to the northern dialects. A high tone suffix is added on to the second NP. For example:

- [12] tódę gbó tódę
 uncle side uncle
 ‘A pseudo-uncle’

4.3 Subordination

I assume that subordination is of two broad types: dependence and embedding. Dependent clauses are sometimes referred to as adverbial clauses and embedded clauses are relative and complement clauses. The broad features of these types of clauses are briefly described in this section.

4.3.1 Dependent clauses

Complex sentences may be made up of a main clause and one or more dependent clauses. These clauses are always introduced by a conjunction. The conjunctions include ési ‘when’, hafí ‘before’, and kásiaa ‘as soon as’ for temporal clauses, né ‘if’ for conditional clauses, bé ‘so that’ for purpose clauses, tógbó bé ‘although’ for concessive clauses, ési....ta/ńúti ‘since’ for reason clauses and abe (alési/ dę) ... ené ‘as ... as’ for semblative (comparative clauses). All the clauses introduced by these conjunctions can occur either preposed or postposed to the main clause. When they are preposed to the main clause they may be optionally marked by the ‘terminal’ particles lá or dę (see Chapter 8 for a discussion of the significance of the particles in relation to the preposed dependent clauses).

- [13] ési ńu ke lá mié fó
 when day break TP 1PL wake up
 ‘When it was day break, we got up.’

Counterfactual conditional clauses introduced by dę always precede the main clause and the main clause of the sentence is introduced by né:

- [14] dę me- kpó e lá né me wu- i
 COND 1SG see 3SG TP then 1SG kill 3SG
 ‘If I had seen it, I would have killed it.’

4.3.2 Embedded clauses

As noted earlier, embedded clauses are of two types: relative clauses which are embedded within a nominal phrase and complement clauses, which are embedded within another clause.

4.3.2.1 Relative clauses

Relative clauses are introduced by the relative marker *si* which occurs in the same slot as determiners within the NP. In general any NP can be relativised. The strategies of a gap and an anaphoric or resumptive pronoun are used. The details are a bit complex to summarise here (see Dzameshie 1983 and Lewis ([1985] n.d) for a full discussion). As noted in the discussion of the structure of the NP in Chapter 3, if the nominal head is plural, the pluraliser is cliticised on to the REL marker. The relative clause always follows its noun head. The function of the relative clause is to modify its head. Consider the following examples:

- [15] *ɔɖé si-wó mé vá agble o lá*
 child REL PL NEG come farm NEG TP
ma- he tó ná wó
 1SG:IRR pull ear to 3PL
 ‘The children who did not come to the farm, I’ll punish them’

- [16] *me- kpó nyónu si ɔé ga bú lá ...*
 1SG see woman REL poss money lost TP
 ‘I saw the woman whose money was lost...’

It should be noted that the relativised nominal can be either subject, as in [15], or object, as in [16], in the clause. In addition, it should be observed that the relative clause may end in the terminal particles (see Chapter 8 for a discussion of the significance of the particles in this context). Note also that the REL marker can be immediately followed by the possessive linker.

4.3.2.2 Complement clauses

Complement clauses function as a subcategorised argument of the predicate. They are introduced by different complementisers. The common complementiser in Ewe is *be,* which has a number of functions and variants as shown below. It could be argued that in certain contexts the clauses introduced by *abé ... ené* are complement clauses. There are also nominalised complements. Examples of each of these are given below.

bé/béná and **né** complement clauses:

bé has a number of functions in Ewe. It can function as the nucleus of a clause. It can be used as a quotative verb for direct or indirect speech:

[16a] kofi bé m'- a- dzó
 K. say 1SG IRR leave
 'Kofi said: I will leave.'

[16b] kofi bé ye- a- dzó
 K. say LOG IRR leave
 'Kofi said that he would leave.'

When **bé** functions as the nucleus of a clause in which the subject is inanimate, it expresses prospective aspect:

[17] tsi bé ye- a- dza.
 water say LOG IRR fall
 'It is about to rain.'

As complementizer, **bé** may be used to introduce direct speech/quotation as well as indirect speech:

[18] kofi gblɔ bé: 'me- le dzo- dzó gě
 K. say COMP 1SG be:PRES leave-RED INGR
 'Kofi said: "I am going to leave."'

[19] tsi dí bé ye- a- dza.
 water want COMP LOG IRR fall
 lit.: 'It wants to rain.'

In this context **bé** is in free variation with **béná**. They can introduce both realis and irrealis S-like complements. **né** as a complementizer seems to be used only to introduce irrealis complements of modal verbs, as in the following example:

[20] dze agbagbá né na- fɔ dɛ́ game dzí
 try load COMP SBJV wake up on time top
 'Try that you should wake up on time.'

It should be noted that **bé**, **béná** and **né** are also used to introduce purpose and consecutive clauses.

In some contexts involving approximations and guesses, clauses introduced by the semblative connector **abé (ené)** ‘like, as ... as’ may function as complements, as is the case in the following example.

[21a] é wɔ abé tsi le dza- dza gé
 3SG do as if water PRES fall fall INGR
 ‘It looks like it is going to rain’

[21b] é ga- fiá abé dɔsrɔ́ví lá xɔxɔ
 3SG REP show as if apprentice DEF receive
 ɔ́é aɔ́etá wó ɔ́é hameené
 into master PL poss group as
 ‘It also shows as if the apprentice has been accepted
 into the group of masters’

Nominalized clauses can also function as complements, as in the following examples:

[22a] nya- té tó ná dzi- lá wó nyó
 word tell tell to bear er PL good
 ‘Saying things to parents is good.’

[22b] agbe-nɔ- nɔ ɔ́é sé ɔ́é gbe dzí le vévié
 life stay stay on destiny poss voicetop be important
 ‘Living according to the tenets of destiny is important.’

4.4 Negation

4.4.1 Standard negation

Standard or clausal negation is marked by a discontinuous negative morpheme **mé o**. **mé** occurs just before the VP and tends to be cliticised onto the first element in the VP while **o** occurs at the end of the clause but before the clause final and sentence final particles. Consider the following examples:

[23] kofí vá afí sia
 K.come placethis
 ‘Kofi came here.’

[24] kofí mé vá afí sia o
 K.NEG come placethis NEG

'Kofi did not come here.'

[25] kofi mé vá afí sia o a?
 K. NEG come place this NEG Q
 'Did Kofi not come here?'

[26] mè ga wɔ- e o- la
 NEG:2SG REP do 3SG NEG ADD
 'Don't do it (I am fed up)'

In this last example, the *mé* part of the negative morpheme has fused with the second person pronoun leading to a low tone on the form. Such tonal changes occur when *mé* fuses with the elements in the verbal phrase.

In a serial verbal construction, *mé* occurs before the first VP in the series while the *o* occurs at the end of the serial clause. For example:

[27] kwami mé fɔ́ kábá yi agble o
 K. NEG wake up quickly go farm NEG
 'Kwami did not get up early and go to the farm.'

[28] kofi mé fúdu yi afe me o
 K. NEG run race go home NEG
 'Kofi did not run (go) to the house.'

The scope of negation in these clauses can be ambiguous. For instance, in this last example, it could be that the only thing being negated semantically is the way in which Kofi went home, not the fact that he went home. Similarly in the first example, the fact that Kwami did not get up early is what may be negated but the syntax of these clauses dictates that the negative morpheme *mé* should occur before the first VP and nowhere else. Of course, the ambiguity could be cleared by adding another clause to make explicit what is being negated.

One or both clauses in a complex sentence may be negated in the standard way. The scope of negation of one clause does not cross clause boundaries. For example:

[29] nékofi mé kpó nyuieo lá
 if K.NEG see well NEG TP
 dɔ gbɔ- na é wu gé
 hunger come HAB 3SG kill INGR
 'If Kofi is not careful, he would grow hungry.'

[30] ama mé gblɔ bé ye ma- vá o
 A.NEG say COMP LOG NEG:IRR come NEG
 'Ama didn't say that she wouldn't come.'

[31] nye mé dzu- i o éye nye mé φo- é hã o
 1SG NEG insult 3Sg NEG and 1SG NEG beat 3SG too NEG
 'I did not insult him/her and I did not hit him/her also.'

Note that in complex sentences with embedded clauses where both clauses are negated as in [30] above, there is only one realisation of the **o** part of the negative morpheme.

4.4.2 Constituent negation

There are different kinds of non-clausal or constituent negation. One of these is the negative cleft construction. This construction is used to emphatically negate a particular constituent in a clause, an NP or a predicate. The constituent that is thus negated is focus marked. The structure of the negative cleft construction is as follows:

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \text{mé} & \text{nyé} & \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{NP (aFOC)} \\ \text{pFOC predication} \end{array} \right\} \text{X o} \\ \text{NEG be} & & \text{X NEG} \end{array}$$

For example:

[32] mé nyé etsɔ- é me- dzɔ o
 NEG beyesterday aFOC 1SG happen NEG
 'It wasn't yesterday I was born.'

[33] mé nyé ɖe me- φo- é o
 NEG bepFOC 1SG beat 3SG NEG
 'It is not that I hit him/her'

Note that the negative cleft construction can occur with standard negation as in the following example:

[34] mé nyé agbeli- é nye mé du na o
 NEGbecassava aFOC 1SG NEG eat HAB NEG
 'It isn't cassava that I don't eat.'

Another manifestation of constituent negation is in some inherently negative words. These belong to several categories. There are verbals, for example, *gbé* 'refuse' and *dó kpo* 'fail'; an adverbial *gbedé* 'never'; and a determiner *áḍéké* 'any INDEF' (or a pronominal formed from this determiner *áḍéke* and a generic nominal *nú* 'thing', namely, *naḍéké/nánéké* 'nothing'). The positive form of this determiner is *áḍé* 'a certain INDEF'. Except for the verbals, all the inherently negative words occur only in standard negative sentences. The verbals may occur either in positive or negative sentences.

4.4.3 Derivational negation

Derivational negation is marked by the affix *ma-* 'un' - the privative marker. This affix is used in the derivation of adjectives and adverbials. It is usually prefixed to a verbal element and reduplicated together with it when necessary. For example:

<i>ma- vɔ;</i>	<i>nú ma- du- ma- du</i>
NEG finish	thing NEG eat NEG eat
'everlasting'	'without eating'
<i>dzidzɔ- ma- kpó ma- kpó</i>	
happiness NEG see NEG see	
'unhappiness'	

These may occur with or without standard negation.

4.4.4 'Double negation'

One can talk of 'double negation' in two ways. Firstly, there may be two negative expressions in a clause. These negative expressions are usually the standard negation marker and one other expression which does not necessarily require the standard negation. We have already seen some examples of this with respect to the negative cleft construction (see example [34] above). The case of the inherently negative lexical items which are constrained to occur only in negative sentences can be treated as a special type of this kind of double negation. In the following example, the main clause is negated and within it there is a lexically derived negation which as shown in sentence [35b], can occur

in a positive sentence. One can think of the sentence in [35a] as containing a double negation.

[35a] nye mé mló anyí nú ma- ðu- ma- ðu o
 1SG NEG lie down thing NEG eat NEG eat NEG
 'I did not sleep without eating.'

[35b] me- mló anyí nú ma- ðu- ma- ðu
 1SG lie down thing NEG eat NEG eat
 'I slept without eating.'

Secondly, there may be two standard negation markers within the same clause. For example, in the right context in English, one can negate both an auxiliary and a main verb in the same clause as in the following example provided by Bob Dixon (private communication):

[36] I { couldn't } not buy it
 { daren't }
 (my wife would have murdered me, she has particularly told me to buy it)

Ewe does not seem to tolerate double standard negation within the same clause as English does in the above example. To convey meanings of this sort one can use the first strategy of 'double negation', that is, standard negation plus an inherently negative verb. For example:

[37] nye ma- té nú á gbé é øe-øle o
 1SG NEG:IRR can IRR refuse 3SG buy-RED NEG
 lit.: 'I could not refuse to buy it'
 (i.e. 'I couldn't not buy it')

Notice that this is a serial construction with the standard negation marker appearing once but with scope over both verbs. One can also express the same idea with a complex sentence where the main clause and the embedded clause are both negated as in the following:

[38] nye ma- té nù á gbé
 1SG NEG:IRR can IRR refuse
 bé nye ma- ðle- é o
 COMP 1SG NEG:IRR buy 3SG NEG
 lit.: 'I couldn't refuse that I would not buy it'

The difference between [37] and [38] is that the nominal complement of the verb 'refuse' in [37] is expanded as a complement clause in [38].

The conclusion to be drawn here is that explicit 'double negation' within the same clause is not favoured in Ewe.

PART II

SEMANTIC DOMAINS AND THEIR GRAMMATICAL EXPRESSION

OVERVIEW

This second part is concerned with the semantics of the forms that are used in Ewe to code three functional domains in language. The three domains investigated can be broadly referred to as **attribution**, **temporality**, and **possession**. 'Attribution' is concerned with the means of modifying an object with respect to its qualities and properties. This domain is coded among other things by 'adjectives', relative clauses and nominals used in apposition. In this study, the focus of the investigation is adjectives in Ewe (Chapter 5). 'Temporality' is the domain concerned with the temporal viewpoint from which a situation is presented. In grammar this domain is coded as tense and aspect. In this study only aspect is examined (Chapter 6). 'Possession' is concerned with the relation of one entity with another. This domain may be expressed by nominal or verbal constructions. Both types of constructions are investigated for Ewe (Chapter 7).

The chapters in this part are organised to reflect the association of the domains with nominals and verbals. Attribution and its realisation as adjectives is a feature of nouns and it is described first. Temporality is mainly a property of verbs and more broadly with situations. Possession relates to both nominals and verbals and so it is described last to round off this part.

Chapter 5

ADJECTIVES - THE CODING OF QUALITIES

Y - a - t - il des adjectifs
qualificatifs dans votre
langue?

Bot Ba Njock 1977 : 207

5.1 Introduction

In concluding a paper on the semantics of English adjectives, Givón (1970) observed that the status of the adjective lexical category in Universal Grammar is very controversial. As he saw it, 'we are dealing with a lexical category whose universality is open to doubt, and whose membership arises primarily through overt derivation even in languages where it does exist. (...) It is perhaps no accident that even the relatively few underived adjectives of English are semantically based on nouns and verbs.' (op. cit.: 837) These impressions were, so to speak, verified and confirmed empirically in an independent research by Dixon ([1977]1982) reported under the title "Where have all the adjectives gone?", which was circulated extensively in 1970. Since that study appeared, other researchers have looked at the status of the adjective class in specific languages and have posed seemingly opposing questions to Dixon's. Thus Maudgu ([1976]1979) asks the following question concerning Yoruba: "Yoruba adjectives have merged with verbs or are they just emerging?". Similarly, Backhouse (1984) has questioned whether all the adjectives have gone in relation to Japanese data. Lindsey and Scancarrelli (1985) posed a directly opposite question to that of Dixon, viz: "Where have all the adjectives come from?" with respect to Cherokee, an Algonquian language. In the light of these studies and on account of the cross-linguistic variation that occurs concerning adjectives, it seems imperative that linguists should answer the query raised by Bot Ba Njock (see the quote above) for the languages they describe.

In this chapter, an attempt will be made to answer that question for Ewe. The aim is to investigate how adjectival concepts are expressed in Ewe. In particular, an attempt is made to find out if the items that encode adjectival ideas (qualities or property concepts) constitute a grammatically defined class in the language. If they do, what is the nature of the class? Also, what are the morphological, syntactic and semantic features of the adjectival terms and how are they related? The study is a response in a way to the hope expressed by Dixon in the Prospect section of his paper that "[A] next step would be to

investigate in detail the syntactic and morphological properties of the types in some of the crucial languages, Such an investigation requires a sound knowledge - preferably, native speaker knowledge - of the language" (1982:61). The way in which the Ewe data relate to the assumptions underlying the questions 'Where have all the adjectives gone?' and 'Where have all the adjectives come from?' will also be explored.

The main claim of the chapter is that the way one frames one's question of inquiry depends on the analytic framework being employed. It will be shown that the kind and nature of data examined, the criteria used in the analysis as well as the level at which the description is made are relevant for and determine the sorts of conclusions one arrives at on the nature of the adjective word class in a particular language and from a crosslinguistic perspective.

The chapter is organised as follows: In section 5.2, the grammar of Ewe adjectival elements is described. Dixon's 'semantics prior approach to adjectives in a typological perspective is introduced in section 5.3. Correlations between the morpho-syntax of the Ewe adjectival terms and their semantic type membership are explored in section 5.4. This leads to an investigation of the conceptual basis of the grammatical coding of adjectival ideas in Ewe vis - à - vis the general universal tendencies of the coding of qualities as adjectives in grammar. Some theoretical issues are then considered in the light of the findings of the present study and other similar research on other languages.

5.2 Adjectival elements in Ewe

'Are there adjectives in your language?' is the English rendition of the French question with which this chapter opened. It is fair to say that for some languages the answer to this question is negative and for others it is positive and even for those languages that have one, variations are observed in relation to their size and composition. Nevertheless, it can be said that all languages have some means of expressing adjectival concepts i.e. qualities (cf. Dixon 1982, forthcoming, Schachter 1985, Thompson 1988). Because of this enormous variation crosslinguistically, linguists have to answer the question posed by Bot Ba Njock for the languages they describe.

In this section an attempt will be made to answer that question for Ewe. It will be argued along with other linguists working on the language that Ewe has a grammatically distinguished class of adjectives. The present study goes a step further than previous ones to analyse the composition of the class and propose a taxonomy based on the morpho-syntactic properties of the adjectival terms. Processes of adjectivalisation are then discussed.

5.2.1 Does Ewe have an Adjective class?

Although Ewe grammarians agree that there is an adjective class in the language, there are differing views on the constitution of the class. Before examining these views, let us consider what it means to say that a language has 'a class of adjectives'?

There is a fair amount of consensus among linguists on the answer to this question. Dixon (1982:56), for example, asserts that an adjective class "is a set of *lexical items* distinguished on morphological and syntactic grounds from the universal classes of Noun and Verb [...] Semantically, an adjective describes some important but non-criterial property of an object. That is, an adjectival description will serve to distinguish between two members of the same species that are referred to by a single common noun." [emphasis added F. A.] In fact, in Dixon's analysis he makes a distinction between 'deep' or 'basic' adjectives, i.e. lexical items defined by the above criteria, and 'surface' adjectives, i.e. words that function as adjectives but are derived from other word classes (see §5.3 for further details). In making decisions about the nature of the adjective class of a language, Dixon only considers the size of the 'deep' adjectives.

Essentially, Dixon's views are similar to those of Lyons (1977:440-1) except that the latter goes a step further to allow for the inclusion of non-lexemes in the class. "When we say that there are adjectives [...] in such and such a language, we mean that there is a grammatically definable class of expressions whose most characteristic syntactic function is that of being the modifier of the noun in an endocentric construction and whose most characteristic semantic function is to ascribe properties to entities.' He goes on to point out (and this is where he differs from Dixon) that it does not follow "that all (or indeed any) of the adjectives [...] will be lexemes; it is in principle possible that some (or indeed) all of these should be formed by productive grammatical processes belonging to other parts-of-speech" (ibid)

It should be noted that different findings will be made in respect of the adjective class in a language depending on whether one follows Dixon's or Lyons' definition. Essentially, by following Dixon the only items that one will consider as adjectives are roots whereas by following Lyons one will consider both roots and derived items. The discussions that follow will be related to the two views.

In fact, the two definitions seem to have been tacitly followed in previous statements on the Ewe adjective class. Thus, for Westermann (1930:183);

There are no words which are adjectives pure and simple. All expressions which serve as adjectives are either (1) also substantives or formed from substantives or (2) actually verbs or formed from verbs or (3) combinations of verbs and substantives or (4) also adverbs or (5) picture words [i.e. ideophones F.A.]

Evidently, Westermann thinks that there are no adjectival roots in the language and that all forms that could behave syntactically and semantically as adjectives on occasion were either derived or belonged to another word class. But as Ansre (1966:213) rightly points out, albeit in a footnote: 'The assertion by Westermann that "there are no words which are adjectives pure and simple" is inaccurate and must be attributed mainly to lack of sophistication in tonal analysis and too great a tendency to etymologise.' This may be so but Westermann's observation throws some light on the categories upon which adjectives, derived or underived are based both diachronically and synchronically. If today we cannot justify some of the connections that Westermann suggests, it is probably because the lexicalization process has been completed. This implies that the language may have a number of items that are adjectives which are on the way of losing their productive sources (see below for examples).

Be that as it may it seems that Ansre's account also lacks the required degree of sophistication. He sets up two structural classes of adjectives: the simple - monomorphemic, presumably the underived adjectives - and the non-simple, the polymorphemic, or the derived forms. He does not make any statements about the size of these sub-classes. More importantly, he fails to recognise and explain that some of his monomorphemic adjectives can also function as verbs and/or adverbs. Two of the three simple adjectives that Ansre (*ibid*) cites behave in this way. The point will be illustrated here with one of them (see example [1]).

It should be recalled that Ewe is an S V O X basic word order language and the fillers of these slots in clause structure are nominal phrases (NP); verb phrases (VP); nominal phrases (NP) and adverbial phrases (AP) (including prepositional phrases (PP)) respectively. The category membership of an item is basically determined by its distributional properties within these structures. The nuclei of NPs and VPs are nominals and verbals and any item that has this function in a particular construction converts to a nominal or a verbal as the case may be. Consider the distribution of *tralaa* in [1] and the different Ewe forms for 'good' in [2]:

1a] [ɲutsu tralaa la]_{NP} [va]_{VP}.
 man thin-tallDEF come
 'The tall and thin (?lanky) man came.'

[1b] [ɲutsu la]_{NP} [tralaa]_{VP}.

man DEF thin-tall
 'The man is tall and thin ?lanky'

[1c] [ŋuʈsu la]_{NP} [kɔ́]_{VP} [tralaa]_{AP}.
 man DEF be tall thin-tall
 'The man is tall in a tallish-thiny (lanky) manner.'

[2a] [dɛví nyuí' la]_{NP} [xɔ]_{VP} [fetu]_{NP}.
 child good DEF get pay
 'The good child got a prize.'

[2b] [dɛví la]_{NP} [nyo]_{VP}.
 child DEF be good
 'The child is good.'

[2c] [dɛví la]_{NP} [ha'ya]_{VP} [nyuie]_{AP}.¹
 child DEF recover good
 'The child recovered well'

The word *tralaa* is one of Ansre's simple adjectives. It can be seen from the example that in addition to functioning as an adjective in [1a] it can also function as a verb as in [1b], and as an adverb as in [1c] without any change in form. Some support for this can be found from a comparison of the forms in [2]. In [2a] *nyuí* is an adjective and it is derived from the verb *nyo* which occurs in [2b]. The adverbial form *nyuie* in [2c] is derived from the adjective form. In this case the difference in grammatical function is overtly marked. Thus some of the so-called simple adjectives are presumably monomorphemic but their behaviour is not simple. In the following section the grammatical behaviour of the adjectival elements are described.

5.2.2 A grammatical definition.

The view adopted in this study is that word classes in a language are established on the basis of their form and grammatical function on language internal grounds and then named and compared across languages on the basis of their semantic content (cf. Schacter 1985, Dixon forthcoming). The classes thus established can be validated on the basis of their function in discourse (cf. Hopper & Thompson 1984, 1985, and Thompson 1988 on the discourse basis of nouns and verbs and adjectives) and /or on the basis of their conceptual evolution metaphorically and diachronically (see Heine & Claudi 1986 and Claudi & Heine 1986 for illustrations from Ewe).

Primarily, the adjective class in Ewe has to be defined in terms of distributional properties. A number of modifiers can occur in an endocentric NP, namely; adjectives (ADJ), quantifiers, including numerals (QT), determiners (DET) which can be realised by either the definite article (DEF) or the indefinite article (INDEF) or demonstratives (DEM), or content question markers (CQ), the plural marker (PL) and intensifiers (INT). A subclass of intensifiers can precede the noun head, all other modifiers come after the noun. The linear order of these items in relation to the noun head in an NP is represented in [3].

$$\text{NP} \rightarrow (\text{INT}) \left\{ \begin{array}{c} \text{N} \\ \text{PRO} \end{array} \right\} (\text{ADJ})^* (\text{QT}) (\text{DET}) (\text{PL}) (\text{INT})^*$$

Example [4] below is a simple NP in which all the slots have been filled. Notice that there are three adjectives in this example. In [5] further examples of NPs are given with different types of modifiers together with adjectives.

INT N ADJ ADJ ADJ
 [4] neneń nyɔńu kɔkɔ tralaa dzetugbe
 such womantall slender beautiful

QT DEMPL INT INT
 eve ma' wo' koń' ko
 two that PL just only
 'only those two tall slender and beautiful women'

[5a] awu ɣi' la'
 garment white DEF
 'the white dress'

[5b] to ga'goglo ma'
 river big deep DEM
 'that big deep river'

[5c] dzidzɔ ma- nya' gblɔ aɖe'
 joy NEG INV say INDEF
 'an indescribable joy'

[5d] neneń ɖevi' vlo' ma' wo' kata'
 such child bad that PL all
 'all such worthless children'

The adjective in Ewe from these examples can be described as an item that immediately follows the noun head and precedes other modifiers if there are any. It serves to describe a property of the noun. The adjective is used only attributively. If it is used predicatively it undergoes category conversion to either a verb, a noun or an adverb. The conversion may be overtly or covertly marked. It has already been noted that post verbally Ewe allows noun phrases or adverbial phrases. There are two verbs 'to be' in Ewe, the 'locative/existential be' *le* and the identification or equational copula *nye*. Adverbials occur after the former and nominals fill the complement slot of the latter. When the adjectival terms that are used attributively occur in these environments they convert to these classes. This conversion is marked for some of them as we shall see below

5.2.3. A classification

The set of items that has the distribution outlined in [3] can be classified according to whether they are derived or derived adjectives. In some cases it is not easy to decide what the derivational status of an item is. On the basis of their structure and derivational history, the adjectival elements that satisfy the grammatical definition may be grouped as follows:

5.2.3.1 Underived adjectives

I assume that there are two subclasses of underived adjectives which are by and large distinguished by whether they are ideophones or not. The classes are outlined below:

Class IA: Adjectival roots (monomorphemic items) which have to be overtly marked for conversion to other categories, for example adverbs. There are five of these (as far as I can determine at this stage):

<i>ga</i> 'big',	<i>vi</i> 'small' (DIMENSION)
<i>vɔ</i> 'bad',	(VALUE)
<i>ɣi</i> 'white'	<i>dzi</i> 'red' (COLOUR)

Note the broad semantic types to which they belong.

Class IB: Basic monomorphemic forms which convert to other parts-of-speech without any overt modification. These are largely ideophones. They may be subclassified on the basis of their structural properties. Thus a subset of these are those ideophonic expressions for which there is no isomorphic relationship between the meaning and the form. Some of these are: *fe* 'young', *sue* 'small/little', *yibo* 'black', *blibo* 'whole', *gbɔlo* 'empty', *dɔ* 'dull/slow/lazy' etc.

The second subclass can be described as those items that are true ideophones in the sense that they have their peculiarities. Thus they have long vowels or

their syllable could be reversed without change of meaning . Their tone may also be varied to effect different shades of meaning. Some examples are: nyadrii/drinyaa ‘tough, hard’, kpɔdzɔɔ/dzɔkpɔɔ ‘fat, thick’, tsaklii/klitsaa ‘rough’, lɔbɔɔ ‘long’, nogoo/gonoo ‘round’ toɖɔɔ̀ ‘roud (of a big object), toɖɔé’ ‘round’ (of a small object) etc.

This class of underived adjectives. i.e. Class I, is an open class more or less because many more items could be added especially to the ideophonic subclass. Being underived they are also ‘deep’ adjectives in Dixon’s terms. If this proposal is accepted then it could be said that ewe has a large open class of underived or deep adjectives. However, if ideophones are ignored in the classification and treatment of adjectives, then the characterisation would obviously be different. The implication for Ewe in that case is that it has a very small class of basic adjectives consisting of five items. This shows that the kind of data considered in the analysis affects the characterisation of the adjective class in a language. Apart from these underived adjectives, however, Ewe also has a number of productive processes for forming words to express property concepts. These processes are described in the next section.

5.2.3.2 Derived Adjectives

There are distinct adjectivization processes that are employed in Ewe. These processes make use of affixation, reduplication and compounding. Even though some of these processes are very productive some traces of lexicalization are discernible. I will refer to the set of derived adjectives as members of Class II. These adjectives come from various sources and they are described in relation to their basic sources.

5.2.3.2.1 Adjectives derived from verbals:

Several adjectives are derived from predicates. These fall into a number of subclasses depending on the process of derivation.

(a) Some are derived by the suffixation of a high-toned high front vowel i. This vowel gets assimilated to the vowel of the verbal. This may be represented roughly as follows:

	i	/	u	_
			i	_
i	e	/	o	_
			e	_
	ɛ	/	ɔ	_
			ɛ	_

Where the vowel of the stem is the low open central vowel /a/, the *i* vowel gets fused with it to become [ɛ]. Dialects vary when the stem vowel is a half-open one. In that case, some varieties including the standard, undergo a vowel raising process before the above rule applies. That is $o \rightarrow u/-i$, for example, before the other rule. Consider the following examples:

[6a] $nyo' + i \rightarrow nyui'$
 be good good

[6b] $b\text{ɔ}b\text{ɔ} + i \rightarrow b\text{ɔ}b\text{ɔ}\epsilon$
 be soft soft

[6c] $baka' + i \rightarrow ba\epsilon e'$
 mix mixed/mashed

(b) Many adjectivals are derived by the reduplication of an intransitive verbal stem and, for some dialects, a high-tone suffixation.

[7a] $k\text{ɔ}' \rightarrow k\text{ɔ}k\text{ɔ}$
 be tall tall

[7b] $se\tilde{ } \rightarrow se\acute{ }se\tilde{ }$
 be strong strong/hard

[7c] $fa' \rightarrow fafa$
 be cold/cool cold/cool

[7d] $tsi \rightarrow tsitsi$
 be old old

[7e] $qu \rightarrow ququ$
 eat chewing/edible

It should be pointed out that this process is different from that of verbal nominalisation by reduplication. Observe that the prefix which always has a CV segmental structure maintains the tone of the root in the examples. That is, if the tone of the stem is high the prefix also has high tone but if it is low the prefix has a low tone as well. This is the condition for the adjectivals. For the nominals, however, the CV prefix always has a low tone irrespective of whether the stem has a high or low tone. In addition, the nominalisation does not involve a high tone suffixation. Compare the following examples:

[8a] $k\text{ɔ}k\text{ɔ}' \text{ me}' - ny\epsilon' \text{ tsitsi} \quad o$

Tallness NEG be oldness NEG
 'Being tall is not being old'

[7b] $\text{d}\check{\text{e}}\text{v}\acute{\text{i}} \quad \text{k}\check{\text{o}}\text{k}\check{\text{o}} \text{m}\acute{\text{e}} - \text{n}\check{\text{y}}\acute{\text{e}} \text{d}\check{\text{e}}\text{v}\acute{\text{i}} \quad \text{t}\check{\text{s}}\text{i}\text{s}\text{i} \text{o}.$
 Child tall NEG be child old NEG
 'A tall child is not an old child'

In [7a] the underlined forms are nominals while in [7b] they are adjectivals.

If Ewe has such a distinct process of forming adjectives different from that of nominalization then it can hardly be denied that one can recognise a grammatical adjective class.

(c) A small class of verbs usually with a reduplicated structure as their stem are converted to adjectives by the suffixation of a high tone.

Verb → Adjective

[8a] $\text{l}\text{o}\text{l}\acute{\text{o}} \rightarrow \text{l}\text{o}\text{l}\check{\text{o}}$
 be large large/big

[8b] $\text{d}\text{i}\text{d}\text{i} \rightarrow \text{d}\text{i}\text{d}\check{\text{i}}$
 be long long

[8c] $\text{v}\text{i}\text{v}\acute{\text{i}} \rightarrow \text{v}\text{i}\text{v}\check{\text{i}}$
 be sweet sweet

I suspect that these disyllabic verbs where the two syllables are identical in structure must have gone through a cycle from a monosyllabic verb to adjectival (by reduplication) back to verb (without modification) and this is the present stem from which the adjectival is derived. Some support for my suspicion comes from the existence of a nominal $\text{v}\check{\text{i}}\text{v}\check{\text{i}}$ 'sweetness'. The tonal structure of this form suggests that it must have come from a verbal $^*\text{v}\acute{\text{i}}$ just as the adjectival $\text{v}\check{\text{i}}\text{v}\check{\text{i}}$ although such a verb no longer exists today.

Further evidence for my contention is provided by the fact that some forms in the language seem to be undergoing a similar process. For such forms we have both monosyllabic and disyllabic variants.

$\text{s}\acute{\text{e}} :: \text{s}\acute{\text{e}}\text{s}\acute{\text{e}}$ 'be strong'
 $\text{k}\text{e} :: \text{k}\text{e}\text{k}\text{e}$ 'be wide'
 $\text{k}\acute{\text{o}} :: \text{k}\acute{\text{o}}\text{k}\acute{\text{o}}$ 'be tall'

glo :: goglo 'be deep'

The disyllabic form of the verb tends to have a causative and/or intensity sense which is lacking in the monosyllabic form.

(d) Adjectivals are also derived from predicates made up of a verb root and a nominal which is its inherent complement by compounding the two items and suffixing a high tone to the product. Some examples are:

[9a] nya' nu' → nyañu''
 know thing wise/intelligent
 'to know'

[9b] φo ði → φoði
 strike dirt dirty
 'to be dirty/to make dirty'

[9c] va ηu → vaη
 move side jealous
 'to be jealous'

[9d] xə ηkə' → xəηkə''
 get name famous
 'to be(come) famous'

[9e.] le' də → leðə
 catch disease sick/ill
 'to be sick'

This process of forming adjectives from phrasal predicates is different from their nominalisation. To nominalize them, first their V N order is permuted and then the verbal part is reduplicated. Thus

[10a] va ηu → ηuva va
 move side jealousy
 'be jealous'

[10b] le' də → dəlele'
 catch disease sickness/disease
 be sick'

Nor is this adjectivalization process the result of a reduction in relative clauses. In many languages of Africa (cf Hagège 1974, for example) the formation of attributive adjectivals has been ascribed to the rule of relative clause reduction. No such rule exists in Ewe (see Lewis 1985 and references there on Ewe relativization).

I submit that the compounding of V+N is another distinct adjectivalization process which is different from nominalization and relativization. But what would one say is the deep category source of these adjectivals? Are they deep verbs because they come from predicates? Presumably, but could they also be assigned to two deep categories V and N since they come from both? Here again we are confronted with a choice and our decision can affect our overall typology of the adjective class in Ewe.

(e) Similar problems are encountered with adjectivals which are the product of the compounding of the inverse marker, *nyá*, (see chapter 9) and a verb. A negative derivational morpheme *ma-* may be prefixed to such a form (see §). A high tone suffix is also added

[11a] *ma- nya' gblɔ*
 NEG INV say[~]
 'unsayable'

[11b] *ma- nya' se*
 NEG INV hear[~]
 'unpleasant to hear'

[11c] *nya' kpɔ*
 INV see[~]
 'nice'

It is worth pointing out that where a verb does not express a property or quality in itself, there are two strategies that may be used to form a modifier out of it. The first is by relativisation, that is the verb is used in a relative clause introduced by *si* which is used to modify the noun. For example,

[12a] *fia si le tsa- tsa- m'*
 chief REL be:PRES wander-REDPROG
 'the chief who is wandering'

The second strategy is one of agent nominalisation. That is by forming a nominal out of it by suffixing the agent marker *la'* to a reduplicated form of an intransitive verb or to a permuted form of the constituents of a phrasal

predicate. Such nominals can be used to attribute qualities etc. to a nominal. Consider the following examples:

[12b] fia tsa-tsa- la'
 chief wander-REDNER
 'the wandering chief'

[12c] nyɔ́nu ŋu-va-la'
 womanside-move-NER
 'the jealous woman'

There tends to be a pause between the noun head and the nominalised modifier, the structure could therefore be described as one of two nominals in apposition. They should not therefore be considered adjectives. These strategies are distinct from adjectivalisation processes and should therefore be distinguished from them.

5.2.3.2.2 Adjectives derived from clauses

Some adjectives may be formed from clauses or parts of clauses. Thus the constituents of a clause could be chained to form an adjectival. This process is more common for negative items therefore the *ma-* derivative is prefixed accordingly. The high-tone suffixation rule applies as well.

[13a] te (X) kpɔ́ → matekpɔ́
 drag see
 'try/test X' 'untried/untested'
 (e.g.. xɔ́lɔ́ matekpɔ́ la' auli- e'
 friend untried TP abyss aFOC
 'An untried friend is death').

[13b] tsɔ́ ame gbɔ́ → ma-tsɔ́-ame-gbɔ́
 be near person side 'distant'
 (e.g.: ave matsɔ́amegbɔ́ ...
 forest distant ...
 'a distant forest ...')

In some cases some of the elements of the original expression are dropped in the adjectivalization process:

[14a] nya' ta le X nu →
 know head at X mouth
 'to manage (something) X'

ma- nya' ta - nu
 NEG know head mouth
 'unmanageable'

[14b] gble' ame fe' nu' →
 spoil person poss thing
 'spoil someone's thing'

gble' ame- nu
 spoil person thing
 'destructive'

(e.g.: gbɔ gble'ame-nu
 goat destructive
 'a destructive goat')

Some of these collocate in a fixed way with certain nouns. Nonetheless they are adjectivals in the language.

5.2.3.2.3 Adjectives derived from nominals

Another compounding process that yields adjectivals involves a noun and an adjective. Usually, the noun pertains to a body part. When compounded, the product is used to qualify another noun.

[15a] φodo ga' → φodo-ga'
 stomach big pot-bellied/big-stomached

[15b] ta yi → ta-yi'
 head white white-head/grey-haired

[15c] ta gbɔlo → ta-gbɔlo
 head empty bald

[15d] afɔ le → afɔle
 leg thin thin-legged.

Thus Class II, the derived adjectives, is a very large class with the members coming from various sources. The processes of deriving them are so productive and distinct from the processes of derivation of other categories such as nouns. This makes the class an open one. Class III described in the next section, on the other hand, is a very small and controversial class. They are items whose derivational status is not very clear.

5.2.3.3 Derived or non-derived adjectives, or what?

The items that I have grouped here are those which behave adjectivally but whose forms suggest that they are probably derived but whose sources cannot be reconstructed with any degree of certainty. In some cases the relationship between the forms and their putative bases are lost. For example, there is a form ϕυϕlu ‘empty’ for which one can predict and postulate an underlying verb *ϕlu based on the rules of adjectival reduplication. However, there is no evidence that this verbal form exists.

kpui ‘short’ is another member of this class which Westermann (1930: 183) suggests could have been derived from the noun kpo ‘stump’. There is not much evidence elsewhere of the process of N + i → Adj. It would be more plausible if there were a verb kpo which would behave like nyó ‘be good’ to get nyuí ‘good’. There is no association today between kpo and kpui in the minds of speakers.

Another Class III item is vévé (véví in some dialects) ‘important’. The only putative source of this item is the verb vé ‘to be scarce’, but the connection between the two items is difficult to establish in the present day language.

xóxó ‘old’ is another problematic adjectival term. By its reduplicative structure it probably comes from a form xó. There is such a form but it is a noun which occurs in expressions such as tu xó and da xó which mean ‘to recount the past (legend)’. However if we associate this item with xóxó then the latter would be the only adjectival that converts from N to Adj by reduplication. It does not seem insightful to link the two items. In fact, the item xóxó exhibits the syntactic behaviour of Class Ib items where it can function as a verbal or an adverbial without any overt marking. In the latter case, there seems to be some semantic shift involved.

[16a] agbale xóxó'la' vu(Adj)
 book old DEF tear
 ‘The old book got torn.’

[16b] agbale la' vuxóxó'(Adv)
 book DEF tear already
 ‘The book is torn already’

[16c] agbale la' xóxó'ɲufó'(V)
 book DEF old very much
 ‘The book is very old.’

The pertinent question in relation to all these items is what their deep parts-of-speech are? Applying the guidelines that have been followed in this study, it seems best to consider them as deep adjectives since we cannot establish beyond doubt the connections between them and their putative sources. Taking this stance, again, has implications for the final typology that is proposed for Ewe. It implies that the size of the basic adjective elements is bigger than it would have been if these were not considered to be basic adjectives.

5.2.3.4 Summary:

In this section, it has been asserted that Ewe has a syntactically defined class of adjectives both derived and underived ones. At the basic level, the class of adjectives is made up of a fairly large set of non-derived items which are either ideophonic or non-ideophonic. The sources of the derived members of the class and the morphological operations that are employed to derive them have been examined. It has been shown that these processes are distinctively adjectival derivations which are different from nominalisation and relativization. In the next section the morphological and syntactic behaviour of these items are described. The lexical relations that operate within the class are also explored.

5.2.4 Morpho-syntactic behaviour of adjectival elements.

(a) All adjectival elements in Ewe can be inflected for comparative/superlative degree by the suffixation of the morpheme $-t\underset{\vee}{\text{ɔ}}$, as illustrated in the following examples

[17a] agbale~ yéye - t $\underset{\vee}{\text{ɔ}}$
 book new ~ cmpv
 'the newer/newest book'

[17b] yayra ga~ t $\underset{\vee}{\text{ɔ}}$
 blessing big ~ cmpv
 'the greatest blessing'

[17c] ɲɔtsu-vi' tsitsi - t $\underset{\vee}{\text{ɔ}}$
 man-DIM old ~ cmpv
 'the oldest boy'

In this form the adjectivals could be used without the explicit mention of the nominals they modify. It is assumed by the speaker that the nominal is uniquely identifiable by the addressee. In this respect, one could think of $t\underset{\vee}{\text{ɔ}}$ as a

nominaliser, making it possible for an adjective to function as head of a nominal phrase. For example,

[18a] dzĩ tɔ meˀ kpaˀ naˀ o.
 red̃ cmpv NEG fade HAB NEG
 ‘The red one does not fade’

(b) Some non-ideophonic adjectives may also be suffixed by -á to form nominals, which is perhaps the definiteness marker. This makes it possible for them to be used to refer to specific entities with the particular property denoted by the adjective. Thus the sentence in [18a] can also be realised as [18b] below.

[18b] dzĩ aˀ meˀ - kpaˀ naˀ o.
 red DEF NEG fade HAB NEG
 ‘The reddish one does not fade.’

The difference between (16a) and (16b), that is, between the use of -tɔ and -á on adjectives is that the latter presupposes a number of items with different degrees of the quality expressed by the adjective to which it is attached and a particular one is selected as having the highest degree in the class. -á, by contrast, indicates that an entity being referred to is one that has among other qualities the property represented by the adjective.

Adjectives share the suffixation of tɔ with some members of other nominal modifiers. Quantifiers may also take this affix. For two of these gbã ‘first’ and mlɔe ‘last’, the suffix marks them as ordinals. For others, the suffix shows that the nominal that they are modifying belongs to a set of items that has that characteristic. Compare the following:

[19a]	d̩kaˀ	gbã	gbã tɔ
	one	first	first̃ compv
			the first one
[19b]	eve	eve - lia	eve-tɔ
	two	two th	twõ compv
		‘second’	‘the forked one’
[19c]	atɔ̃	atɔ̃ - lia	atɔ̃ - tɔ
	five	five th	five compv
		fifth	the five-pronged one

[19d] mləe
last

mləe-tə
last compv
'the last one'

Some nouns also take this suffix, but when they do they connote adjectival qualities:

[20a] dɛvi' - tə
child compv
'younger/youngest'

[20b] ŋutsu - tə
man compv
'male, masculine'

[20c] nyɔ́nu - tə
woman compv
'female, feminine'

Postpositional nouns that indicate location also take this suffix. The resulting forms refer attribute a property of being located in the place denoted by the postpositional noun to the (understood) nominal head

[21a] ɲgɔ(gbe)- tɔ
 front ˘ compv
 'the front one'

[21b] gɔme - tɔ
 under ˘ compv
 'the one under'

[21c] megbe - tɔ
 back ˘ compv
 'the back one'

The core function of tɔ is to isolate an item from a class as having the highest degree of a feature among other items. Thus, it is basically inflectional. -á, however, is derivational. It even occurs on nouns to derive other nouns from them. For example:

[22] ade → ade-a'
 'game' hunter

Sharing this property with nominals and other nominal modifiers indicates that this morphological property is not necessarily criterial for the adjective class although it is applicable to all adjectivals.

(c) Another property that adjectivals share with nouns is that they can be marked with the diminutive suffix -i (The same rules of assimilation that operate in relation to the adjectival derivational suffix are applicable here, see §5.2.3.2).

[23a] Nouns

go + i → gui
 gourd DIM small gourd

gagba + i → gagbe
 metal bowl DIM small metal bowl

adɔ + i → adɔɛ
 squirrelDIM 'small squirrel'

[23b] Adjectives

fáfá + i → fafe'
 cool DIM 'cool'

yibɔ + i → yibɔɛ
 black DIM 'blackie'

There is no need for agreement between the noun and the adjective in terms of the marking for the diminutive. Either the noun or the adjective modifying it could take the diminutive without requiring the other to do the same.

Apart from the sense of 'smallness' the diminutive on the adjective tends to carry an appreciative sense. Roughly speaking, one of the components of the diminutive on the adjective can be paraphrased as

'I think of the property/quality as something good that X should have'

(d) Several adjectival elements may be adverbialised by the suffixation of -i (The same rules of vowel assimilation apply here see) In addition dissimilation occurs if the vowel of the stem is -i (see examples below).

[24] kpui' + i → kpuié'
 short 'shortly'

nyui' + i → nyuié'
 good 'well'

vɔ̃ + i → vɔ̃ɛ'
 bad 'badly'

sešẽ + i → sesiě'
 hard strongly

[A dialectal variant of -í is ɔ́. Thus nyui + ɔ́ → nyuiɔ́, kpui + ɔ́ → kpuiɔ́. sešẽ + ɔ́ → sešẽɔ́ etc.]

Other adjectival elements may function as verbs or adverbs without any overt marking. Compare the following sets of sentences:

[25a] ɔ́evi la'nyo' (V)
 child DEF good
 'The child is good'

ɖevi nyuí' la' (Adj)
 child good DEF
 'The good child'

ɖevi la' le nyuie
 child DEF be:PRES well
 'The child is well'

[25b] agbale~ la' yeýe ñufó' (V)
 Book DEF new very much
 'The book is very new'

agbale yeýe la' (Adj)
 Book new DEF
 'The new book'

agbale~ la' le yeýe. (Adv)
 Book DEF be:PRES new
 'The book is new.'

Notice that the relevant item in [25a] is morphologically marked for the different syntactic functions, i.e. *nyo'* is the verb form, *nyui* is the morphologically derived adjective form, and *nyuie* is the morphologically derived adverbial form. However, for these three functions there is no difference in the form of *yeýe* in [25b].

(e) In fact, some of the Class IA adjectives carry this property further into the nominals. Thus although some adjectives have to be nominalised by the prefixation of a low tone, others can be used nominally without any marking. The small set of adjectives that can be nominalised by the prefixation of a low tone are listed in [26] below. (Note that the low tone fuses with the high tone of the adjective stems to yield rising tones.)

[26]	Adjective	→	Noun
	gã	→	gã
	big		great
	vɔ̃	→	vɔ̃
	bad		evil
	vi'	→	vi
	small		a little
	yi'	→	yi
	white		white
	nyui'	→	nyui
	good		good

It should be observed that apart from nyuí 'good' the members of this set all belong to Class IA. The interesting question is why should nyui' be drafted into this class of adjectives. This is one of the peculiar things about this adjective. The other peculiarity is that it is one of the very few, if not the only one attested of the adjectivals that is derived from a non-ideophonic verb without reduplication. It has gone a step ahead here to behave just like underived forms. It seems reasonable to argue the nyui' has emerged from verb to adjective. This probably occurred because the language wanted to fill the gap in the antonymic pair in Class IA where vɔ̃ 'bad' originally had no opposite in Class IA.

Be that as it may, forms such as sue 'small' yéye 'new' and xóxó 'old' among others do not undergo any morphologically marked nominalisation although they can function syntactically as nominals, as yéye does in [27a].

[27a] xa' xo'xo'kplɔ - a nu' nyuiewu' - a' yéye
 broom old sweep HAB thing well exceed HAB new
 'An old broom sweeps better than a new one.'

[27b] e'ya - e' nye' sue le wo' dome
 3SG aFOC besmall at 3PL between
 'S/he is the smallest among them'

(f) Adjectival iteration: Several adjectives may be repeated for intensity and/or emphasis. Adjectival iteration differs from minimal or verbal reduplication in the sense that each instance of the adjective may be considered a word.

[28a] xɔ gã- gãwo´
 building big big PL
 ‘very big houses’

[28b] aɖu sue - sue wo´
 tooth small small PL
 ‘very small teeth’

[28c] awu ye´ye ye´ye ye´ye wo` - nye´
 garment new new new 3SG be
 ‘a NEW garment’

By way of summary, I have described the various patterns of morphological and syntactic behaviour of adjectival elements in Ewe. One feature that has been not been mentioned is the formation of semantically opposite items by ma- derivation. This is described in the next section together with other lexical relations that operate within the adjectival class.

5.2.5 Lexical Relations

The adjectival elements contract three basic kinds of lexical relations with one another: synonymy, complementarity, and antonymy (cf. Lyons 1977; Creider 1975). The last two involve semantic opposition.

5.2.5.1 Synonyms

The following are some synonym sets:

[29] vɔ̃ vɔ̃ɖi; vló; baɖa;dovo´ gbe´gble´(spoilt) ‘bad’

Note that the first item is a Class IA term while the last one is a Class II item, i.e. it is a derived adjective. The other items belong to Class IB.

[30] ví sue; tukui; kake (tiny) ‘small/little’

Again, the first underlined item is an original adjective and the last is a derived one, i.e. Class II item. The others are Class IB forms.

Other sets are as follows:

[31] gã (big, great) lolo (large, big)
 titri (thick, fat) dami (fat)

[32] dzĩ : babiã 'red'
 red 'macro red'
 yi' : fufu 'white'
 'white' 'macro-white'
 yibo : yoyō̃ 'black'

[33] lubuí : xãxa(ε); mamia; 'narrow' etc.

5.2.5.2 Complementaries:

The colour adjectives are complementaries of one another:

[34] dzĩ yi' yibo
 babiafufu yoyō̃
 'red' 'white' 'black'

Another set of complementaries involves PHYSICAL PROPERTY ideas. This set seems to have a superordinate term bíbí 'well-cooked'. The set includes:

[35] ɔ̃ɔ̃; meme; tɔ̃tɔ̃
 cooked (with water) 'baked' 'roasted/fried'

5.2.5.3 Antonyms

We can distinguish two types of antonym sets. Those that involve ma-derivation and those which do not. Some of the pairs of the latter set include:

[36]

gã	'big'	ví;	sue	'small'
yéye	'new'	xóxó;	tsitsi	'old'
fẽ	'young'	tsitsi		'old'
nyuí	'good'	vō̃		'bad'
gbadza	'flat,wide'	lúbuí,	xáxe'	'narrow'
gbõgo	'unripe'	ɔ̃ɔ̃		'ripe'
blibo	'whole'	gbagba		'broken'
mũmu	'raw'	ɔ̃ɔ̃		'cooked'
kɔ̃kɔ̃'	'tall'	kpuí		'short'
didi	'long'	kpuí		'short'
viví	'sweet'	vévé		'sour'

dáɖa''	'sharp'	kuku''	'blunt'
gbaǵɛ	'alive'	kuku''	'dead'
kpekpe	'heavy'	wóɖzóé	'light'

Most adjectivals that are derived from predicates can form their opposites by prefixing ma- to their base. If the surface form of the unmarked item is reduplicated in structure ma- is repeated with each of its parts.

[37]	nyańu''	ma-nyańu''
	'clever/wise'	'unwise'
	difo	ma-difo
	'guilty'	'innocent'
	seṣẽ	ma-sẽ-ma-sẽ
	'difficult'	'easy'
	bíbí	ma-bí-ma-bí
	'well-cooked''	'not well-cooked'

It should be observed that some of the adjectives have lexical antonyms as well as morphologically derived ones. For example,

[38]	ḍi ḍi	ma-ḍi-ma-ḍi	gbo-ǵbo
	ripe	unripe	unripe/raw
	ɖaɖa	ma-ɖa-ma-ɖa	múmu
	cooked	uncooked	raw/fresh

It will be pointed out (§5.3) that one of the dimensions of Dixon's typology is based on the deep level category of polar opposites. Some comments are therefore in order here. The oppositions involving big/small; new/old; (good/bad) and broad/narrow in Ewe have both poles expressed by deep adjectives by our system of characterization (see §5.2.3).

Curiously enough, the marked poles of the following pairs are deep adjectives: large/small; tall/short; long/short. Recall that these are all DIMENSION concepts and also that the unmarked forms have been suspected of losing their verbal bases and on the way of full lexicalization (cf. § 5.2.3.2.1).

The unmarked poles of the pairs young/old; raw/cooked; whole/broken and unripe/ripe are all deep adjectives while the marked ones are deep verbs.

Other oppositions listed above are expressed by deep verbs. To recapitulate, the Ewe situation with respect to the oppositions is as follows:

	ACTION OPPOSITION	NON-ACTION OPPOSITION
deep	Adj - V	V - V
surface	Adj - Adj	Adj - Adj

It would appear that at the deep level Ewe is somewhere between strongly verbal to neutral languages. It is curious though that the non-action oppositions are deep verbs. On the surface, however, Ewe is a strongly adjectival language (see discussion of Dixon's typology below).

5.2.3.6 Summary

In this section, I have outlined the various morpho-syntactic properties of Ewe adjectivals. These properties would have seemed very arbitrary and chaotic, but we shall show in section 5.4 that if we approach the adjectival elements from a semantic perspective in terms of their semantic types some plausible predictions can be made about the nature of the elements. It will become clear, for example, that particular morphological processes tend to be employed to derive members of particular semantic types. Since the notion of 'semantic type' is taken from the work of Dixon, in the next section, an outline of the main points of his 'semantics-prior' framework as they relate to adjectives is presented. This is done to locate the Ewe data in a cross-linguistic perspective.

5.3 Dixon's framework for a cross-linguistic comparison of adjectives

In this section I will outline briefly the main tenets of Dixon's 'semantics prior' approach to grammar, and the findings of his ingenious and perceptively insightful study of the adjective word class crosslinguistically. I will also raise some theoretical and descriptive problems associated with the framework.

Dixon distinguishes three levels of description; a universal semantic level, a basic or 'deep' level and a surface level. At the UNIVERSAL SEMANTIC LEVEL concepts represented by dictionary items in a language are grouped into 'semantic types' such as AGE, COLOUR, KIN, OBJECTS, AFFECT, MOTION, etc. Usually, one item is associated with only one semantic type but there could be overlapping membership (Dixon 1984:583). The members of a semantic type have a common semantic element or feature, and they also tend

to behave in similar ways syntactically and morphologically. [Dixon reckons there are about thirty of these types.] For example, English 'red' belongs to the type COLOUR and 'walk' to the type MOTION.

At the BASIC LEVEL, the semantic type to which a lexical item belongs is associated normally with a single part-of-speech in the language. For example, in English, MOTION is linked to the class Verb, KIN to the class Noun, and COLOUR to the class Adjective. Thus 'red' is a 'deep' adjective and 'walk' is a 'deep' verb.

The SURFACE LEVEL is the one at which items can undergo conversion to other categories. Thus the deep adjective 'red' could become a surface verb 'redden' while the deep verb 'walk' could yield the surface noun 'walker'.

The semantic types which constitute the word class adjective are listed below with English examples:

1. DIMENSION - big, large, little, small, long, short, narrow, wide,
2. PHYSICAL PROPERTY - hard, soft, sweet, sour, rough, smooth, hot
3. COLOUR - black, white, red, green, yellow, blue ...
4. HUMAN PROPENSITY - jealous, happy, kind, rude, proud, cruel...
5. AGE - new, young, old....
6. VALUE - good, bad, precious, delicious, atrocious....
7. SPEED - fast, quick, slow....
8. POSITION - high, low, near, far....
9. ORIGIN - English, American, Australian, Ghanaian, Polish
10. PURPOSE - dining table, drawing board hunting dog ...
11. COMPOSITION - wooden chair, plastic bag, golden box ...

The first seven of these were the basis of the cross linguistic comparison of the adjective word class. Two typological dimensions were set up on the basis of the survey. The first has to do with whether a language has an OPEN or a CLOSED adjective class. Those languages in which all the seven semantic types were associated with one part-of-speech are said to have an OPEN class. In this case either they fall into a class different from the class of MOTION, and of OBJECTS etc., that is, they form an adjective class. Dyirbal is an example of such a language. Or the seven types belong to the same class with the MOTION and AFFECT types, that is a verb class, as is the case, for instance, in Yurok, Chinese, and Samoan. In addition to these two possibilities that Dixon outlined, one might add a third where the seven types could belong to the same class as the members of the KIN and OBJECTS types, that is a noun class. This seems to be the case in Quechua (Schachter 1985:17) and Warlpiri. It should be pointed out that in more recent work, Dixon insists that one can

make a distinction between the members of the adjective class of every language and other word classes such as Verb and Noun. He argues that Chinese has a set of words which may be described as adjectives and are distinct in behaviour from other stative verbs (see Dixon forthcoming)

The languages with a CLOSED adjective class are those in which some of the seven types are associated with one word class, the adjective class, and some with other parts-of-speech to which other semantic types belong, for example, noun, or verb. Typically, in these languages, the DIMENSION, VALUE, AGE and COLOUR types are associated with the adjective word class. PHYSICAL PROPERTY has the tendency to belong to the verb class and HUMAN PROPENSITY tends to go with the noun class and SPEED is grouped with adverbs. Dixon's examples of such languages include Hausa, Igbo and Hua.

The second dimension has to do with whether the language is verb dominated or adjective dominated. STRONGLY ADJECTIVAL languages such as Dyirbal are those in which the seven types are exclusively associated with a single part-of-speech, the adjective class. In such a language the polar opposites all belong to the same class. In STRONGLY VERBAL languages the marked pole of many adjectival oppositions are realised by a verb (cf. raw vs cooked, whole vs broken) or by a noun. Hausa and Alambak are examples of such languages. NEUTRAL languages have both poles of most oppositions expressed by adjectives but for a few which involve a state resulting from an action the marked pole may be realised by a verb. English is the clearest representative of this with respect to pairs such as raw and cooked.

A number of problems come to the fore when this framework is applied. The first concerns the levels of analysis. Dixon's findings are based on the deep or basic level. Thus the English surface adjective foolish is said to be a deep noun because it is derived from the noun fool. The implication for the analysis is that the HUMAN PROPENSITY type in English is said to be associated in part with the noun class. It will be equally true to say, I think, that on the surface this type is associated wholly with the adjective class. The consequence of this is that Dixon's taxonomy does not take account of the class associations at the surface level. Thus two forms which could fall together as adjectives at the surface level could get different classifications at the deep level. Foolish and red are both adjectives but they are noun and adjective respectively at the basic level. It appears therefore that one can expect variations in the type of adjective class a language has depending on the level of analysis one adopts.

One way of resolving the problem is to say, as Lindsey & Scancarrelli (1985:208-9) have done, that the type of adjective class a language has should be characterised at both a deep and a surface level. This suggestion is not

without its drawbacks. Firstly, it leaves unresolved the issue of the place of lexical derivation in the establishment of word classes. Dixon is very careful to observe that for his crosslinguistic survey, he was concerned with roots and not with derived items. It seems however that if derived items as well as underived items fall together in form classes then derived items should be accorded a place when word classes are being set up in a language. Secondly, there are problems of deciding what the basic part-of-speech of some items are, especially those that do not show any overt marking when they convert to other classes. For example, it has been noted in the discussion of the Ewe adjectival terms that some of them can be used as either nouns, verbs, and adverbs without any overt morphological marking. For example, the word *tralaa* 'tall-thin' can be used as an adjective, a verb and an adverb. Which of these should be taken as its deep part-of-speech? Thirdly, there is the associated problem of failing to distinguish clearly between diachronic and synchronic derivations. Certain forms are transparently derived forms but their derivations were completed and they have assumed lexical status in the language and now undergo other derivations as though they were underived. A case in point could be the Telugu roots that obligatorily take affixes and yet were considered together with the affixes as deep level items by Dixon (1982:42). Dixon does not seem to draw such a line consistently. In his analysis, do and deed are considered deep level items belonging to the verb and noun classes respectively. But although an item like verdict which belongs to the same semantic type as decision and opinion does not have even an archaic verb form as opinion (=opine) does, nevertheless, '*opinion* and *verdict* are said to be deep verbs on both intra- and inter- language criteria.' Dixon 1982:14). To be able to characterise languages along the dimension of OPEN vs CLOSED class of adjectives at both the deep and surface levels, an attempt should be made, I suggest, to distinguish between synchronic and diachronic derivation.

To summarise thus far, the semantics prior approach of Dixon has been outlined and some of the problems associated with its application have been indicated. In spite of the problems the framework can serve as a useful heuristic device for examining the nature of the adjective class in a language. As was noted earlier, other issues might affect the outcome of one's analysis such as the criteria employed in the definition of the class and the nature of the data considered. For instance, Madugu (1976/1979) decides to ignore ideophones in his examination of Yoruba adjectives. One wonders how his conclusion on the nature of the adjective class may be affected if he were to have taken them into account. He suggests that one could reconstruct a small set of about eight adjectives for Yoruba. All other adjectives are derived. But from the analysis

of Ewe, it seems reasonable to suspect, that data from the area of ideophones could provide a different perspective on this issue.

In the next section, the correlations between the Ewe surface forms and their semantic type membership are explored. Different characterisations of the Ewe adjective class are suggested. It is argued that one can describe the class in a number of ways depending on the vantage point that one assumes in the analysis.

5.4 Correlations between semantic types and structural classes of Ewe adjectives.

It is quite true that superficially, grammatical structures seem to be arbitrary codings of ideas but if carefully examined from the viewpoint of the nature of the meanings that are encoded in grammar, some order, or some motivation even isomorphism, in some cases can be found to explain the surface forms quite insightfully. In §5.2, various classes and formation processes of adjectives in Ewe were indicated. From that account, it would seem that there is very little correlation between semantic types of adjectives and the type of formation process involved. It is intriguing that if the individual items and their semantic classes are investigated, some interesting mappings between form, process and meaning can be extrapolated. This is the task of this section. The properties of the members of each of the semantic types proposed by Dixon in Ewe are investigated.

It should be borne in mind that three broad 'structural' classes of adjectives have been set up. Class I: non-derived This class is subdivided into IA, the basic roots that require morphological marking for category conversion, and IB, the underived forms that can function as other categories without overt marking. These are typically ideophones. Class II comprises derived forms whose sources are transparent, and Class III items have indeterminate derivational status. How do these map on to the various semantic types?

AGE

No items of this type belong to Class IA. However, fe 'young' yéye 'new' and maybe kányá 'early' belong to Class IB. xóxó 'old' is a Class III item. All these are 'deep' adjectives. Two other members of this group: tsitsi 'old' and mavɔ (literally, not finished) 'eternal, everlasting' are deep verbs. Note that the former but not the latter members of this type can be used adverbially without any overt modification. tsitsi can undergo ma- derivation to form matsimatsi 'not old'.

COLOUR

There are two Class IA items in this type; yí 'white' and dzi 'red' yibɔ 'black' and maybe (mú)mu(i) 'green' fall into Class IB [(mú)mu(i) appears to be connected metaphorically to muńu 'raw, fresh']. The first three of these are basic roots, but three other terms řufu 'white' abia~ 'red' and yɔyɔ~ 'black' are derived from verb roots. However, they do not undergo ma- derivation like most deep verb adjectivals.

[39] *mafumafu *mabiañabia~ *mayɔñmayɔ~

It is worth observing that Ewe has basic adjective colour terms in addition to derived adjectival items for similar focal points in the colour domain. It can be described as having three basic colour terms: white, red and black. It is possible that the 'green' term was introduced as a fourth based on 'raw'. However, there is something odd about the way the items behave which suggests and gives some support to our analysis. If we accept Berlin & Kay's (1969) findings about universals of colour terms then we would expect that yí 'white' and yibɔ 'black' would belong to the same class, class IA, which may be considered the basic class, and then dzi~ 'red' would belong to the same class as the other two or to another class, maybe class IB. However, we find that yí and dzi~ belong to class IA and yibɔ to class IB. This state of affairs requires an explanation. It may be the result of one of two factors.

First, it may be an artefact of the superficial structural classification proposed where underlyingly the two classes are united as deep adjectives. This position is implied in our analysis. Because all the elements ultimately belong to Class I. Second, and this is less likely, it may be that Ewe is a language whose lexico-grammatical structure provides contrary evidence to Berlin and Kay's universal claims concerning colour vocabulary (see also Wierzbicka 1990b). Thus the colour terms indicate that we are basically right in claiming that Classes IA and IB are deep adjectives.

DIMENSION

Two items ga~ 'big' and yí 'small' are Class IA terms. kpui 'short' is a Class III term. A number of DIMENSION words belong to class IB, for example, sue 'small/little' gbadza 'flat/wide' legbee 'long' kpɔdzɔɔ 'fat/thick' 'lúbui' 'narrow' and a few more.

Other members of this type are derived from predicates. Two of these are based on disyllabic verbs: lolo 'large/big' didi 'long/far'. These, we have argued, could be considered deep adjectives. A few are the product of verbal reduplication. titri 'fat/thick' kakε' 'tiny/small' goglo 'deep' mamiε 'narrow'.

These can be used verbally (although not adverbially) as well as having monosyllabic verb roots.

Three of these come from phrasal predicates damí 'fat' diku 'thin' dzotsu 'stout'.

VALUE

vɔ̃ 'bad' is an original member of Class IA. nyuí 'good', although a derived term from a verb seems to have taken on the properties of Class I items. A few forms belong to Class IB. baɗa 'bad' vló 'bad' vávã 'real' among others. Some of the VALUE words are derived by reduplication from verbs. They include gbégblẽ 'spoilt' nyányá(ε) 'known/familiar' and kɔ̃kɔ̃(ε) 'holy/clean'. All these reduplicated forms can undergo ma- derivation. In point of fact, these items could (more appropriately) be said to belong to the PHYSICAL PROPERTY type. For example kɔ̃kɔ̃(ε) 'holy' comes from the verb kɔ̃ 'clean' which has been extended to mean 'holy' - a VALUE concept nyákpɔ̃ 'nice' comes from a modal inverse maker and a verb.

Other VALUE words come from phrasal predicates. These include dzáni 'nice/fine' dzetugbe 'beautiful' dzeɗeka 'handsome' xɔ̃asi 'expensive/precious' tɔ̃jku 'odd'. Notice that these items could be PHYSICAL PROPERTIES or HUMAN PROPENSITIES.

PHYSICAL PROPERTY

Several members of this type belong to Class IB. Some examples are: wóɗzóé

'light', klitsaa 'rough', ɸlatsaa 'coarse' muúmu 'raw' gboɗbo 'unripe', blibo 'whole', nogoo 'round' and many more.

The interesting thing is that for most of these, their opposites are derived from verbs (largely by reduplication). For example, kpekpe 'heavy' zɔ̃zɔ̃(ε) 'smooth' meme 'fine (in texture)' ɗada 'cooked' didi 'ripe' gbabgã 'broken'. Many PHYSICAL PROPERTY ideas are expressed by this structure. Further examples include sesẽ 'hard/strong/tough...' (with synonyms in Class IB such as kako 'stiff' and drinyaa 'tough'). Temperature words such as fafa 'cold/cool' gbɔ̃gbɔ̃ 'warm' and dzoɗzo 'hot' behave similarly. Taste terms include vévé 'sour/bitter' and víví 'sweet'. Other items include gɔ̃glɔ̃ 'crooked' dzɔ̃ɗzo 'straight' and vúvú 'torn' and many more items.

A few of these concepts are expressed by forms derived from phrasal predicates. They include: gbagbe 'alive'; léɗɔ̃ 'sick/ill' dziɗɔ̃ 'frightful' véɗui 'painful' and dzekpólo 'stale/spoilt'. Except for the last of these, the concepts represented by these words could well be classified semantically as HUMAN PROPENSITIES.

Some of these items based on verbals can form antonym pairs by ma-derivation for example,

- [40] dada → maɗamaɗa
 cooked uncooked
- tsyɔtsyɔ → matsyɔ́matsyɔ
 dark(without light) ‘not dark’

Only the antonym pair seṣe and bɔbɔ (soft/easy/weak) undergo adverbial derivation by -i suffixation. However the Class IA and Class III members such as ɸuɸlu ‘empty’ can be used adverbially without overt marking. The other Class III items do not get used adverbially. This may be due presumably to their original verbal or predicative nature.

HUMAN PROPENSITY

Few items in this type belong to Class IB: ɗɔ ‘lazy/dull’ and ɗuɗɔ ‘stupid/foolish’. No Class IA term has yet been attested in this type.

Most of the HUMAN PROPENSITIES that are expressed as true adjectivals come from phrasal predicates. They include vanu ‘jealous’, nyañu ‘clever/intelligent/nice’, tsɪŋku ‘mean’, dzagla ‘fierce/wild’, kutsuu ‘mad/insane’, buame ‘polite’, ɗoto ‘obedient’, xɔŋkɔ ‘famous’, gbéɗɔ ‘lazy’ ɗifɔ ‘guilty’, davo ‘mistaken’, dahe ‘poor’, ɗigbɔ ‘disgraced’, ɗɔuu ‘well-behaved’ and a couple more items.

Very few items originate from verbs by reduplication. fufu ‘confused/insane/mad’ mamla ‘tame’.

Some forms that express HUMAN PROPENSITY attributes have the structure X-tɔ where X is invariably a nominal. Roughly speaking, a construction such as “Y X-tɔ” where Y is the nominal head indicates that ‘Y possesses or has X’, or ‘Y comes from X’ (the origin of Y is X) (see Chapter 7 on possession).

X-tɔ structures are usually used anaphorically where the nominal head is understood. However when they are used to ‘qualify’ a head noun, their categorial status is not entirely clear. From a semantic point of view, however, these forms represent a categorisation of the referent rather than expressing a characteristic or quality of entities. They are thus nominals rather than adjectivals, although they may be used in apposition to other nominals to modify them. Some examples are offered below (but see Chapter 7 for a full semantic analysis of these structures).

[41]	dzi	+	tó'	→	<u>dzitó'</u>	
	heart					courageous
	aso	+	tó'	→	<u>asotó'</u>	
	fool					foolish (one)
	akúvia	+	tó'	→	<u>akúviató'</u>	
	laziness					lazy (me)
	kale~	+	tó'	→	<u>kaleťó'</u>	
	bravery					brave/bold (one)
	ga	+	tó'	→	<u>gató'</u>	
	money					rich
	ahe	+	tó'	→	<u>ahetó'</u>	
	poverty					poor
	dóme	-	vévé +	tó'	→	dómevetó'
	stomach		sour			unkind/mean
	dóme	-	nyó +	tó'	→	dómenyótó'
	stomach		good			kind/generous
	tame	-	seśe~ +	tó'	→	tameseśeťó'
	head		hard			cruel/wicked

All the examples above pertain to human propensities, however some of the X - tó' structures are used to express ORIGIN as well. Some examples are the following:

[42]	Eve	+	tó'	→	Evetó'	
	Ewe					(an) Ewe
	Ghana	+	tó'	→	Ghanató'	
	Ghana					Ghanaian
	Amerika	+	tó'	→	Amerikató'	
	America					American

It may be concluded from these examples that X - tó' nominal structures may be used to code ORIGIN and HuMAN PROPENSITY

The distribution of the polar opposites within the HUMAN PROPENSITY type with respect to the structural classes is quite interesting. For the rich/poor pair, the unmarked term is *gatɔ́* while the marked term is *dahe* although *ahetɔ́* also exists. For clever/stupid however, the unmarked term is derived from a phrasal predicate *nyańu* and the marked term has several synonyms belonging to Class II, *duɖɛ* and also of *X-tɔ́* structures: *asotɔ́* 'foolish' *abunetɔ́* 'foolish' and *aleɛɔ́* 'stupid'.

Other items derived by the compounding of V + N may employ *ma*-derivation to form antonym pairs. For example:

[43]	<i>nyańu</i> 'clever/wise'	<i>ma-nyańu</i> 'unwise/unintelligent'
	<i>buame</i> 'polite'	<i>ma-buame</i> 'impolite'

SPEED

Few speed items belong to Class II. They include *kpata* 'sudden' *blewu* 'slow' and *kábá* 'fast, quick' (Maybe *kányá* 'early' would also fit into this type, see AGE). It is important to recognise that all the items here are Class IB terms. The implications of this for the typology of Ewe would become evident from the summary below.

The typology of the adjective class in Dixon's framework is based on the behaviour of the elements that belong to these seven types. But I will quickly point out some examples of the other types here to give a complete coverage of the adjective types. It has been indicated above that elements that express ORIGIN may be nominals of the form *X-tɔ́*. POSITION ideas are expressed by locative nominals, for example, *gbɔ́* 'near'. PURPOSE concepts are also coded in Ewe by nominal derivations, for example, *nu-ɖa-ze* (literally, thing-cook-pot) 'cooking pot', *ade-vu* (literally, game-dog) 'hunting dog' etc. COMPOSITION is expressed by nominal compounding, for example, *ati-kpuɔ́* 'wooden chair', *aɲe-fɔ́kpa* 'plastic shoe' etc. It can thus be said that the non-basic types are all associated with the nominal word class and not the adjective class and will therefore not be considered in the final typology.

5.5 Summary and observations on typology.

Table 5.1 below summarises the match between the morpho-syntactic structural properties of adjectivals and their semantic types.

CLASS	DEEP LEVEL	AGE	COLOUR	DIMENSION	VALUE	PHYSICAL PROPERTY	HUMAN PROPENSITY	SPEED
IA	Roots		2	2	1			
IB	Roots	3	a few	some	some	several	2?	3?
III	?	1		1		few		
II	V	1		2	1	few		
	-RED							
	V + RED	1	3	few	some	several	2	
	INV + V				some	a few	some	
	V + N			3	a few	a few	several	
N + to'						several		

Table 5.1 Correlations between semantic types and structural classes of adjectives

It is quite clear from the table that some adjectivalisation processes cluster around certain types. Surface adjectivals that are the product of reduplication are most likely to be PHYSICAL PROPERTY qualities. Where they could be classified as other types, they would tend to have a sense related to PHYSICAL PROPERTY.

The compounding of the verb and nominal components of a phrasal predicate invariably expresses a HUMAN PROPENSITY concept. If it belongs

to another type it is more likely to be used attributively with a human or higher animal.

While the two processes mentioned so far are very productive, the derivation of adjectives from verbs without reduplication is rather limited in productivity as well as applicability. The forms that are thus produced occur in only three types: AGE (mavɔ 'eternal'). DIMENSION (eg. lolo 'large') and VALUE (nyuí 'good'). It appears that grammaticization is in progress in this area. This is particularly true of the VALUE item which has acquired the properties of Class I items.

The grammatical processes may not be arbitrary but an interesting question which is outside the scope of the present study is why these processes and sources are mapped the way they are to the types and vice versa.

Now, from this survey what type of language is Ewe in terms of its adjective class? It is fair to say that at the SURFACE level Ewe is strongly adjectival and it has a fairly large open and thriving adjectiv(al) class. (That is even if we ignore the ideophonic terms).

At the DEEP level however the taxonomy depends on the stand we take on deep parts-of-speech membership of Class IB and Class III items and also on whether we want to consider class IB items at all.

For me, at this level too, Ewe has quite a large open adjective class with Class IA, IB and III items. It is OPEN because the three classes and especially class IB items are associated with all the seven types and new members can be added to it. But as I pointed out earlier, Ewe is somewhere between a neutral and a strongly verbal language. This is not incompatible with the facts. After all several surface adjectives are based on verbals.

For those who would not want to consider ideophonic items, the situation is different. Although such a stance is counter-intuitive, Ewe would be said to have a very small CLOSED adjective class, maybe of five or six core items (= Class IA) and probably a few more from Class IB and maybe III and a large set of surface adjectivals which is open.

Taking such a stand, it becomes difficult to make a decision concerning the second dimension of the typology, i.e the domain of the polar opposites. Recall that we would not have any items to consider for the unmarked polar opposites of the NON-ACTION oppositions. For example, whole vs broken.

It is indisputable that the typology one advances for Ewe and for that matter any language depends on one's theoretical and methodological orientation. And above all, on the kind of data one considers.

5.6 Sequencing of adjectives.

To conclude the discussion on adjectives, I want to make some preliminary remarks on the sequencing of adjectives. Although most Ewe grammarians mention that a noun may be qualified by more than one adjective, not much attention has been paid to the ordering of these adjectives. Nor have the circumstances surrounding the sequencing of adjectives been studied. In this section some preliminary observations are made about the ordering of a sequence of two adjectives in a noun phrase. The examples are restricted to instances of the sequence of two adjectives primarily because these are the most frequent tokens found in texts.

Based on the analysis of the examples encountered in texts, it is claimed that a speaker's communicative perspective and purposes as well as how far particular qualities expressed by the adjectives are perceived to be inherent and salient attributes and shared by other people are the principal factors that determine the relative order of adjectives.

First, we shall consider situations in which the adjectives in sequence belong to the same semantic type. One of the purposes of having more than one adjective to qualify a noun is to produce emphasis. The iteration of an adjective for this purpose has already been mentioned (see §5.2.4). Speakers may use two (or more) synonymous adjectives to achieve such a goal. Consider the following examples:

[44a] aɲuti vivi ɲánaɲána sia
 orange sweet sweet DEM
 'this very sweet orange'

[44b] tre tsitsi xoxo ma'
 bachelor old old DEM
 'that old bachelor'

[44c] fia vlo' baɖa la'
 chief bad bad the
 'the very very bad chief'

[44d] abɔ didi legbee áɖé
 arm long long INDEF
 'a very long arm'

cp [44e] xɔ ga[~]ga[~]wo'
 house big big PL
 'very big houses'

The second adjective modifies, so to speak, the first and adds the emphatic or intensity sense.

The other tendency in this area is where the second adjective is a quality generally implied (logically) or associated with the first. It is conceivable, in this case, to consider the second adjective as a logical extension of the first.

[45a] koklokuku veve aḑe'
 hen dead smelling INDEF
 'a smelling dead hen'

[45b] agbledelá kpuí sue sia
 farmer short small DEM
 'this small short farmer'

[45c] avo vuvu ḑoḑi
 cloth torn dirty
 'a dirty torn (piece of) cloth.'

It could be argued that these structures consist of two hierarchical parts: [the N + first Adj] and the second adjective where the first structure refers to the entity and the second adjective modifies it.

Where the adjectives involved belong to different semantic types, the ordering and its motivation are not as clear cut. One thing that can be said though is that if one of the items is an AGE term, it tends to occur first. For example,

[46a] ḡusu xoxo ḑoḑi
 man old dirty
 'a dirty old man'

[46b] fofo tsitsi vḑi
 father old bad
 'a bad old father'

[46c] gagba xo^oxo^o- e' ḑoḑi
 metal bowl old DIM dirty
 'a dirty old small metal bowl'.

Hardly can this order be reversed.

Beyond this, one finds that two adjectives belonging to different types can occur in either order in relation to the head noun. Compare the following pairs of examples:

[47a] ta nyui' zɔzɔɛ
 head nice/good smooth
 'nice smooth head'

[47b] ŋkuɛ zɔzɔɛ nyui'
 face smooth nice/good
 'nice smooth face'

[48a] ŋutsu lolo dzi~ aɖe'
 man fat red INDEF
 'a red fat man'

[48b] ŋutsu dzi~ lolo aɖe'
 man red fat INDEF
 'a red fat man'

It should be observed that in [47a] a VALUE item occurs before a PHYSICAL PROPERTY term. This order for the same lexical items is reversed in [47b]. Similarly, in [48a] a DIMENSION term precedes a COLOUR term and the reverse order is what occurs in [48b]. These examples make it clear that the semantic type membership of the adjectives seems to be irrelevant for the ordering. Other examples support contention:

[49a] xexe ga~vɔɖi sia me
 world big bad DEMin
 'in this bad large world'

[49b] koklo nyui' dami
 hen nice fat
 'a nice fat hen'

In [49a] a VALUE adjective is preceded by a DIMENSION adjective. The order is reversed in [49b]

While the semantic type membership of the adjectives does not seem relevant for their ordering, it appears that speakers order the adjectives according to which quality represents the most important for the identification of the noun head. The salient characteristic tends to come first. In a particular

communicative situation, such a property may tend to be more visible with respect to the noun and therefore verifiable or it may be a property which is general and shared knowledge . It appears that it is such a quality that a speaker tends to focus on and therefore puts it next to the noun depending on what other contextual factors there are.

My guess is that this principle underlies the tendency of AGE items to occur first in a sequence. One is tempted to indulge in a kind of Whorfianism to support this guess. Age is a culturally salient feature used in categorizing people in Ewe society. There are norms of behaviour associated with old age. Younger people are expected to show respect to old people. It seems therefore that to establish the manner of behaviour appropriate to a particular person one has to know about his/her age and hence it is placed next to the noun to assist the addressee in the categorization of the person. This would seem to be the starting point of that tendency.

All in all, it can be said that the order of adjectives in a sequence depends on which property the speaker perceives as most salient for characterising the noun head. Such a feature depending on the communicative situation tends to be quite obvious or visible, high in factuality and verifiable, in other words, a feature that most people would agree with and is based, so to speak, on shared knowledge. Such an adjective would occur first.

An adjective that represents a quality that is less important, less inherent with respect to the noun and open to disagreement and variation in judgement occurs further away from the noun. No wonder some of N. Adj Adj structures suggest a hierarchical structure of [[N Adj] Adj]].

My suggestion is akin to Hetzron's (1978) claim that universally the more objective an adjective is the closer it tends to be to the noun and the more subjective it is, the farther it tends to be from the noun. While this may be a sound explanation, it is hard to apply it to some of the orderings that occur in Ewe where VALUE adjectives can occur before PHYSICAL PROPERTY adjectivals. One would have thought that VALUE adjectives would in general be more subjective and therefore should occur away from the noun. However, a perusal of our examples shows that VALUE comes closer to the noun and before the PHYSICAL PROPERTY ones (compare examples [47a] and [47b]).

It would appear that the blanket terms of objective and subjective are less helpful for the Ewe situation, but approaching the issue from the speaker's perspective and communicative goals would yield better results.

5.7 Concluding remark.

In this chapter, I have examined the nature of the way in which property concepts and qualities are expressed in Ewe. It has been shown that there are a class of underived adjectives as well as derived ones. It has been contended

that the nature of the class of the underived adjectives can be said to be either large and open or small and closed depending on the kind of data one considers. If one ignores ideophones, then one could say Ewe has a small closed adjective class. But to do this is to ignore a large part of the language. I suspect that the sort of conclusion reached in this chapter about Ewe may be applicable to some other African languages which are often cited as having small closed classes. In many cases the investigations ignore ideophones (see e.g. Madugu (1976/1979) on Yoruba).

It has also been shown that Ewe has several derivational processes by which adjectives are formed. It is instructive to note that some derived forms seem to have lost any connection with their sources (Class III items). Furthermore, some of the derived forms whose origins are transparent seem to be assuming the status of lexical roots and do not behave any more like derived items. For example, *nyui* can be nominalised by the addition of a low tone in the same way that non-derived adjectives do.

In the light of these observations it may be said in answer to Dixon's question about where have all the adjectives gone that in Ewe the adjectives seem to be emerging. It needs to be reiterated that the way one answers the question of whether the adjectives are gone or emerging depends on the kind of data one considers and what definitions one assumes for the definition of the word class adjective.

¹ Vowel assimilation is responsible for the change in the stem. In general, the underlying form of the adjectivalising and of the adverbialising suffixes is *-i*. For the adjective there is a regressive assimilation in terms of the half-close vowel of the stem assuming the same height as the suffix. For the adverb there is a progressive dissimilation where the close vowel suffix becomes half-close because of the high vowel of the stem. Further details of the assimilation processes are outlined in the next section.

Chapter 6

ASPECTUAL MARKERS:

The coding of the temporal structure and development of situations

6.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the meanings of the markers of aspect in Ewe, especially the meanings of the ingressive and perfective aspect markers. The issues involved in the study of aspect and aspectual markers have been cogently summarised recently by Brinton (1988:1) as follows:

Aspect is a topic of current interest in many areas of language research, including linguistic theory, philosophy of language, language acquisition, and language-particular studies, yet the study of aspect presents a number of difficulties. There seems to be more uncertainty about the very definition of this grammatical category than any other. There is no consensus about the object of study: widely diverse phenomena are subsumed under the label of 'aspect'. Approaches to the study of aspect also diverge, with some focusing on overt grammatical forms and others focusing on lexical or semantic features of aspect. (Brinton 1988:1)

The present investigation is a descriptive and a language-particular study of aspect, although some observations are made on the cross-linguistic relevance of the Ewe phenomena. This study also focuses on the meanings of grammatical forms that are dedicated to the expression of aspect.

Since the approaches to aspect are so diverse, a synthesis of the views that are assumed in this study are outlined first (§6.2). This is followed by a catalogue of aspectual markers to provide the necessary background context for the discussion of the ingressive and perfective markers (§6.3). The forms that are of interest in the present study are then described: the ingressive aspect marker (§6.4) and the perfective aspect markers (6.5).

6.2 Preliminary discussion on situations and aspect

6.2.1 Aspect

In this study, situations (i.e. events, processes, actions and states, cf. Comrie (1976) and Mourelatos (1981)) are considered to be temporally segmentable. And aspect is construed as the different ways of viewing the internal temporal structure and the reference to distinct intervals in the temporal development of situations (cf. Comrie 1976:3; Freed 1979:10ff; Johnson 1981:152; Dahl 1985:24ff). Following Freed (1979:30ff) it is assumed that situations in general have an **onset** - a first moment, a **nucleus** - a main part, and a **coda** - a final temporal phase. The nucleus can be further decomposed into an **initial** period,

a **middle**, and a **final** part. These temporal segments of a situation can be diagrammed as follows:



Fig 6.1 The temporal phases of a situation

The **onset** of a situation is the “temporal segment of a situation which takes place **prior** to the initial temporal part of the nucleus” of that situation (Freed *ibid*:31, emphasis in original). It is a necessary and an obligatory preparatory stage in the ontogeny of every situation. The **initial** part of the nucleus is the first moment or period during which the nuclear or characteristic activity of the situation can be said to be taking place. It should be noted that language does not code reality directly; it is a codification of how people perceive reality and it is the representation or ‘construction’ of this reality in language that linguistic semantics is about (cf. Grace 1987 among others). Whilst it may be hard, in reality, (and perhaps impossible) to draw a line between the successive temporal phases of a situation, languages tend to provide linguistic forms for the description of such stages in the evolution of a situation. Thus English, for instance, has the aspectual verbs *start* and *begin* which are used to refer to the **onset** and the **initial** period of the nucleus of situations respectively (cf. Freed 1979 and Wierzbicka 1988). It is instructive, in this connection, to observe that of the two sentences below:

[1a] ? John started to cook, but he didn’t cook.

[1b] * John began to cook, but he didn’t cook.

[1a] sounds better than [1b]. The reason for this, I believe, is that the conceptualisation of the real world event presented in [1a] is less contradictory than the one represented in [1b]. Roughly speaking, the message conveyed by [1a] is that John went through the preparatory stages of cooking, such as getting pots and ingredients ready, but he never performed the nuclear activity of cooking. That is, the onset, but not the nucleus, of the situation has been attained. Hence it makes sense to say that the main part of the event did not happen. The message of [1b], by contrast, is anomalous: the first part of the nucleus of the situation is portrayed as having been accomplished and at the same time the occurrence of the situation is denied. This is what makes [1b] more bizarre than [1a].

The **middle** part of the nucleus is the period after the first moment and the **final** part is the last moment or period during which the nuclear activity can be thought of as taking place. After this last temporal phase the nuclear activity

could be thought of as being over and some situations could not go on beyond this point. Many situations also have a time segment just after the nucleus which must be realised for the events which they represent to be thought of as having been completed (cf. Freed *ibid*:35). This is the **coda**. One could think of the difference between the final part of the nucleus and the coda in terms of the contrast between the English verbs *finish* and *end*, for example. As Wierzbicka (1988:77) points out: “the main difference [between *finish* and *end* F.A.] is that *end* refers to the point immediately after the last part [i.e. the coda F.A.] whereas *finish* refers to the last part [of the nucleus F.A.] itself.” Notice also that ‘in a race the finish comes before the end (the runners or horses ‘move into the finish with X in the lead’)’ (Wierzbicka *ibid*.:78).

The markers of the **onset**, **nucleus**, and **coda** phases of a situation may be described as ingressive/inceptive, progressive/continuative, and egressive. These terms are however only used as labels for convenience. It is well known that the meanings of the markers of these phases in different languages are not synonymous. There is therefore the need for detailed analyses of the semantics of the individual items in each language. The present chapter will attempt to do this for the markers of onset and coda in Ewe. In the rest of this section, other conceptual distinctions that need to be made in the description are presented.

6.2.2 Perfective

The ‘perfective’ and ‘imperfective’ aspectual categories have been distinguished in terms of whether the situation is viewed as having an internal temporal structure or not:

Perfectivity indicates the view of a situation as a single whole without distinction of the various separate phases that make up that situation while the imperfective pays essential attention to the internal structure of the situation.

Comrie (1976:16)

This characterisation seems applicable to the semantic category of the perfective but not necessarily to all the uses of the markers of that category. It seems to be the case that linguistic realisations of the perfective category tend to be used to signal distinct phases or intervals in the development of situations. Such expressions tend to be interpreted as marking the inception (the onset) especially of states, or the cessation (the final part of the nucleus or the coda) of situations. Perfective markers, morphological or lexical, thus tend to have an ingressive and/or an egressive meaning in context (Comrie 1976:19; Chung and Timberlake 1985:217). From a localist viewpoint, perfective aspect is construed as denoting going into, being in and coming out of a situation,

while ingressive aspect focuses on going into, and egressive aspect focuses on coming out of, a situation. Consequently, ingressive and egressive aspect are often analysed as subcategories of perfective aspect (cf. Brinton 1985:31, see also Brinton 1988). It will be shown that perfective markers may also be used to indicate the beginning of, or the period just before, the final part of the nucleus, or the coda of situations (see §6.5.3). It seems therefore that the internal temporal structure of situations is relevant and useful for the analysis of the linguistic indicators of perfectivity. Such a position is not, to my mind, incompatible with conceptualising the perfective as a view of a situation as a whole. What it implies is that a perfective marker may signal a particular stage in the evolution of whole situations. Thus a perfective marker may focus on the inception, or the period just before the inception, or the total or imminent completion of a whole situation.

6.2.3 Situation types

The classification of situations proposed by Mourelatos (1981:201), based on the work of Kenny (1965) and Vendler (1967) as shown in Fig 2, is assumed in this study:

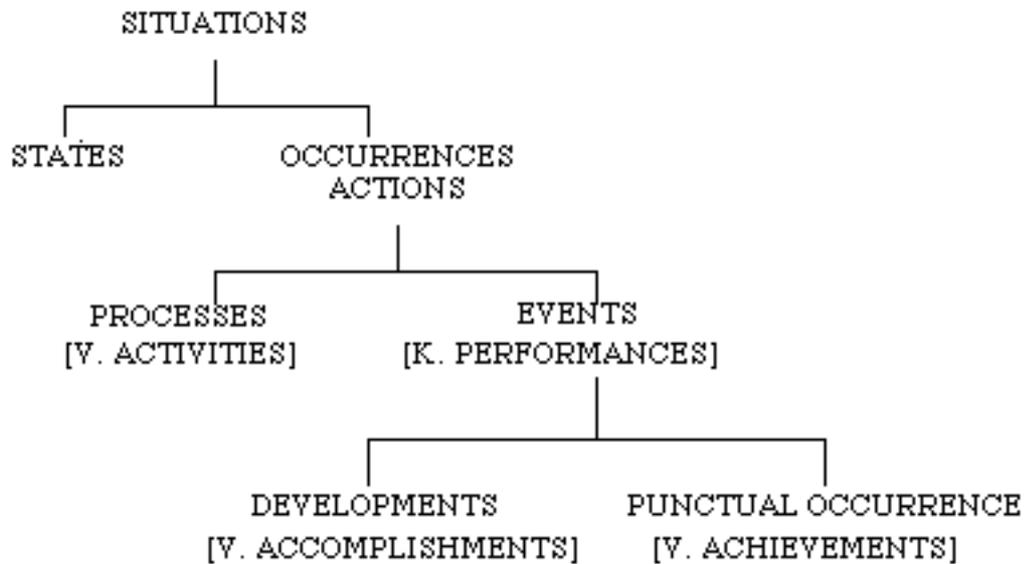


Fig 6.2 Mourelatos' classification of situations

[In Fig 6.2, V. or K. before a label refers to the terms used by Vendler and Kenny respectively.]

States are unchanging conditions over an extended period. These are represented by English examples such as *be sick* and *love*. Processes are homogeneous situations that could occur over an indefinite time stretch.

6.3 Ewe aspectual markers

In this section I will outline the markers of the various phases of a situation that are used in Ewe. Where necessary, brief comments are offered about the distinctions in meaning. Typically, phasal aspectual meanings are expressed periphrastically.

6.3.1 Onset markers

The onset of situations may be marked by the ingressive marker *gé* in combination with an auxiliary verb indicating tense or direction (see §6.4 for details) e.g.:

[2a] tsi le dzadza gé
 water be:PRES fall-RED INGR
 'It is about to rain.'

[2b] kofi le áma *ɔ* gé
 K.be:PRES A.marry INGR
 'Kofi is going to marry Ama.'

Roughly speaking, the ingressive marks the period just before the first moment of the situation.

The first moment or initial part of a situation may be expressed by the phrasal predicate *dé así* 'put hand' in combination with a postposition *me* 'in' as the head of an NP which contains a nominalisation which refers to the situation, e.g.:

[3a] tsi dé así dza-dza me
 water put hand fall-RED in
 'Rain started to fall.'

[3b] ame- wó dé así nu- ϕ o- ϕ o me sesiẽ
 person PL put hand talking in loud
 'People started talking loudly.' (Akpatsi 1980:18)

The verb *dze* which probably means 'land' may be used in combination with the postpositions *gome* 'under', or *dzi* 'top' which head an NP containing a nominal denoting the situation, e.g.:

[4a] kofí dze sukúu gɔme
 K. land school under
 'Kofi has started school.'

[4b] wó dze dɔ- á dzi
 3PL land work DEF top
 'They have started the work.'

The verb *dze* 'land' may also be used as an auxiliary to the progressive marker *-mí* to indicate the first moment of a situation, e.g.:

[4c] ɔvɛ́ á dze zɔ-zɔ- mí
 child DEF land walk-RED PROG
 'The child has started walking.'

In general all the expressions involving the verb *dze* imply that the situation has started and it is possible that it may become a habitual situation. There is the implication that the situation will continue beyond the initial stage. By contrast, the expression involving *dé así* only focusses on the initial stage and does not entail the view that the situation may develop beyond that stage or become a habit that may occur again and again. In this connection, it is instructive to note that non-volitional situations do not easily occur in the *dze N gɔme* construction. Thus the situation of 'starting to rain' represented in [3a] above cannot be described as [5] below:

[5] *tsi dze dza-dza gɔme
 water land fall-RED under

6.3.2 Nucleus markers

A situation whose occurrence is simultaneous with the moment of speaking or the temporal reference point is indicated by the progressive *mí*. The tense auxiliaries used in the progressive are *le* 'be:PRES' and *nɔ* 'be:NPRES', e.g.:

[6a] kofí le nú ɔ- mí
 K. be:PRES thing eat PROG
 'Kofi is eating.'

[6b] ɔvɛ́ á wó nɔ fe-fé mí
 child DEF PL be:NPRES play-RED PROG
 'The children were playing.'

To express continuative aspect of situations the same tense auxiliaries are used in combination with the locative postposition *dzi* 'top'. e.g.:

[7a] kofí le dɔ- á dzí
 K.be:PRES work DEF top
 ‘Kofi continues doing the work.’

[7b] ɔvɛ́ á wó nɔ du dzí
 child DEF PL be:NPRES race top
 ‘The children continued to run.’

The essential difference between the continuative and the progressive is that the continuative implies that the situation would continue after the temporal reference point, while the progressive does not entail that. It only says that the situation is going on at the reference time.

6.3.3 Coda markers

There are three main coda markers which are described in detail in §6.5 below. They are *vɔ*, which marks the completion or imminent completion of a situation, *sé* which signals the termination of a situation, and *kpó* which expresses an experiential perfective meaning, e.g.:

[8a] me- ɔvɛ́ fufu- a vɔ
 1SG eat fufu DEF PFV
 ‘I have finished eating the fufu.’

[8b] ɔvɛ́ á tsi vɔ
 child DEF grow PFV
 ‘The child is almost grown.’

[9] me- ɔvɛ́ fufu sé
 1SG eat fufu PFV
 ‘I quit eating fufu.’

[10] me- ɔvɛ́ fufu kpó
 1SG eat fufu PFV
 ‘I’ve eaten fufu before.’

In the rest of this chapter, the meanings of the ingressive marker and the perfective markers will be described. Although there are phasal verbs, such as *dzudzɔ* ‘stop’, *tasi* ‘cease’, *to* ‘start’ etc., which also have aspectual meanings, they are not given much attention in this investigation because they are lexical rather than grammatical. They are only invoked to illustrate some of the issues

where relevant. Other aspectual markers such as the habitual (n)a and the repetitive ga have been described in the overview grammar (see Chapter 3).

6.4 The ingressive marker - gé

6.4.1 Overview

It will be recalled that sentences involving imperfective aspect, that is, the ingressive and the progressive involve at least two verbal elements (cf. Chapter 3). I will assume that in such sentences the first verbs are auxiliary verbs and the second ones are main verbs. I will not go into the nature of the structure of these constructions partly because the syntactic structure that is assumed does not affect the semantic generalisation that is to be made. Schematically I assume the following structure for the predicate component of sentences involving imperfective aspect:

V ₁	<NP>	V ₂	ASPECT
(AUX)		(MAIN)	
TNS			PROG
DIR			INGR

Thus the following structure is assumed for the sentence below:

[11]	SUBJ	(AUX)	TNS	OBJ	MAIN	V ₂	ASPECT
	wó	le		nú	du	gé	
	3PL	be:PRES		thing	eat	INGR	
	'They are about to eat.'						

It should be noted that if the main verb does not have an object NP adjacent to it, as in the above example, it is reduplicated. This means that intransitive main verbs, as in [12a], as well as those transitive verbs whose objects are moved away from them, as in [12b], are reduplicated. For example:

[12a]	dɛví	á	wó	le		dzo-dzó	gé
	child	DEF	PL	be:PRES		leave-RED	INGR
	'The children are going to leave.'						

[12b]	fufu-	é		mie-´le		du-du	gé
	fufu	aFOC	1PL	be:PRES		eat-RED	INGR
	'It is fufu we are going to eat.'						

There are discussions in the literature about the structure of these sentences from different theoretical points of view (see Fabb 1990 for a most recent discussion along GB lines, but see also Clements 1972, 1975; Heine and Claudi 1986 and Heine and Reh 1984). The position taken here is in accordance with a structural functional view (see e.g. Duthie in press).

The ingressive marker has a number of dialect variants: gé (Añlɔ and standard) gbé and φé (northern dialects of Ewe and other Gbe dialects). It appears that historically gbé is the original form which got simplified to gé and perhaps further simplified to φé. The interesting thing is that in those dialects where the three variants co-exist, they seem to occur in complementary distribution with respect to the functions of the ingressive discussed below.

There are three main uses of the ingressive marker in Ewe:

- (i) It is used to express imminent action. In this case, the ingressive is realised as gbé or gé.
- (ii) The ingressive may be used to express an inchoative and/or purposive meaning. All variants are possible in this context, however, this is the only function for which the ingressive may be realised as φé.
- (iii) The ingressive may be used to express an attempted or failed action on the part of the grammatical subject of the clause. The forms gbé and gé are the realisations of the ingressive in this context.

In expressing these meanings, the ingressive marker combines with different auxiliary verbs. For imminent action, the auxiliary verb is the locative existential 'to be' verb: le (PRES). For the inchoative and/or purposive the auxiliary verbs are verbs of motion: vá 'come', yi 'go' and gbɔ 'go-come'. For the attemptive sense, it combines with the bidirectional resultative verb de 'to have been to a place'. The fact that the ingressive has different realisations which correspond to the functions outlined above, and the fact that different categories of verbs function as auxiliaries corresponding to the different uses provide evidence for the linguistic reality of the functions proposed. The following sentences illustrate the three main uses of the ingressive morpheme.

I IMMINENT ACTION

- [13] fifia, me- le ku-kú gé kpuie
 now 1SG be:PRES die-RED INGR shortly
 'Now, I am about to die shortly.' (Akpatsi 1980: 69)

IIa INCHOATIVE

- [14a] zã yi-na do-dó gé

night go HAB fall-RED INGR
 'It is getting dark.' (Gadzekpo 1982: 26)

IIb PURPOSIVE

[14b] wó ga- yi aboloϕle gé ηdí ádé
 3PL REP go bread buy INGR morning INDEF
 'They went again to buy bread one morning.' (Gadzekpo 1982:23)

IIIa ATTEMPTIVE

[15a] éye wò de vo-vo gé dó kpo- e
 and 3SG been to free-RED INGR wearlog 3SG
 'And she tried to be free but couldn't.' (Gadzekpo 1982: 14)

IIIb APPROXIMATIVE

[15b] é ϕé ηuti- gbalēde ba-biã gé kloē
 3SG poss side skin been to orange-RED INGR almost
 'Her skin was almost copper-coloured.' (Dogoe 1964: 11).

In what follows each of these uses of the ingressive marker is described and the relationships between them are noted.

6.4.2 Imminent action

The ingressive forms gbé or gé (but not ϕé) are used to indicate planned, intentional, imminent future actions. In this usage, the auxiliary verb is the existential locative which expresses time. The ingressive form thus indicates that the event will take place after the moment of speech. In this usage it also tends to be used with adverbials that express ideas of 'a short time'. Consider these examples:

[16] mié le gbo-gbo gé le ηkeke etō megbé
 1PL be:PRES go-come-RED INGR at day three after
 'We will come back after three days.'

[17] uu- á le ho-ho gé kpuie
 lorryDEF be:PRES uproot-RED INGR shortly
 'The car is taking off shortly.'

It should be noted that in some contexts as in example [17] above the use of the ingressive in Ewe is similar to the use of the progressive in English for intentional imminent future actions (see Bland 1988). The progressive in Ewe is

not used in such contexts. It is used to express situations that are simultaneous with the time reference point, for example:

- [18] vu- á le ho-ho- m'
 lorryDEF be:PRES uproot-RED PROG
 'The car is taking off (at this moment).'

When the ingressive is used to express imminent action, it is different from the plain future in the sense that the future is predictive while the ingressive is intentional. Compare the following with sentence [17] above:

- [19] vu- á a- ho kpuie
 lorryDEF FUT uproot shortly
 'The car will take off shortly.'

Roughly speaking the future sentence means that someone thinks that the event of the taking off of the car will happen after now. However, the ingressive structure has the further element of a subjective wanting on the part of the one who thinks. As a first approximation, the contrast between the two may be represented as follows:

FUTURE

Someone thinks: X happens after now

INGRESSIVE

Someone thinks: I want this: X happens after now.

X in these paraphrases stands for an event or situation. One can think of the sentences under discussion and several others discussed in this chapter as consisting of a situation (or event or proposition) and its tense and aspect operators. It is the operators that are of concern to us. Thus a sentence [17] above can be analysed as consisting of a situation or event represented as

[vu - a ho]X

with the tense-aspect operators le 'be:PRES' and gé INGR. In the representation of the meanings of these sentences the event or situation is represented by X and the operators are what are defined.

To return to the contrast between the future and the ingressive, it should be observed that in the explications above, the future one lacks the component: ‘I want this’.

The meaning of the ingressive for imminent action may be more rigorously defined as follows:

at this time one can think this:
not much more time after now, X happens
because someone wants it

Some comments are in order here. In the first component ‘at this time’ reflects the fact that the imminence of the event or situation is in relation to the moment of speech. The linguistic evidence in support of this is that the auxiliary verb is *le* ‘be:PRES’. Furthermore, the non-present counterpart of this locative/existential verb, *nɔ*, does not occur in this construction, as the following example shows:

[20] * *é nɔ nú ɖu gé*
3SG be:NPRES thing eat INGR
‘He was about to eat.’

This indicates that the relevant time frame for the imminent activity is the moment of speech and no other time. In fact it is not surprising that an aspectual category should be restricted to a certain tense category. As Comrie (1976:71) observes: ‘One of the interesting relationships between aspect and tense, from the viewpoint of language as a functional system, occurs when an aspectual distinction is restricted to one or more tenses, rather than operating across the board, independently of tense.’ Thus the restriction of the Ewe ingressive imminent action marker to the present tense is a manifestation of the intricate interaction between tense and aspect. What is also noteworthy is that the ingressive imminent marker which has a future orientation does not occur with a future tense either. It should be remembered that *nɔ* is a Non-PRESENT marker, that is both past and future.

The second comment relates to the person whose wants are represented in the clause. I have used ‘someone’ in the explication to account for the possibility of it referring either to the speaker or to the subject NP. In general if the subject NP is animate then it is his/her wants that are represented. If it is inanimate then it is the wants of the speaker that are represented.

6.4.3 Inchoative and Purposive uses

When the ingressive marker is used to express an inchoative or purposive meaning the auxiliary verb in the clause is a verb of motion. Typically, this

auxiliary verb is inflected for the habitual when one wants to express the inchoative meaning. Consider the following example:

- [21] me- gbɔ- na é gbé gé
 1SG go-come HAB 3SG refuse INGR
 'I will be getting divorced from him.' (Akpatsi 1980:53)

In this example, a woman was discussing the behaviour of her husband with a friend. She expressed the view that if he did not change his ways, she will divorce him sooner or later. It can be inferred from the context that the speaker is indicating that a state of affairs is going to be changed. It has not changed yet, but it is intended to happen at some later stage.

It could be argued that it is the compositional semantics of the construction as a whole which gives the inchoative reading. The habitual marking on the motion verb expresses the idea that something is in the process of happening. It indicates that the grammatical subject of the clause (if animate) or the situation is moving towards a certain goal. The goal may be attained in the future. One could speculate that it may be the purpose or intention of the grammatical subject, as in the above example, or of the speaker if the subject is not animate, as in the example below:

- [22] yeyi-na tó dọ́ gé
 sun go HAB depth set INGR
 'The sun is going to set.'

This example is instructive in the sense that this sentence is uttered when the sun is really moving to set in the west, that it is in the process of setting.

It should be pointed out that the habitual together with a verb of motion is used independently of the ingressive context to express the meaning of 'to be in the process of moving'. For example, if one saw Kofi approaching in the distance one could inform his/her interlocutor with the sentence in [23]:

- [23] kofi gbɔ- na
 K. go-come HAB
 'Kofi is coming.' i.e. 'He is on his way.'

The main point of this construction then is that something is happening at the reference time; it could be either some movement or some thought. The culmination of this current situation as expected by the grammatical subject or the speaker is the event that is described in the rest of the clause.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication to account for the inchoative use of the ingressive marker:

Y_{SUBJ} V_{MOTION} -HAB PRED g_é
 at time t, something was happening
 because of this, one could think this:
 not much more time after t, X happens
 because someone wants it

The purposive use of the ingressive marker is related to the inchoative one in the sense that the auxiliary verb used is a motion one. However, for the purposive use, the auxiliary does not have to be inflected for the habitual. A further difference is that for the purposive the three realisations of the ingressive: g_é gb_é and ϕ _é are possible in those dialects that have the three allomorphs.

Note that ϕ _é is identical in form with a nominalising suffix - ϕ _e which is used in the formation of nominals of place from predicates. The resulting nominals have the meaning ‘place to do X’. Thus from the phrasal predicate $\mathfrak{d}\mathfrak{u}$ nú ‘eat’ one can form by permutation and suffixation the nominal nu- $\mathfrak{d}\mathfrak{u}$ - ϕ _é ‘dining place’. Similarly from the verb root d_ó ‘sleep’ one can form the nominal d_o- ϕ _é ‘sleeping place’. Ambiguity may arise when these derived place nominals are used as complements of verbs of motion. For example, the following sentence, as indicated in the English translation, may be read as either a verbal with an ingressive marker or as a motion verb plus a nominal of place:

[24] é yi tsi le ϕ _é
 3SG go water bath NER/INGR
 ‘S/he has gone to the bathroom.’
 ‘S/he has gone to have a bath.’

Of course, this can be disambiguated by adding a definiteness marker to the nominal form. The definiteness marker cannot be added to the ingressive form. In a way, this homonymy supports the view that in this context the ingressive is used to express purpose. If the other allomorphs of the ingressive were used in the above sentence, the only reading possible then is the second one, the purposive.

Another piece of evidence in support of the purposive use of the ingressive when it is in combination with verbs of motion is that there is a formal identity between a purposive nominalising suffix and another allomorph of the ingressive marker. There is a nominalising suffix -gb_é which is used to form nominals from nouns. The derived nominals may be paraphrased as ‘for the

purpose of N'. For example, the form *gbé* can be suffixed to nouns such as *náke* 'firewood', *ade* 'game' and *ahiã* 'lover' to yield the following forms respectively: *náke-gbé* 'for firewood, i.e. look for firewood', *ade-gbé* 'for game i.e. hunting' and *ahiã gbé* 'for lover, i.e look for a lover'. These nominals occur typically as complements of verbs of motion, and in such a context the sentences mean something like 'go to look for N'. For example:

[25] *áma yi náke-gbé*
 A. go firewood-PURP
 'Ama has gone to look for firewood.'

[26] *kofí yi ade-gbé*
 K. go game-PURP
 'Kofi has gone to look for game.' i.e. 'Kofi has gone to hunt.'

These sentences can be paraphrased in the manner shown in [27] and [28]. In these paraphrases the purposive nominals of [25] and [26] are expressed as verbals marked with the ingressive, the nominal stem in each case serving as the object of the verb. The verb of motion then becomes an auxiliary verb:

[27] *áma yi náke fɔ gé*
 A. go firewood collect INGR
 'Ama has gone to collect firewood.'

[28] *kofí yi ade da gé*
 K. go game throw INGR
 'Kofi has gone to hunt for animals.'

In these examples any of the allomorphs can be used to express the ingressive. The fact that these paraphrases are by and large synonymous supports the view that the ingressive may be used to express purpose in the appropriate context. It has even been suggested in the literature that the ingressive developed out of the nominalising suffix *gbé* (Heine and Reh 1984). If this suggestion is correct then the purposive sense of the ingressive marker should not be too surprising.

Nevertheless the links between imminent action and purposive are semantically transparent. Essentially, a purposive action is something that one has in mind to execute in future. Similarly, an imminent action is something that is performed at a time after the moment of speech. They both thus share future orientation.

One can explicate the purposive sense of the ingressive marker as follows:

Y_{SUBJ} V_{MOTION} PRED gé
 at time t, Y was doing something
 because Y thought this:
 I want this: after now X happens
 one could think this at t:
 not much more time after t, X happens

It should be noted that the auxiliary verb of motion in this usage can be inflected for future or habitual. The implication of this is that it is not tied to the moment of speech as is the case with the imminent action usage. This is the reason why the time has not been specified. In the example below the auxiliary verb is inflected for the future. The message of the sentence is that a purpose is expressed in relation to the time frame of future.

[29] miá yi núḡuḡu dí ꞑé etsɔ
 1PL:FUT go food seek INGR tomorrow
 ‘We shall go to look for food tomorrow.’

6.4.4 ‘Attemptive’ and ‘Approximative’ uses

The essential difference between the approximative and the attemptive senses of the ingressive marker is that the former pertains to a non-potent grammatical subject or the whole situation, while the latter relates to an animate or potent subject. These two senses are also distinguished by the adverbials that typically modify the sentences. In the case of the attemptive sense, the sentence may be modified by the form dó kpo ‘fail’ (see e.g. [30], while for the approximative sense, the sentence is typically modified by approximation constructions such as kloé ‘almost’ (see e.g. [31] below).

[30] me- de dzo-dzó gé le é gbɔ dó kpoɛ
 1SG been-toleave-RED INGR at 3SG side wearlog
 ‘I tried to leave him, but I failed.’ (Setsoafia 1982:64)

[31] wó ꞑo- e wò de ku-kú gé kloé
 3PL beat 3SG 3SG been-todie-RED INGR almost
 ‘He was beaten, he nearly died.’ (Dogoe 1964:9)

The auxiliary verb for these usages is the bidirectional resultative verb de ‘to have been to some place and returned’. The implication of the use of this verb is that the situation would have occurred, or that someone wanted the situation to occur, but that something else prevented the whole of the situation from

happening; consequently one could not say that the situation had occurred. For both senses, it appears if a little more of it happened then one could say the situation occurred.

6.4.5 Summary of ingressive marker

In the preceding sections, an attempt has been made to describe the uses of the ingressive marker *gé* and its allomorphs. The common thread that runs through all the uses of the form is that of imminence or future orientation. Thus in its use for imminent action, someone plans that something will happen after the moment of speech. When it expresses inchoative meaning the implication is that something is happening at the time of reference whose result or outcome will occur at a time after the reference point. For the purposive meaning, someone consciously thinks that s/he wants something to happen after the reference time. For the attemptive and approximative senses the essential thing is that the culmination of something was imminent at a time but something else intervened to stop it from happening. It seems that the unifying feature of the ingressive marker is the imminent or future orientation of the situation characterised in the clause.

6.5 Perfective aspect markers

6.5.1 Overview

This section investigates the meanings of the adverbial modifiers used to express the terminal viewpoint, that is the final part of the nucleus or the coda, of situations in Ewe. The forms to be discussed are three grammatical morphemes, *vɔ*, *sé* and *kpɔ́*. In some of the previous studies of Ewe, these forms have been identified as ‘completive’ or ‘perfective’ markers (see in particular Duthie (1970, 1988, in press) and also Westermann (1930:131-133) and Pazzi (1970:117)). Apart from descriptive comments on the structural properties of these forms and of their historical development from lexical verbs, no systematic study has yet been done on the nuances of meanings that the morphemes encode within the ‘perfective’ semantic domain. In addition, the various interpretations that the individual morphemes have in different contexts have not been explored.

Intuitively, native speakers can feel and appreciate the semantic differences among the following sentences:

[32a] *kofi de suku kpɔ́*
 K been-to-school PFV
 ‘Kofi has been to school before.’
 (Kofi has had some formal education before.)

[32b] *kofi mé de suku kpɔ́ kpɔ́kpɔ́* o.
 K.NEG been-to-school PFV-TRIP NEG
 ‘Kofi has never been to school.’

[33a] *kofi de suku vɔ*.
 K been-to-school PFV
 ‘Kofi has completed school.’

[33b] *kofi de suku vɔvɔvɔ*.
 K been-to-school PFV-TRIP
 ‘Kofi has almost completed school.’

[34] *kofi de suku sé*
 K been-to-school PFV
 ‘Kofi has stopped/quit school.’

Roughly speaking, [32a] describes a situation that has obtained at least once in the past. [32b], on the other hand, indicates that the situation has not ever

come about. In [33a] the situation is presented as one which has been completed; there is no more of that activity to be performed by Kofi, so to speak. Example [33b] implies that the situation is on the point of being terminated. By contrast, [34] characterises the situation as one that has been terminated but not necessarily completed. The English glosses provided are suggestive of these interpretations.

Ewe grammarians have been content to describe the morphemes as markers of perfectivity without due regard to the semantic nuances manifested by their distinct usages. In doing so they fail to recognise, in my view, the relevance of the semantic distinctions that the language has maintained (cf. Bolinger's (1977:ix) observation that "any contrast a language permits to survive must make its semantic contribution"). The analytic task of the present study is to explore the subtle semantic differences encoded by the three forms within the 'semantic space' of the 'end-point' of situations (cf. Sapir and Swadesh 1932). It will be argued that *vɔ* signifies that something has happened or has been done completely. When it is used without triplication in certain contexts and with triplication in others, it indicates that a situation is about to be completed. By contrast, *sé* indicates that a situation has been terminated and it is incomplete, while *kpó* symbolises the existential status of situations. To emphasise the non-manifest status of situations *kpó* may be triplicated.

The statement of the meanings of these forms does not stop at the kind of abstract description just outlined in the previous paragraph; rather explicit semantic representations are proposed for the constructions in which the morphemes occur, in line with the general methodological position of the thesis. In the subsequent sections, first, the syntax of the three morphemes is presented (§6.5.2), then the semantics of the forms are analysed (§6.5.3 ff). Some cross-linguistic evidence is adduced in the concluding section to show that imminent completion is one of the meanings that perfective markers may have.

6.5.2 The syntax of the 'perfective' markers

It has been indicated that the three morphemes under discussion have homophonous verbal counterparts. In this section an attempt is made to describe the syntactic properties that distinguish the grammatical items from the lexical verbs.

The main channel for the grammaticization of verbs in Ewe is the serial verb construction (cf. Heine and Reh 1984:242). There are two structural types of serial verb constructions in Ewe. In the first type, the subject of the first predicate is identical with the subject of the other predicates in the series. Because of this, the subject of the other predicates has a zero realisation. The

verbs in this type have identical tense, aspect and mood marking. In example [35] both verbs are marked for the habitual aspect. Notice that in this particular case, both predicates in the series have identical subjects and objects:

- [35] ɖɛví á wó ɖa- a te ɖu- na
 child DEF PL cook HAB yam eat HAB
 ‘The children cook yams and eat (them).’

The second type, also known as the ‘overlapping clause’ (Duthie 1988, in press), is a construction in which the object of the first clause is coreferential with the subject of the second clause. Consequently, the subject of the second verb is expressed as a pronominal which appropriately refers to the object of the first verb, as illustrated in [36]:

- [36] áma øɖɛví á wò fa avi.
 A.beat child DEF 3SG cry tears
 ‘Ama beat the child and it cried.’

The first step in the grammaticalisation of verbs is their loss of the power to take any markings for various categories on the verb, especially when these verbs appear to occur with other verbs in the same clause. This provides a crucial test for distinguishing between homophonous forms that function as verbs and those that perform other grammatical functions (see Ansre 1966 on verbids i.e. prepositions in Ewe).

The instances of the forms *vɔ*, *sé* and *kpó* which come under the purview of the present study are those where they i) occur after another verb, i.e. as post-verbal modifiers, and ii) are typically uninflected for tense, person, aspect or mood. Thus in [37] *vɔ* is a grammatical item that marks perfectivity, but the same surface form in [38] is a full verb. The latter is inflected for person and tense and it should be noted that the two sentences have slightly different meanings, as the English equivalents suggest:

- [37] ɖɛví á wó á ɖu nú á vɔ
 child DEF PL FUT eat thing DEF PFV
 háfí á yi suku.
 before FUT go school
 ‘The children will finish eating the food before they go to school.’

- [38] ɖɛví á wó á ɖu nú á wò a- vɔ
 child DEF PL FUT eat thing DEF 3SG FUT finish

háfí á yi suku.
 before FUT go school
 'The children will eat the food and it will be finished
 before they go to school.'

Similarly, the occurrences of sé and kpó in [39b] and [40b] respectively are the exponents of the perfective category and are the instances of concern to us:

[39a] m-a xlě agbalě sésě má á sé dẹ afií
 1SG:FUT read book hard DEMFUT stop at here
 'I will read that difficult book and stop there.'

[39b] m-a xlě agbalě sésě má sé dẹ afií
 1SG FUT read book hard DEMPV at here
 'I will stop /quit reading that difficult book there.'

[40a] kofi á liá gemító a- kpó tógó dǎ
 K.FUT climb G. FUT see T VS
 'Kofi will climb Mt Gemi and will look at Togo (from there).'

[40b] kofi (á)- liá gemító kpó
 K FUT climb Gemi Mt. PFV
 'Kofi has (will have) climbed Mt Gemi before.'

There is lack of agreement on the grammatical category to which these morphemes belong. Duthie (1988, in press) describes them as verbal auxiliaries occurring after the main verb within the verbal phrase. Nyomi (1977) describes them on some occasions as adjuncts or adverbials, and on other occasions as verbids. This last term reflects their historical origin, but it is not discriminatory enough. It is also used for other items that have evolved from verbs in the language (cf. Ansre 1966). Westermann ([1928] 1973) and Pazzi (1970) describe the forms as adverbials. These characterisations are offered with little or no supporting details and it is difficult therefore to assess their adequacy.

In the present study, the morphemes are considered to be adverbials for two reasons: firstly, these items can occur after other adverbials. In [41a] *vó* occurs after an adverbial phrase of comparison. Adverbial elements do not come between verbals and their auxiliaries. Notice that [41b] is unacceptable because the adverbial phrase *abé fofóá ené* occurs between the verbal *kpó* and its auxiliary, the ingressive aspect maker, *gé*. By contrast, [41c] is acceptable

because the adverbial phrase does not interrupt the sequence of the verb and its auxiliary. If *vɔ* and the other perfective markers were auxiliaries (as Duthie suggests), one would expect [41a] to be unacceptable, but it is not. We conclude from this that the perfective markers are not auxiliaries, but are rather adverbials:

[41a] áma kó abé fofó á ené (*vɔ*).

A. be tall as father DEF as PFV
 ‘Ama is (almost) as tall as the father.’

[41b] *ámale ga kpó abé fofó á ené gé

A. be:PRES money see as father DEF as INGR
 ‘Ama will have as much money as her father.’

[41c] áma le ga kpó gé abé fofó á ené

A. be:PRES money see INGR as father DEF as
 ‘Ama will be as rich as her father’.

Secondly, the forms *kpó* and *vɔ* may be triplicated (see § 6.5.4.2 and §6.5.6.2 below). Triplication is a feature of adverbials (and nominal intensifiers), as exemplified in [42a] and [42b] respectively, but not of verbs and verbal auxiliaries. Hence these forms are adverbials.

[42a] é dzrɛ dɔ́ pɛ́ (pɛ́ pɛ́) [pɛpɛ:pɛ]

3SG prepare:3SG VS exactly-TRIP
 ‘S/he mended it perfectly well.’

[42b] dɛví má ko- (ko- ko)- é tsó é

child DEMonly-TRIP aFOC take 3SG
 ‘It is only that child who took it.’

6.5.3 A semantic analysis of the ‘perfective’ markers

In the following sections the semantics of the ‘perfective’ markers are analysed.

6.5.4.1 *vɔ*

The perfective marker *vɔ* has developed from the verb *vɔ* ‘finish’ (Westermann 1930: 133). The development of perfective aspectualisers from the verb ‘finish’ is fairly widespread cross-linguistically. It has been attested in many African languages (see Heine and Reh 1984), in some Asian languages, for example Chinese (Li and Thompson 1981), in Pacific languages, for instance Fijian (cf. Foley and Van Valin 1984:211) and in some Papuan languages, such as Barai (Foley 1986:145).

Strictly speaking, the description of *vɔ* as a marker of an accomplished action as reflected in statements such as Pazzi's (1970:117) 'action achevée' and Westermann's (op. cit.) glosses of 'finished up, that's all' is only appropriate for characterising the form when it occurs with processes. With events, *vɔ* signals imminent or prospective completion. Compare [43] and [44]:

[43] áma ðu nú vɔ.
A. eat thing PFV
'Ama has finished eating.'

[44] áma kú vɔ.
A. die PFV
'Ama is nearly dead/ Ama nearly died.'
≠ 'Ama has finished dying/ Ama has died.'

The two sentences differ in situation type. [43] is a process while [44] is an event, a punctual occurrence. Thus it can be said that with processes *vɔ* indicates total completion, while with events it indicates that the situation is on the point of being completed. But another difference between [43] and [44] suggests itself. The latter is a telic or bounded event while the former is atelic. [44] has an inherent terminal point after which one can say the situation has happened. [43], by contrast, has no such point. At any point in time during the evolution of this situation it would be true to say the activity has occurred. However, telicity is not the relevant distinguishing feature for the two senses that *vɔ* may have. This is because [45] and [46] describe bounded situations, but *vɔ* has the interpretation of the total completion of the situation.

[45] kofí ðu akɔɖú ðiɖi- á wó kátã vɔ.
K. eat banana ripe DEF PL all PFV
'Kofi has eaten up/ has finished eating/ (≠is about to eat up/
to finish eating) all the ripe bananas.'

[46] áma dzrá avɔ yéye- á wó kátã vɔ le gbé nye.
A. sell cloth new DEF PL all PFV at side 1SG
'Ama has sold up (≠ is about to finish selling) all the new clothes
without saving any for me.'

Contrast the interpretation of *vɔ* in examples [45] and [46] with its significance in the examples in [47], which also describe telic situations. Notice that the situations in [47] are events and *vɔ* has a sense of imminent attainment of an end point goal in this context. With the bounded processes in [45] and [46], *vɔ*

implies the absolute completion of the situation. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that the interpretation of $v\textcircled{a}$ depends on the situation type with which it occurs rather than with the telicity or otherwise of the situation:

[47a] $mi\acute{e} \quad \text{d}\acute{o} \quad kp\acute{a}ndo \quad v\textcircled{a}$.
 1PL reach K. PFV
 ‘We have almost reached Kpando’.
 ≠ ‘We have reached Kpando.’

[47b] $\acute{e} \quad dz\textcircled{a} \quad v\textcircled{a}$.
 3SG happen PFV
 ‘It is about to happen’.
 ≠ ‘It has happened.’

The two interpretations of $v\textcircled{a}$ described so far can be related to the temporal phases of situations. With processes, for instance [45], $v\textcircled{a}$ codifies the attainment of the last moment of a situation. With punctual occurrences as in [47b], $v\textcircled{a}$ indicates that the onset is taking place, while with developments (see [47a]), it shows that the last moment leading up to the total accomplishment of the situation is in progress.

There are some features of $v\textcircled{a}$ which are common to the two interpretations. These features provide some clues for the discovery of the semantics of the form. First, $v\textcircled{a}$ does not occur with static situations. Thus [48a] and [48b] are ungrammatical because the situations with which $v\textcircled{a}$ occurs are states:

[48a] * $m\acute{a}w\acute{u} \quad li \quad v\textcircled{a}$.
 God be (exist) PFV
 lit. ‘God has ceased to exist.’

[48b] * $ga \quad le \quad as\acute{i} \quad nye \quad v\textcircled{a}$.
 money be:PRES hand1SG PFV
 ≠ ‘I have become rich.’

[48c] $ga \quad \text{d}\acute{o} \quad as\acute{i} \quad nye \quad v\textcircled{a}$.
 money reach hand1SG PFV
 ‘I am about to become rich’.
 (lit. Money is about to come to my hands.)

Notice that $v\textcircled{a}$ can occur with inchoative situations as in [48c] with the interpretation of imminent accomplishment. This is consistent with the

analysis presented for $v\text{ɔ}$ when it occurs with situations that lead up to a certain goal. The non-occurrence of $v\text{ɔ}$ with states suggests that any situation which it is used to characterise is one which can be segmented into temporal phases, since states by definition do not have an internal temporal structure.

A second feature of $v\text{ɔ}$ is that its use with any situation signals that the situation is perceived in its entirety (cf. Comrie 1976:16). This is also true of those situations in which it has imminent completion interpretation. Some support for this view comes from the fact that $v\text{ɔ}$ collocates with adverbials of totality such as $k\acute{e}\eta$ ‘completely’ and $p\acute{e}t\acute{e}$ ‘all’. Similarly, nominal arguments in the predications with which $v\text{ɔ}$ can occur may have completeness modifiers such as $k\acute{a}t\check{a}$ ‘all’ and $blibo$ ‘whole’. Consider the examples in [49]:

[49a] $de \quad v\acute{a}v\acute{a} \quad w\acute{o} \quad k\acute{a}t\check{a} \quad k\acute{u} \quad v\text{ɔ}.$
 oil palm nursed PL all die PFV
 ‘All the palm seedlings are almost dead.’

cp. [49b] $de \quad v\acute{a}v\acute{a} \quad w\acute{o} \quad k\acute{a}t\check{a} \quad k\acute{u}$
 oil palm nursed PL all die
 ‘All the palm seedlings are dead/ have died.’

[49c] $kof\acute{ı} \quad \text{ɔ} \quad fufu- \acute{a} \quad v\text{ɔ} \quad k\acute{e}\eta.$
 K.eat fufu DEF PFV completely
 ‘Kofi has eaten up the fufu completely.’

To anticipate the discussion on $s\acute{e}$ it should be stated that completeness is one of the features that distinguishes $v\text{ɔ}$ from $s\acute{e}$. The unacceptability of $s\acute{e}$ in contexts which imply completeness supports this claim. Compare [50] and [51]:

[50] wó no aha lá kátǎ { [a] vɔ }
 { [b] *sé }
 3PL drink wine DEF all PFV
 [a] 'They drank all the wine up.'
 [b] ?? 'They stopped drinking all the wine.'

[51] wó no aha lá { [a] vɔ }
 { [b] sé }
 3PL drink wine DEF PFV
 [a] 'They drank up/ finished drinking the wine.'
 [b] 'They stopped/ gave up/ quit drinking the wine.'

Observe that both *vɔ* and *sé* can occur in [51] with slightly different meanings. However, *sé* is unacceptable in [50] because it contains a word that denotes the completeness or totality of a situation.

To summarise thus far, it has been shown that *vɔ* occurs with non-static situations. In this usage there are two interpretations: total completion and imminent or prospective completion of a situation. The appropriateness of these interpretations depends on the semantic and aspectual properties of the situation involved. The first interpretation, which I assume to be the basic one, applies to homogeneous activities i.e. processes whether they are bounded or not. The second one applies to bounded events i.e. instantaneous actions and developments.

With these considerations in mind, the following explications are proposed for the two senses of *vɔ*:

X [PROCESS] vɔ1
 eg. [52] me wɔ- ε vɔ.
 1SG do 3SG PFV
 'I have finished doing/done it.'

X was happening before time t
 All the parts of X happened by t
 No more of X can happen after t

X [EVENT] vɔ2
 eg. [53] mamá nye háyá vɔ.
 grandmother 1SG recover PFV
 'My grandmother has almost recovered (from her sickness).'

At time t one cannot truly say that all the parts of X have
 happened
 The last part of X is happening at t
 Not much more of it would have to happen for one to be able to
 say X happened
 If a little more of it happened after t one could say X happened
 If no more of it happened after t one could not say X happened

Some facts about the behaviour of *vɔ* are predictable from the suggested explications. The form does not occur with ‘sharp’ achievements, as in [54a] below (cf. Dillon 1977:36). Such situations seem to have only a punctual nucleus and no recognisable onset phase. ‘Gradual’ achievements, by contrast, have an onset and a punctual nucleus. Compare [54a], a ‘sharp’ achievement and [54b], a ‘gradual’ achievement:

[54a] *nya lá lílí míkátã (* vɔ).*
 word DEF surprise 1PL all PFV
 ‘We were all taken by surprise / The case happened unexpectedly.’

[54b] *nya lá dzɔ (vɔ).*
 word DEF happen PFV
 ‘The case happened / is about to happen.’

The unacceptability of *vɔ* in [54a] is an indication that it is used to characterise situations that are segmentable into various temporal phases. This also accounts for its unacceptability in [56]. Notice that the perfective marker can occur with the verb *vɔ* ‘finish’, as illustrated in [55]:

[55a] *atíke- á vɔ vɔ.*
 medicine DEF finish PFV
 ‘The medicine is almost finished.’

[55b] *atíke- á vɔ.*
 medicine DEF finish
 ‘The medicine is finished.’

[56a] *ɔvɛ́ á dzudzɔ avi gǎ lá (* vɔ).*
 child DEF stop cry big DEF PFV
 ‘The child has stopped “the big cry” (i.e. has stopped sobbing).’

[56b] kofí tásí aha - no-no (*vɔ).
 K. stop wine- drink-RED PFV
 ‘Kofi has stopped drinking alcohol.’

Further evidence for the two senses of *vɔ* postulated is provided by ambitransitive verbs. Verbs such as *gba* ‘break’, *lóló* ‘melt’ and *gbɔ* ‘warm up water’ which can be used transitively or intransitively have the two interpretations possible, depending on how they are used. When they take only one core argument, the two interpretations are possible, although the ‘imminent completion’ sense is more natural (see [57a]). But when they have two core arguments, the total completion sense is the one that is applicable (see [57b]):

[57a] ze- á gba vɔ.
 pot DEF break PFV
 ‘The pot nearly got broken.’ / ‘The pot is completely broken.’

[57b] kofí gba ze- á vɔ.
 K. break pot DEF PFV
 ‘Kofi has broken the pot’ / ‘Kofi has finished breaking the pot.’¹

A piece of compelling evidence for the imminent completion sense of *vɔ* is provided by its use to express approximations (see [58b, c]), and its co-occurrence with approximators, for example in [58a]. In the examples in [58] the only possible interpretation of the perfective marker is that of prospective completion:

[58a] áma kɔ́ abé fofó á ené (vɔ).
 A. tall as father DEF as PFV
 ‘Ama is (almost) as tall as the father.’

[58b] game sũ (vɔ).
 Time catch /hold PFV
 ‘It is (almost) time.’

¹ The reading of ‘Kofi nearly broke the pot’ is possible for this utterance, but it is more natural to express this meaning by the triplication of the perfective marker as discussed in section 4.1.2 below. The multiple interpretations for this sentence could also be attributed to a possible polysemy of the verb *gba* in Ewe. It appears that *gba* has the senses of ‘break’ and ‘break up’.

- [58c] ga atʂ ɸo (vɔ).
 bell five strike PFV
 'It is (almost) five o'clock.'

Furthermore, when *vɔ* occurs with some events which could be thought of as having relative terminal points, the two interpretations are possible. With events involving predicates such as *tsi* 'grow up', *d̪i* 'ripe', *vó* 'rot', the judgement of individuals with respect to the point at which they have become accomplished could vary. This leads to ambiguous utterances such as those in [59]:

- [59a] akɔd̪ú lá d̪i vɔ.
 banana DEF be ripe PFV
 'The banana is completely ripe.' / 'The banana is almost ripe.'

- [59b] d̪eví siá tsi vɔ.
 child DEM grow up PFV
 'This child is quite grown.'²
 = 'This child is perfectly mature.' / 'This child is almost of age.'

In summary it can be said that the perfective marker *vɔ* has two senses: one of total completion and the other of imminent completion.

6.5.4.2 Triplication of *vɔ*.

A further means of indicating that a situation is about to be completed is the triplication of the perfective marker *vɔ*.³ Thus for either processes or events one can triplicate *vɔ* to express the idea that a situation is very close to completion. In one sense, one could think of the triplication of *vɔ* with events as emphasising the very imminent nature of the achievement of the terminal point of such situations (see [61]). With processes, the triplication of *vɔ* indicates that a situation is going through the last part of its evolution (see [60]):

²Notice that this sentence is ambiguous in English between 'The child is almost mature' and 'The child is very mature'. I am grateful to Alan Duthie for drawing my attention to this ambiguity.

³This strategy is employed only in some dialects. Some dialects, for instance the Ho dialect, just reduplicate the form. It appears that the Aŋ]ɔ dialect does not make use of any of these. The triplication of *vɔ* is however a feature of the standard colloquial dialect described in this study.

[60] kofí no de- tsi- á vɔ - vɔ - vɔ. [vɔvɔ:vɔ]
 K. drink palm soup DEF PFV-TRIP
 ‘Kofi has almost finished/is on the point of finishing eating
 the palm nut soup.’

[61a] mamá - nye háya vɔ -vɔ - vɔ.
 grandmother 1SG recover PFV-TRIP
 ‘My grandmother has nearly recovered from her sickness.’

[61b] awu- á wó fú vɔ - vɔ - vɔ.
 garment DEF PL dry PFV-TRIP
 ‘The garments are almost dry.’

One can explore the iconic relationship between incompleteness and iteration as a means of accounting for this strategy (cf. Moravcsik 1978). Elsewhere in the language intransitive verbs are reduplicated to express the incompletive aspects of the progressive, as in [62a], and the ingressive, as in [62b]:

[62a] kofí le si- sí m̄
 K. be:PRES run-RED PROG
 ‘Kofi is running away.’

[62b] áma le va- vá gé ɲdí sia.
 A. be:PRES come-RED INGR morning DEM
 ‘Ama is going to come this morning.’

It seems logical therefore for the language to triplicate/reduplicate a form that indicates completion to show that something is just about to be completed.

6.5.4.3 vɔ in complex sentences

The discussion so far has revealed that there are two senses of the perfective marker *vɔ* when it is used in simple sentences. It was pointed out that the sense of total completion was the basic one. The behaviour of *vɔ* in complex sentences (and its use in connected discourse in general) seems to support this view.

If *vɔ* is used to characterise a situation in one of the clauses in a complex sentence, be it in the main (cf. [64]) or dependent (cf. [63]) clause, it tends to indicate the total completion of that situation prior to the one described in the other clause. In these cases, irrespective of the situation type, the

interpretation of total completion holds. Notice that in [63], *vɔ* occurs with an event in the first clause but it has the total completion interpretation.

[63] *né me - kú vɔ há lá a - vá - kpó dzi - nye*
 If 1SG die PFV also TP 2SG:FUT come see top 1SG
 ‘When I am dead, you will look after me (in the grave).’

[64] *a- dzu- m le ame dome vɔ,*
 2SG:FUT insult 1SG at people among PFV
háfi á vá ɖe- m-a?
 before FUT come marry 1SG Q
 ‘Would you have finished swearing at me in public
 before coming to marry me?’

One can predict from the analysis presented so far that one of the uses of the form *vɔ* in connected discourse would be the sequencing of events or propositions: that is, to mark situations that are prior in time to the other situations to which they are linked. There is the need to study further the use of these forms in discourse to establish their discourse functions conclusively. However, it must be stressed that one would expect the discourse functions to be predictable from the semantics of the form.⁴

6.5.5 *sé*

The main difference between *vɔ* and *sé* which has been alluded to in the discussion lies in completeness: *vɔ* presents a situation as complete, while *sé* presents a situation as incomplete. *sé* marks a situation as one which is not necessarily completed but is no longer happening and will no longer occur. Typically, it is used to describe habits or repeated actions or durative situations that have been stopped. Consider example [65]:

⁴There has been a tendency in recent times for people to study the discourse functions of linguistic items to the exclusion of their semantics. Aspectual markers are no exception. Hopper (1982:16), for example, asserts that aspectual categories can only be studied from discourse. Such a view has been challenged by Scott De Lancey (1982:179), for example. My sympathies lie with the latter’s claim that ‘[T]he roots of grammar lie in semantics which is in turn a direct reflection of (in fact is probably not distinct from) a cognitive map of reality’ (see also Wierzbicka (1988 chapter 1), and Waugh and Monville-Burston (1986)). To understand the discourse functions of linguistic items, it seems to me, we must first know what their semantics is. When we have described the semantics and investigated the discourse functions, we should then make explicit the connection(s) between the meanings of the items and their discourse functions. In the present study, I am only investigating the semantics of the perfective markers, but I am aware that there is the need for a complementary study of the functions of these items in discourse.

- [65] kofí no sigareti sé
 K. drink cigarette PFV
 'Kofi has stopped/quit smoking.'

Compare the following explication for sé with those of vɔ under examples [53] and [54]:

X sé
 X has been happening before time t
 One could think that more of it could happen after t
 At t one could not say all of X happened
 After t no more of X will happen

The essential thing about this morpheme sé is that the situation it characterises should be perceived as having the potential to go on beyond the point at which it has been stopped. Thus it is not appropriate to describe punctual occurrences with sé as illustrated in [66]:

- [66] * kofí kú sé
 K. die PFV
 ? 'Kofi has stopped dying.'

It should be noted however that the morpheme could occur with punctual occurrences if the subject is plural. Contrast [66] with [67]:

- [67] atí á wó kú sé
 tree DEF PL die PFV
 'The trees have stopped dying.'

The implication of [67] is that some members of the group or class of trees have not yet died, but none of them will die any more. Compare this with [68] where the whole situation is completed and therefore sé is unacceptable:

- [68] é tsa le ablɔ- wó kátã dzí *sé /vɔ.
 3SG wander at road PL all top PFV/PFV
 'S/he has wandered through all the streets.'

The difference between vɔ and sé in terms of completion is seen in the different contexts in which the utterances in [69] can be used. The inference that may be drawn from the use of sé in this case is that there is nothing biologically to prevent the woman from having children, but she has decided not to have any

more children. The use of $v\text{ɔ}$, however, implies that the woman has exhausted her capacity for having children and therefore cannot have any more children. She is probably past her menopause.

- [69] nyónu má dzi ví $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} [a] \text{ sé} \\ [b] v\text{ɔ} \end{array} \right\}$
 womanDEM bear child PFV
 [a] 'That woman has stopped having children.'
 [b] 'That woman has finished having children.'

Natural causes may be responsible for the cessation of a situation which could be described with $sé$, as illustrated in [70]:

- [70] tsi lá dza ?? $v\text{ɔ}$ /sé élabéna lɔŋgɔ do.
 water DEF fall PFV/PFV because rainbow appear
 'Because a rainbow has appeared, the rain has stopped.'

The form $sé$ is different from the other perfective markers in that it is not triplicated to express any nuance of meaning.⁵ This is probably due to the fact that intrinsically $sé$ means something which is abrupt and unexpected. The abrupt cessation of a situation could not be construed as happening repeatedly or leading to its termination.

6.5.6 $kpó$

6.5.6.1 $kpó$ in positive contexts

The item $kpó$ is very commonly used to describe situations that have existed before or will have existed after the moment of utterance. Thus in [71] the situation has obtained before the speech time while in [72] the situation will become manifest some time in the future:

- [71] fofó nye gblɔ ná m $kpó$ bé lã
 Dad 1SG say to 1SPFV COMP animal
 si nyá zɔ- zɔ lá ϕ é dzo- é tró ná
 REL know walk-RED TP poss horn aFOC curl HAB

⁵ One could quibble about the appropriateness of the term 'perfective' for this form $sé$ given its semantics. Perhaps a more apposite label is 'terminative'.

‘My father once told me that the animal which knows how to behave itself is the one whose horn curls.’ (Dogoe 1964:23)

- [72] dzi-lá wó á ga- φo nu ná wó vi lá kpó
 parent PL IRR REP strike mouth to 3PL child DEF PFV
 ‘The parents will (try to) speak again to their child.’

Previous descriptions of the form *kpó* have focused on its use with respect to past actions. Thus Pazzi (1970:117) observes that *kpó* is used to characterise ‘action déjà accomplie autrefois’ (an action that has been completed once already). English writers gloss the form as ‘ever’, ‘once’ and ‘sometime’ (in positive sentences), and as ‘never’, ‘never as yet’ (in negative sentences) (Warburton et al 1968:249, Westermann 1930:131). These glosses are also not adequate for the use of *kpó* with imperatives, as in [73]:

- [73] no aha sia kpó
 drink wine DEMPFV
 ‘Have some of this wine (and see)’ / ‘Try some of this wine.’

With the future and the imperative, as the glosses of the relevant examples suggest, *kpó* could be said to have an attemptive sense: ‘try X and see’. The same interpretation is applicable to its use with the ingressive [74] and the progressive [75]:

- [74] me- le é ɖu gé kpó
 1SG be:PRES 3SG eat INGR PFV
 ‘I will eat it and see.’ / ‘I will try it.’
- [75] me- le atike- a wɔ- mí kpó
 1SG be:PRES medicine DEF do PROG PFV
 ‘I am taking the medication to see.’ / ‘I am trying the medicine.’

The attemptive sense of *kpó* is not surprising from a cross-linguistic perspective. In many languages of the world, the verb ‘see’ or its grammaticalised form tends to be used for the expression of such a meaning. For instance, ‘conative modality (the actor *tries* to perform the action) is almost universally signalled in Papuan languages with a serial verb construction involving the verb stem *see*.’ (Foley 1986:152) It appears that in Japanese the verb *miru* ‘see’ has become grammaticalised as an aspectual form with the function of attemptive perfect (cf. Martin 1975).

One can summarise the use of *kpó* as follows: it may indicate a situation that has obtained prior to the moment of utterance. It may also have an attemptive sense, and may indicate that some situation will have occurred after the moment of utterance. It seems that what is common to both interpretations is that at a certain time, specified by linguistic temporal markers, one can know something about the historical status of a situation. This is obvious for actions in the realis mode. For situations in the irrealis mode, in which the form seems to have an attemptive sense, it can be argued that the main point about trying something is that at the end of it the one who performs the trial will have had the experience of the event. Furthermore, the expectation is that at the appropriate time the situation will have been accomplished and its existence established.

With these considerations in mind, I contend that *kpó* has a unitary meaning which can be explicated as represented in the formula below. The various interpretations are the result of contextual features which are predictable from the linguistic environment:

X *kpó*
 One can know this of some time t (not this time now)
 X happened by t

One piece of evidence in support of this formula comes from the behaviour of the form *kpó* with respect to the quasi synonymous pair of verbs of motion *yi* 'go' and *de* 'go, to have been in a place': *de* is used only in the past, while *yi* may be used in the present or the future. The interpretations that their combination with *kpó* yield provide support for the semantics of *kpó*. Consider the examples in [76]:

[76a] *me- de afíma kpó*
 1SG been-tothere PFV
 'I have been there.'

[76b] *me- yi afíma kpó*
 1SG go there PFV
 'I am going there (to see)/ I'll try that place.'
 ≠ 'I have gone/ been there.'

[76c] *m'- a- yi afíma kpó*
 1SG FUT go there PFV
 'I will go there and see/ I'll try that place.'

[76d] ? m'- a de afíma kpó
 1SG FUT been-tothere PFV
 'I would have been there.'

Observe that in these examples *yi* with *kpó* has a non-manifest situation interpretation only at the moment of utterance. The time that the situation will have been accomplished is always in the future. It is significant that this is true of the aorist as well, as shown in [76b]. With *de* the interpretation is always a historical or manifest situation interpretation. In both cases there is no interpretation that has to do with the current manifesting, so to speak, of the situation. This suggests that the situation marked by the form *kpó* does not relate to the moment of speech. Hence the statement in the formula 'not this time now'.

6.5.6.2 *kpó* in negative contexts

kpó may be used in negative utterances to indicate the non-existence of a situation, either before the speech time or after the speech time, as illustrated in [77a] and [77b] respectively. The meaning proposed above for *kpó* fits its usage here as well. The meaning of *kpó* combines with the meaning of the negative marker to convey the non-existence of the situation. The first component of the formula can be used to account for the use of *kpó* in negative contexts, i.e. 'One cannot know this of time t':

[77a] ɖeví á wó mé nyá kpó gɔ̃ hã bé
 child DEF PL NEG know PFV even also COMP
 tó le ye- wó sí o.
 father at LOG PL handNEG
 'The children never knew that they even had a father.'
 (lit.: The children did not even know for once that a father was
 in their hands.)

[77b] nye ma- wɔ- ε kpó o.
 1SG NEG:IRR do 3SG PFV NEG
 'I will never do it.' / 'I will never try it.'

[77c] me- dó dɔ̃medzui nenémá me- kpó kpó o.
 NEG:2SG wearanger such 1SG see PFV NEG
 'I have never seen you that angry.' (Nyaku in press:24)

To emphasise that a situation has never obtained and will never obtain, one can triplicate the form *kpó*, as in [78]. It should be remarked that the strategy of *kpó* triplication is pan-dialectal; that is those dialects that do not triplicate *vɔ* (see §6.5.4.2, footnote 3) triplicate *kpó* in this context. Observe also that one cannot emphasise the existence of a situation by triplicating *kpó* (see [79]):

[78] nye mé se nya má tɔgbi kpókpókpó o.
 1SG NEG hear word DEMsuch PFV-TRIP NEG
 ‘I have never never heard such a thing before.’

[79] me- se nya má tɔgbi kpó/ *kpókpókpó
 1SG hear word DEMsuch PFV PFV-TRIP
 ‘I have heard such a thing before.’

6.5.6.3 *kpó* - an experiential or existential perfective?

The final issue to be addressed here is the kind of perfective marker that *kpó* is. All along it has been indicated that *kpó* is used to mark the existential status of situations. However the examples given so far might suggest that *kpó* could be an experiential perfective marker. That is, a form that indicates that a participant in the situation has experienced the event. Indeed the English glosses of ‘ever’ and ‘never’ point in this direction. It seems that a true experiential should go only with sentient beings. If this is so, then *kpó* may not be an experiential perfective because it can be used in situations where there is no sentient being involved, as in [80]:

[80a] tsi dza ŋkeke atɔ sɔŋ trɪ dɛ nu kpó
 water fall day five all line in mouth PFV
 ‘It once rained unceasingly for five days.’

[80b] kú mé dɪ alea kpó o.
 drought NEG shine such PFV NEG
 ‘There has never been such a drought before.’

In these cases it is the existence or historical status of the situations which is being talked about, not the experience of some particular entity. Hence it is more adequate to think of *kpó* as an existential perfective⁶.

⁶It would appear that one can think of *kpó* as an exponent of the category ‘existential status’ as proposed by Johnson (1981:157). This category is concerned with the relation between ‘event time’ and ‘speech time’ (à la Reichenbach). As Johnson (ibid) puts it ‘[...] the position of an event vis - à - vis the time at which the event is talked about determines the status of the event as a historical fact’. An event is historical once it is fully accomplished in real

6.5.7 Summary and conclusion of perfective markers.

The syntax and semantics of the three forms in Ewe that have been labelled perfective markers have been explored in the preceding sections. It has been demonstrated that *vɔ* is a completive marker in the sense that it marks the total or imminent completion of a situation. By contrast, *sé* is a terminative marker that indicates the cessation of a situation. The form *kpɔ́*, on the other hand, is an existential perfective marker. It must be noted that these three forms codify the semantic space of the end point of situations. Nevertheless each is a code for a specific part of that domain, as the labels and the semantic analyses suggest. The study thus demonstrates and supports the view that where there are two or more items expressing a semantic domain such as perfectivity in a language, the forms tend to parcel out the semantic features of that domain among themselves. This could be viewed as a consequence of the absence of absolute synonyms in natural languages (cf. Bolinger 1977, for example).

The analysis of *vɔ* presented here may have implications for cross-linguistic investigations of the meaning of perfective markers. It has been argued that the perfective marker *vɔ* in Ewe may carry the meaning of imminent completion when it occurs with event situations (see § 6.5.4.1). It was also shown that *vɔ* may be triplicated to express the same meaning (see §6.5.4.2). This suggests that linguistic indicators of perfectivity may also encode the meaning of imminent or prospective completion in a language. Cross-linguistic surveys of the perfective category have noted ingressive or inceptive meaning as one of the senses of perfective forms (see Comrie 1976, Bybee 1985, Chung and Timberlake 1985, Dahl 1985). Imminent completion as an aspectual meaning does not seem to have been recognised for perfective categories in the literature⁷. In this concluding section, I want to present evidence from two other African languages to point to the typological relevance of imminent completion with respect to perfectivity.

Turkana, a Nilotic language of N.W. Kenya, has a morphological aspect marker *-it* which indicates perfectivity. According to Dimmendaal (1983:150ff)

time and it is non-historical if some or all of the event is accomplished in a hypothetical future time. This distinction is inspired by Whorf's 'manifest/manifesting' contrast in Hopi (Whorf 1956). It seems to me that one can say that *kpɔ́* in the realis mode indicates the historical and manifest status of a situation. In the irrealis mode however it indicates the manifesting status of a situation. Because of this one can expect that the historical or manifest status of a situation in the irrealis mode will become known at some future time.

⁷Comrie (1976: 64) discusses what he calls 'prospective aspect' as a symmetrical category of the perfect which seems closely related semantically to the notion of imminent completion. Prospective forms such as 'be going to', 'to be about to' and 'to be on the point of' in English describe a state as related to some subsequent situation. Thus prospective aspect as construed by Comrie seems to involve a relationship between two situations. It differs from imminent completion in this respect. Imminent completion has to do with a point in the temporal evolution of an event. It does not have to do with a relationship between two situations.

this form has the meaning of totality of completion and its focus of attention is on completion. This sense of -*ì* is exemplified in its use in [81]:

Turkana:

- [81] è à dòk- ù ñesì e- mor- ù
 3 PAST climb PFV he mountain
 'He climbed the mountain (and came down again).'

However with “ingressive” verbs ‘[T]he semantics of these completive constructions [sic] is not always present’ (op. cit.:151). Notice that in [82] the event has not been accomplished. I suggest that in this case the perfective marker indicates imminent completion. It is striking that the verb ‘die’ features in this example (cp. the Ewe example in [34] in §6.5.4.1):

Turkana:

- [82] è à twà n- ù ñesi.
 3 PAST dead SG PFV he
 'He almost died.'

Similarly, the interlacustrine Bantu language Kinyarwanda - the national language of Rwanda - has a perfective marker *à* and a completive marker *ye* which may be used to express imminent completion. With some verbs characterised by Botne (1983) as non-inchoative the perfective marker has two interpretations, viz. perfective [83a] and ingressive [83b] meanings. (Botne’s numbering is provided on the right hand side of the examples).

Kinyarwanda

- [83] à rá mw- éèmèr- à (25)
 3 segp- 3 OBJ-believe PFV
 a. 'He believes her (at present).'

b. 'He will come to believe her (later in the day).'

With events or inchoative verbs - verbs that have a punctual nuclear phase and an onset and/or coda - the perfective marker has an imminent completion and an ingressive interpretation as indicated in glosses [a] and [b] respectively in [84] and [85]:

Kinyarwanda:

[84] à rà gèr- à iwa. (62)

3 segp arrive PFV home

a. 'He is arriving home (on his way now).'

b. 'He will arrive home (later in the day).'

[85] à rà s̄inz̄ir- à

3 segp fall asleep PFV

a. 'He is falling asleep.'

b. 'He will sleep (later in the day).'

The completive marker tends to mark a situation which has just been completed. The contrast between the perfective and the completive is evident from the comparison of [86a] and [86b]:

Kinyarwanda:

[86a] à rà hà gè à (29)

3 segp LOC OBJ arrive PFV

'He will arrive there (later in the day).'

[86b] à rà hà gèr- zè (30)

3 segp LOC OBJ arrive COMPL

'He has just arrived there.'

However with inchoative verbs the completive marker has another possible interpretation. 'In this second reading, the completive aspect is interpreted as marking the initial point of the coda phase' (Botne *ibid*). Hence the two readings of [87]:

Kinyarwanda:

[87] y- à rwàà yè umuiiro. (55)

a. 'He became ill with fever.'

b. 'He was ill with fever.'

The examples from these languages in addition to the Ewe ones point to the expression of imminent or prospective completion especially of events - developments and punctual occurrences - by perfective aspectuals.

It is worth noting that in English, imminent accomplishment of events is coded by the progressive (see Dillon 1977:126; Vlach 1981, and Bland 1988). Consider the examples in [88]:

- [88] a. Mary is dying.
 b. John is winning.
 c. The ship is arriving.
 d. The plane is landing.

The progressive in these cases focuses on the onset or the moment that leads to the culmination of the events. Further research might lead to the understanding of how the meaning of imminent completion of a situation is encoded in many more languages by aspectual markers, especially of progressive and perfective markers. There is an urgent need for a cross-linguistic investigation of the expression of imminent completion. It is hoped that the present study might provoke some interest in this topic.

It should be evident from the discussion of the Ewe forms that the aspectual interpretation of situations depends on the interaction of the semantic properties of the aspectual marker, the verb, and the verb and its arguments, including the adverbial adjuncts as well. Witness the two senses postulated for *vɔ* which depend on the situation type in which it occurs.

Furthermore, the semantics of the Ewe forms gives support to the claim that grammaticalisation has a semantic basis - the sorts of meanings the Ewe aspectualisers have are deducible from the meanings of the lexical verbs from which they evolved. Studies of the semantic bases of grammaticalization of aspectual forms have just begun to appear (e.g. Brinton 1985, Bybee 1987). For example, Brinton (1985) shows that in English, there is a link between the semantic classes of verbs and the types of aspectualisers they develop into. She writes: "... verbs expressing 'movement into or towards' or 'connection with' come to mark ingressive aspect, which refers to entry into an area; verbs expressing 'position' or 'stasis' come to mark continuative/iterative aspect, which refers to location in an area; and verbs expressing 'movement out of or away from' or 'separation from' come to mark egressive aspect, which refers to exit from an area" (p.32). These connections have been described in somewhat global terms, dealing with verb classes and different aspectual types. The study in this section has focused only on egressive aspect markers in Ewe. And from the analysis, one can discern a predictable relationship between the semantics of the particular item that undergoes grammaticization and the specific aspectual grammatical meaning that evolves from it. Indeed, it does not seem to be an accident that a verb meaning 'finish' should develop into a marker of the completion of situations. Nor is it strange, semantically, that a verb meaning 'stop/end' should become a marker of the termination of situations. Similarly the development of an existential perfective marker from

a verb meaning 'see/experience' would appear to be fully motivated semantically.

Chapter 7

POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS

7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the linguistic expressions of possession in Ewe and to explicate their meanings (see §7.2 for the sense in which “possession” is used in this chapter). The motivation(s) for the grammatical distinctions that are manifested in the domain of possession in Ewe will also be investigated. It will be argued that the *prima facie* ‘peculiarity’ of the distribution of the nominal ‘alienable’ and ‘inalienable’ possessive structures in Ewe can be explained on semantic grounds. This position is in sharp contrast to the stance taken by Claudi and Heine (1986) who advocate a metaphorical explanation. They comment on the grammar of adnominal possession in Ewe as follows:

The semantics corresponding to this grammatical distinction [between ‘alienable’ and ‘inalienable’ possession] are peculiar: it is only kinship terms and relational locative nouns, plus a handful of isolated concepts like **de** ‘home, native country’, which are treated as inalienable. Perhaps the most noteworthy observation is that body parts have the morphology of ‘alienable’ possession [in Ewe]. ... In accordance with our claim that grammar is the result of metaphorical processes we may expect that this strange relationship between morphological and semantic structure must have some metaphorical base.

Claudi and Heine (1986:316).

The arguments put forward to support their position will be critically examined. To gain an understanding of this area of Ewe grammar, it will be suggested, one should adopt a semantic perspective and supplement it with insights from the ‘metaphorical base’ hypothesis. This chapter, in a sense, illustrates the opposition between the semantic and the metaphorical bases of grammar approaches.

The discussion will proceed as follows: first, brief comments are made on the delimitation of the domain of possession (§7.2); second, sections 4 and 5 provide a description, both structural and semantic, of the constructions that express possession in Ewe; third, the problem of the putative ‘peculiar semantics’ of the ‘alienable’ and ‘inalienable’ distinction and the metaphorical explanation for this contrast are evaluated (§§ 7.6 and 7.7); finally, the chapter concludes with an exploration of the iconic relationship between the linguistic representation and the conceptualisation of possession (§7.8).

7.2 The domain of possession

'Possession is a difficult concept.' (Taylor 1989a:679). It is hard to capture a common core meaning which is applicable to all the structures and situations that have been described as involving possession in one language, let alone across languages. Part of the difficulty comes from a confusion between the use of the term "possession" as an everyday concept where it is restricted to ownership, and its use in grammatical description. In linguistic description, 'it is only a minority of what are traditionally called possessive constructions that have anything to do with property or possession.' (Lyons (1977:722); cf. Isačenko (1964:62) Miller and Johnson-Laird (1976:558 ff.)) In this chapter, the term possession will be used in its broad sense; it will not be restricted to ownership or property. As Lyons (1977:473-4) observes: 'In many languages, possessive structures do not indicate possession or "ownership". Generally speaking, however, a phrase like X's Y means no more than "the Y that is associated with X" and the kind of association holding between Y and X is frequently one of spatial proximity or attachment'. The domain of possession is perhaps best viewed as consisting of a number of prototypical relationships that may hold between two entities.

For the purposes of this study and as a heuristic definition, I follow Seiler (1983a:4) and assume that '[S]emantically, the domain of possession can be defined as bio-cultural. It is the relationship between a human being and his kinsmen, his body parts, his material belongings, his cultural and intellectual products. In a more extended sense, it is the relationship between parts and the whole of an organism.' (cf. Bally 1926). This definition is anthropocentric and characterises the prototypes covered by the semantic space of possession.

Thus in this study, any linguistic expression that represents a given relationship between two entities will be considered a possessive construction. The nature of the relationship between the two entities may be in terms of spatial proximity or in terms of physical or social connection. One entity, the possessor, may be construed as the owner, or the user, or the custodian or the 'care taker', or the controller, or the controllee of the other entity, the possessum (or the possessed). The possessum may also be a part of the possessor, which is the whole¹.

¹Taylor (1989a: 679) views possession as a cluster of the following properties:

- a. The possessor is a specific human being
- b. The possessed is a specific concrete thing or more rarely a living thing
- c. The possessor has exclusive rights of access to the possessed. Other persons may have access to the possessed only with the permission of the possessor
- d. The possessor's rights over the possessed are invested in him through a specific transaction (typically through inheritance, purchase or gift) and remain with

7.3 Ewe possessive constructions: an overview

In any language, one can find expressions of possession which are either nominal (or substantive) or verbal (or predicative) (Utan 1978; Seiler 1983). Possessive constructions, especially the nominal ones, have also been talked about as involving a semantic split between ‘alienable’ and ‘inalienable’ relationships (cf. e.g. Nichols 1988, Seiler 1983). The semantic content of these subcategories is not always clear. In this study, the terms ‘alienable’ and ‘inalienable’ are used primarily to describe constructions as opposed to classes of nominals. These constructions are used to characterise the distance between entities: in the inalienable construction, there is a close relationship between them, with an alienable construction there is a distant one. Thus the construction involving juxtaposition of nominals is considered the prototypical inalienable construction since there is no intervening linguistic material between the nominals, and the one involving a possessive linker is the typical alienable construction (see below and also Chappell and McGregor 1989). The linguistic distance is assumed to be iconic with the perceived conceptual distance between the nominals. In this view nominals are not classified as either alienable or inalienable. Rather they may be conceptualised as entering into such a relationship with other nominals depending on the structures that are used to code the relationship between them and other nominals. In the following subsections, the various nominal and predicative constructions that will be described are outlined.

7.3.1 Ewe adnominal possessive structures:

The possessive relationship between two NPs in an adnominal construction may be indicated in one of the following ways (examples will be supplied in the subsequent sections):

- a. by the use of a possessive linker or connective $\phi\acute{e}$ or its dialect equivalents, e.g. $w\acute{o}$ (Anf \acute{o} e), $b\acute{e}$ (Gb \acute{i} and G \acute{e}), $m\acute{e}$ (Kpele). The structure of such a construction, which will be referred to as the ‘alienable nominal construction’, is:

him until the possessor effects their transfer to another person by means of a further transaction (such as bequest, sale or donation)

- e. The possession relation is a long term one, measured in months and years rather than in minutes and seconds
- f. In order to guarantee the possessor’s easy access to the possessed, the possessed is normally located in the proximity of the possessor. In the limiting case, the possessed is a permanent or at least a regular accompaniment of the possessor.

It should be noted that Taylor considers the occurrence of these properties as constituting the prototypical possession. In my view this represents just one prototype within the domain of possession. It covers only the cases of ownership. Such a view would appear to be too restrictive.

NP POSSESSOR ϕ^e NP POSSESSUM

b. by simple juxtaposition. This is taken to be the inalienable nominal construction, whose structure may be represented as:

NP POSSESSOR NP POSSESSUM

c. by the syntactic compounding of the two nominals. The structure is suprasegmentally marked by a high tone at the end:

N POSSESSOR - N POSSESSUM + HIGH TONE SUFFIX

d. by definiteness marking on the possessum in some cases. The definite article in this usage may be referred to as the possessive article:

NP POSSESSUM + DEFINITE ARTICLE

e. by the use of a possessed or possessum pronoun $t\grave{o}$:

NP POSSESSOR $t\grave{o}$ POSSESSUM

f. by the use of possessive suffixes: $-t\acute{a}$ $-n\acute{o}$, $-v\acute{i}$ $-s\acute{i}$, $-d\check{e}$

N POSSESSUM - POSSESSIVE SUFFIX

7.3.2 Ewe predicative possessive constructions

Certain verbs together with their arguments may represent possessive situations. Constructions of this kind are the following:

a. A general predicative construction for encoding possession makes use of the locative/existential verb 'to be': $l\grave{e}$ PRES or $n\grave{o}$ NPRES and the dative preposition $n\acute{a}$ 'to/for' in the following frame (POSS = POSSESSUM, POR = POSSESSOR):

NP POSS V LOC/EXIST (NP) $n\acute{a}$ NP POR

b. Another predicative structure makes use of the same locative/existential 'be' verb: $l\grave{e}$ PRES and $n\grave{o}$ NPRES and the spatial relational term or postposition (a) $s\acute{i}$ which is derived from the body part term a- $s\acute{i}$ 'hand'. The linear order of the elements in such constructions looks like this:

NP POSS V LOC/EXIST [NP POR $s\acute{i}$]_{NP}

c. Event verbs of contact such as $d\acute{o}$ 'reach', $s\acute{u}$ 'grasp', and $k\acute{a}$ 'get to, touch' may be used in the same configuration as in (b) above in place of the locative/existential verb to indicate the inchoative nature of the possession. The formula for these constructions is:

NP POSS V [contact] [NP POR $s\acute{i}$]_{NP}

d. Temporary possession may be expressed by constructions involving verbs of exchange or handling verbs like *xɔ* ‘receive’ and *lé* ‘hold, catch’ which enter into construction with a prepositional phrase *dé asi* ‘at hand’. In this case, the possessor is the subject and the possessum the object. An optional dative prepositional phrase may be used to encode the person on whose behalf custody of the possession is being kept.

NP POR V [contact] NP POSS *dé asi* (ná NP)

e. The verb *kpó* ‘see, experience’ is also used to express possession of material things like *ga* ‘money’, as well as abstract attributes and states such as *ɲúsẽ* ‘strength’ or *vovo* ‘free’. The possessor is the subject (and experiencer) and the possessum is the object. The syntactic frame is:

NP POR *kpó* NP POSS

These constructions with their subconstructions are now described in detail paying attention to their syntactic form, and behavior and meaning.

7.4 Nominal possessive constructions.

7.4.1 ‘Alienable’ nominal constructions.

It is useful to distinguish between those constructions in which the possessor is a nominal and those in which it is a pronominal. These will be discussed in turn.

7.4.1.1 NP [POR] poss NP [POSS]

The prototypical relation expressed by this construction is that between an animate possessor and a non-relational possessed item. Relational items are nominals which are viewed as having a permanent or inherent association with another nominal. The use of a relational term evokes the thought of an associated nominal. To put it differently, a relational noun can be said to have subcategorised arguments (cf. Seiler 1983, Bally 1926, Taylor 1989). Spatial orientation terms (e.g. *top*, *front*, etc.), kin terms, body parts and other meronymic terms, that is, part terms, are all relational. To say *bottom* means *bottom of something* and to say *grandfather* means *someone’s graandfather*. Similarly, to say *arm* means *the arm of an entity: someone or something*. By contrast, to say *table* or *basket* etc does not imply *someone’s table* or *someone’s basket*. These are non-relational terms. Such nominals typically occur in the alienable construction, that is the NP *ɸé* NP construction. As mentioned earlier

body parts and other part terms also occur typically in this construction (see below).

Ordinary possessive relations which involve a possessor having ownership, or right of use or control over the possessum are expressed by this construction. Consider the underlined phrases in the examples involving non-relational nominals below:

[1] kofi φέ awu vú
K. poss dress tear
'Kofi's garment is torn.'

[2] ama φέ tɔme- de- ze gba.
A. poss river go pot break
'Ama's pot for going to the riverside is broken.'

Example [2] could have a number of interpretations. The pot could be the one that Ama made or bought or has been using. In all these cases there is some association between Ama and the pot. The propensities or attributes of people and animals may also be coded with this structure. Consider these examples:

[3] é se é tɔgbui- wó φέ kalẽwɔwɔ
3SG hear 3SG grandfather PL poss bravery
tsó ame- wó gbó
from person PL side
'He heard about the bravery of his grandfathers from people.'
(Akpatsi 1980:20)

[4] alẽ wó φέ asokúkú ɖe fu ɲútó
sheep PL poss foolishness issue trouble much
'The foolishness of sheep is very worrying.'

In all these cases it is reasonable to think of the possessa as attributes of the possessor. The possessa are like parts of the possessors in the sense of being connected or attached to their possessors, not in the sense of their being integral parts of the possessors (cf. Cruse 1986:157 ff, Winston et al. 1987 Iris et al. 1988). A consequence of the association between the possessors and their possessa is that they can do things with their possessions. In the case of abstract attributes like 'foolishness' and 'bravery' (see the examples above), it can be argued that people (and animals) have the disposition to do certain things because of these attributes, hence it can be argued they can do things with them.

With these considerations in mind, the semantic prototype of this construction may be paraphrased as shown below. Throughout this chapter,

the variables X and Y will be used to represent possessor and possessum respectively:

NP (=X =POR) $\phi\acute{e}$ NP (=Y =POSS)

One can think of Y like this:

Y is like a part of X

X can do things with Y

A stronger form of the last component in the semantic formula could be “X can do what X wants with Y”. But this would not be equally applicable to abstract attributes such as *kalēwəwə* ‘bravery’ and *asokúkú* ‘foolishness’ (see [3] and [4]).

7.4.1.2 PRO poss NP constructions

If the possessor is realised as a pronoun, a variant of the independent forms are used (see table of pronouns in overview grammar). Apart from the first and second person singular forms (discussed below), all other pronouns are linked to the possessed items by the possessive connective $\phi\acute{e}$. Some of these are illustrated below:

[5] *mía $\phi\acute{e}$ agble- xə kló*
 1PL poss farm house bare
 ‘Our farm house is without a roof.’

[6] *wé $\phi\acute{e}$ agbenəɔ mé nyó o.*
 3PL poss character NEG good NEG
 ‘Their character is not good.’

The logophoric pronoun, *ye*, is also linked to the possessum by the possessive connective. For example:

[7] ... *aɸuya xə se bé ye- $\phi\acute{e}$ pɔŋ bla-ene*
 A. get hear COMP LOG poss pound forty
 ‘... Aɸuya believed that his forty pounds ... (was enough)

(Dogoe 1964:7)

The possessive link for the first and second person singular forms is indicated by a high tone only. This high tone combines with the low tone of the forms to produce a rising tone on the pronouns:²

[8] *nyě (* $\phi\acute{e}$)ga bú*
 1SG:poss poss money lost

² It has been suggested that this suprasegment is a remnant of the high tone on the possessive linker $\phi\acute{e}$ after the segmental forms have been lost.

'My money is lost.'

- [9] wǒ (*φέ) takú dzó
 2SG:poss poss scarf fall
 'Your scarf has fallen off.'

7.4.1.3 NP poss NP [body part]

A subtype of the NP *poss* NP construction is one in which body parts and parts of wholes are the possessa. These terms are relational as explained above (see §7.4.1.1). All categories of body part terms - external, for example, ηῶτι 'nose', αῶ 'leg, foot' etc; internal, for instance, dzi 'heart', φύ 'bone' etc; and personal representation such as gbṛgbṛ 'spirit', luṛ 'soul, shadow' etc. (Chappell and McGregor in press) - occur in this frame. The only exception is the term ηḱó 'name, fame'. This concept, which could be considered as a personal representation, for some reason, is treated as more inherently associated with its owner than body parts as we shall see below. Consider the following examples:

- [10] kofí *(φέ)ηḱúme φo dji.
 K. poss face beat dirt
 'Kofi's face is dirty.'

- [11] dḗví á *(φέ) aḱuḱó biã
 child DEF poss urine orange
 'The child's urine is orange in colour.'

- [12] ... máwú vu é φέ susú me ...
 God open3SG poss brain in
 '... God has opened up his mind ...' (Akpatsi 1980:31)

For the NP φέ NP structure with body part possessa, the following semantic representation is proposed:

NP (=X=POR) φέ NP (=Y = body part)

One can think of Y like this:

Y is a part of X

When one thinks of Y

one cannot not think of X

X can do things with Y

There are two main differences between this formula and the previous one. First, body parts are not LIKE parts but they ARE parts of their possessors. They are organic parts of people and animals. Second, body parts are relational hence the component “When one thinks of Y one cannot not think of X”. But notice that the last components in both formulae are identical. The similarity between the two constructions captured in this last component is that the possessor can do things with the possessa. It appears that this is the crucial feature that sets body part terms apart from other inherent relational terms. And it is responsible for the ‘alienable’ grammar they have in adnominal constructions.

7.4.1.4 NP poss NP [other part terms]

Other part-whole relations seem to be modelled on the body parts. The only deviation in this case is that inanimate things cannot be said to be able to do things with their parts. Although the relationship between a plant and its parts, [13], an instrument and its parts, [14], or an artefact and its parts, [15], is expressed in the same way as that between a body and its parts, they differ in one aspect. The inanimate wholes lack the right of use of their parts, so to speak.

[13] *ɔmá ɛ́ á *(ɔ́é) alɔ ɡǎ ɔ́eká fé*
 ‘oak’ tree DEF poss branch big one split
 ‘One big branch of the ‘oak’ tree has split off.’

[14] *agblenu ɡǎ *(ɔ́é) atí ɲé*
 hoe big poss handle break
 ‘The handle of the big hoe is broken.’

[15] *agbalē a *(ɔ́é) akpa ɔ́e.*
 book DEF poss cover remove
 ‘The cover of the book is torn.’

Similarly, parts of temporal entities such as day or year and things that are associated with these temporal periods, such as things that happened during these periods, are coded using the possessive linker *ɔ́é*. For example:

[16] *ɲufóke ɔ́é fiē ...*
 next day poss evening
 ‘the evening of the next day’ (Nyaku in press:35)

[17] *vivití ... ɔ́é ɣeyiyi- wó me*
 darkness poss time PL in
 ‘during the times of the dark i.e. night’ (Nyaku in press: 35)

[18] ϕ e si vá yi ϕ é tsi-dza-dza
 year REL come go poss rainfall
 'last year's rainfall.'

The explication of these part-whole relations should capture the idea that the possessors cannot necessarily do things with their possessa. Part of the inherent semantics of the inanimate wholes is that they are [-potent] (cf. Chafe 1970) and this cancels the semantic component of the construction that has to do with the possessor doing things with the possessa. Hence the formula proposed is identical with the one for the body-part relations in all respects except one. Compare this explication with the body part one:

NP (=X= POR, inanimate whole) ϕ é NP (= Y = part)

One can think of Y like this:

Y is a part of X

When one thinks of Y

one cannot not think of X

To sum up, in an NP *poss* NP construction the possessa are non-relational terms and meronyms - parts in part-whole relations. The semantic prototype of this construction has been characterised. The interaction of the inherent semantics of the different categories of possessa, for example, body parts, with the prototype has led to the recognition of a number of subconstructions. For instance, body parts add the element of their relational nature captured by the component:

When one thinks of Y, one cannot not think of X.

In specific situations, the semantics of the lexical items involved in the syntactic construction would interact with the prototype defined and yield specific contextual interpretations (cf. the case of inanimate possessors above).

7.4.1.5 Possessive superlative constructions: N_i -PL *poss* N_i

The same semantic prototype of the alienable construction is exploited in a specialised construction of the form: N_i -PL ϕ é N_i . The essential thing about this construction is that the nominals are identical and the possessor is structurally pluralised. It is analogous to English archaic structures like:

king of kings; lord of lords.

The only difference is that the Ewe constructions are more productive than the English ones. Consider these examples:

[19] éya hã zu dadá gã aφéno- wó φé aφéno.
 3SG too become mother big mistress PL poss mistress
 ‘She too became a madam, a mistress of mistresses.’ (Dogoe 1964:9)

[20] né me- wú nyě así wó dè dzi
 if 1SG raise 1SG:poss handPL to high
 dó dè wò kəkəe-φé wó φé kəkəe-φé
 send to 2SG holy-placePL poss holy-place
 ‘When I lift up my hands toward your Most Holy Place.’ (Ps.28 v.2)

In essence, this construction conveys the idea that the referent is an exceptional N, the best of Ns, a super N or the first among the Ns; the greatest N. Hence the label possessive superlative. Notice that in example [20] from the Book of Psalms, the structure is employed in translating a superlative expression in English. The possessive linker is used here, it would seem to indicate a kind of class-member relationship. The meaning of this construction may be paraphrased tentatively as follows:

X-PL φé X

One can think this:

An X is somewhere

It is a part of the group of Xs

One could say about this X: it is more than an X

because of something that one can say about it

One cannot say the same thing about all Xs.

The crucial component that links this construction to the prototype is the second one: the one that says roughly Y is part of the group of Xs.

7.4.2 ‘Inalienable’ nominal constructions.

It should be recalled that the label ‘inalienable’ construction is to be understood in terms of the linguistic distance between the nominals whose relationship is represented in the construction. Thus the expressions which are considered inalienable are those that involve the strategies of juxtaposition (NP NP); syntactic compounding (N-N) and suffixation (N+ Affix). The possessive connective is not used in these constructions. First, the NP NP structures are described (§7.4.2). Before describing the syntactic compounds, the alternation of juxtaposition and possessive connective constructions with respect to the same categories of possessa is examined. An egocentric linguistic perspective

on possession is described as well as the possessed pronoun *tɔ*, which can also stand for any category of possessum.

7.4.2.1 NP [POR] NP [POSS]

The NP NP construction is used to express spatial, kin, social and cultural relations between a possessor and a possessum. These relationships are in a sense inherent and permanent (Bally 1926, Seiler 1983 Haiman 1985). The nature of the relationship between the possessor and possessum varies from one category of possessa to another. Nevertheless, all the terms that participate in this construction as possessa share one thing in common: they are all relational but not meronymic (i.e. part) terms. The various semantic domains covered by this construction are described in turn.

7.4.2.2 NP NP [Spatial relation terms]

The constructions in which an entity is related to its spatial orientation are generally instantiated as NP N structures because the spatial relational terms are seldom modified (see Duthie in press, Westermann 1930:52). Even if they are modified, it is usually post-intensifiers that they take. The spatial relational terms form a subclass of nominals but they are not prototypical ones because they allow a very limited degree of modification. The members of this class vary in their degree of nominality partly because most of them have evolved historically from body part terms (see §7.7.1 below, and cf. Westermann 1930:51 ff., Heine and Reh 1984:256ff., Heine 1989).

Spatial relational terms such as *dzi* 'top, above', *gɔme* 'under', *ɲɔɔ* 'front', *gbó* 'side' etc. occur as possessa in this construction as the examples below show:

[21] *tsó ga- a daɖé kofí gbó ko.*
 take money DEF put at K. side only
 'Just leave the money with Kofi.'

[22] *atíkpo aɖé le tɔ- a títína.*
 log INDEF be at river DEF middle
 'There is a log in the middle of the river.'

[23] *kplɔ̃ gã dzí ɸoɖi.*
 table big top beat dirt
 'The top of the big table is dirty.'

It should be pointed out that one thing which spatial relational, kin and socio-cultural terms have in common is that their possessors cannot do anything with them as they could with body parts and other possessa.

To capture these features of the possessive construction of NP NP constructions in which the possessa are spatial orientation terms, I propose the following explication:

NP (=X=POR) NP (= Y =POSS, spatial orientation)

One can think of X and Y like this:

One cannot think of all of X and not think of Y

Y is a part of X

When one thinks of Y

one cannot not think of X

One cannot say

X can do anything X wants with Y

The second component in this formula indicates that every entity has some spatial relation. Spatial orientations are inseparable parts or elements of any item hence the third component: 'When one thinks of Y, one cannot not think of X'. The last component aims to capture the idea that an entity does not have much control over its spatial relations as it may have with its body parts.

7.4.2.3 NP NP [Kin and social relations]

Kin terms, consanguineal as well as affinal, constitute another category of possessa in the NP NP construction. Consider these examples:

[24] ɖɛví á wó tógbé dze dɔ.
 child DEF PL grandfather fall sickness
 'The grandfather of the children has fallen sick.'

[25] kofí srɔ̃ eve- á wó kátã dzi vǐ
 K. spouse two DEF PL all bear child
 le ŋkeke ɖɛká dzí
 at day one top
 'The two wives of Kofi bore children on the same day.'

Intuitively, the relationship between an entity and its spatial orientation is different from the one between a human and their kin relation. The entity-spatial orientation relation is a kind of whole-part one while the human-kin relation is one where the two terms can be thought of as members of the same socio-cultural group. In other words a kin relative is not a part of the possessor in the same way that a spatial orientation or a body part is a part of its possessor. Tentatively, I propose the following formula to capture the kin relationship between a possessor and a possessum:

NP (=X=POR) NP (=Y=POSS, kin term)

One can think of X and Y like this:

X is part of something

Y is part of the same thing as X

When one thinks of Y one can think of X

One cannot say

X can do anything X wants with Y

In the part-whole and the entity-spatial orientation relations there is mostly an exclusive one-to-one relationship between the possessor and the possessum. This is not the case with respect to the relationship between a human and their kin. Normally, several people may have one individual as ‘mother’ whereas a particular entity has a particular spatial orientation, for instance, ‘bottom’ (cf. Sapir 1917-1920:88). This difference is reflected in the formulae in the components that account for the relational nature of the terms; namely, “when one thinks of Y one cannot not think of X” for part-whole relations and “when one thinks of Y one can think of X” for kin relationships.

Similarly there is no necessary exclusive one-to-one corresponding relationship between a possessor and their social and cultural associates. Thus the attachment between a possessor and their social relations such as *xólõ* ‘friend’, *hati* ‘colleague, mate’, *lõlá* ‘lover, well-wisher’, *tabialá* ‘suitor’ etc. is not a unique one. The same thing can be said of possessions which are thought of as basic in the culture. These are *ηκό* ‘name, reputation’, *de* ‘native/home land’, *aφέ me* ‘home/dwelling’ and *agble* ‘farm’. These concepts are merely juxtaposed to their possessors to indicate their connection. Consider these examples:

[26] *ama tabialá wó wú taɖa.*

A. suitor PL exceed hair

‘The suitors of Ama are (as) uncountable (as hair).’

[27] *nye mé nyá ɖevi má ηκό o.*

1SG NEG know child DEMname NEG

‘I don’t know the name of that child.’

[28] *hotɔwú xólõ vevi- tɔ ηκό é nyé akakpo*

H. friend important comp name aFOC beA.

‘Hotɔwu’s best friend’s name is Akakpo’. (Nyaku 1984:15)

Note that in the last example [28] there are two possessive phrases both involving socio-cultural terms and hence there is no overt possessive connective to link the nominals.

Tentatively, the following semantic representation may be proposed for the NP NP structure in which socio-cultural concepts are the possessa:

NP (=X = POR) NP(=Y = POSS, socio-cultural terms)

One can think of Y like this:

Y is like a part of X

When one thinks of Y one thinks of X

X can do some things with Y

X cannot do with Y anything X wants to

This formula attempts to capture the intuitive idea that socio-cultural possessa are not parts of their possessors the way in which a meronym is a part of its whole. Another feature it tries to capture is that the possessor has limited control over the possessum. This is portrayed in the last two components. In fact, a person's 'use' of these items is constrained by social and cultural norms of behaviour, as the following proverb teaches about one's behaviour towards one's homeland:

[29] wé mé tsó á mia- sí
 3PL NEG take HAB left hand
 fiá á ame de o.
 point HAB person homeland NEG
 'One does not point to one's homeland with the left hand.'

This saying should be appreciated against the cultural background of the taboo on the use of the left hand in social interaction. One cannot point to others or pass things on to them with the left hand. This is considered to be very rude (see §14.8.2 on an excusing formula for the use of the left hand). The point of this proverb is that one should not be rude to one's native or homeland. One cannot do certain things with one's homeland.

It was noted earlier that *ɲkó* 'name' which could be thought of as a personal representation and hence a body part term is treated differently from body part terms. It behaves more like a socio-cultural term. This is probably because there is a limit to what one can do with one's personal given names. It should be remembered that in Ewe culture as in other West African cultures people are born at least with one of their names, their birthday names, and this cannot be easily altered, although it could be suppressed. This constraint on what one can do with one's names is perhaps responsible for the different treatment of this

term. This is indirect evidence for the claim made earlier on that body parts are conceived of as things people can do things with.

7.4.2.4 PRO NP

For the PRO NP construction, when the possessor is first or second person singular, the order of possessor preceding the possessum is reversed (see the discussion on egocentric perspective below (§7.4.4). This can be schematically represented as follows: NP [POSS] 1SG/2SG PRO [POR]. For other pronominals including the logophoric, the normal order is maintained. Compare examples [30] and [31] on the one hand with [32] and [33] on the other:

[30] ɲkǎ nye- é nyé kofi
 name 1SG NFOC be K
 'My name is Kofi.'

[31] srã wò fě a?
 spouse 2SG rise Q
 'How is your spouse?'

[32] miá gbó fá
 1PL side cool
 'Our side is cool.' i.e. 'There is no bad news around us.'

[33] ava dzɔ le wó de.
 war happen be at 3PL homeland
 'A war broke out in their homeland.'

7.4.3 The alternation between 'NP NP' and 'NP poss NP' construction

The three classes of nominals - spatial, kin and socio-cultural relational terms - which occur as possessa in the NP NP structure can also participate in the NP ϕ é NP construction *pace* Claudi and Heine's (1986:317-318) assertion that they never do. This happens in marked contexts. Typically, its effect is to de-emphasise the closeness between the entities and to draw attention to the distinct character of either the possessor or the possessum. Some support for this contention comes from the tendency of spatial, kin and socio-cultural terms to occur as possessa in the NP ϕ é NP structure in focused or emphatic contexts. It must be conceded though that there are semantic constraints on the spatial orientation terms that can occur in this structure. For example those spatial relation terms that have lost most of their nominality and are fully

grammaticalised as postpositions e.g. *me* 'inside', *té* 'under' and *dzí* 'top' cannot be connected to their possessors by the possessive linker $\phi\acute{e}$. (I notice that Heine (1989:115ff) makes a similar observation, but he did not take back their 1986 assertion.) Consider the following examples:

[34] $\text{v\`{o}n\`{u}d\`{r}\`{s}l\`{a} \ \eta\`{u}t\`{s} \ \phi\acute{e} \ \acute{v}\acute{i} \ \acute{e} \ n\`{o} \ \eta\`{g}\`{o}$
 judge self poss child NFOC NPRES front ná *v\`{i}*
 nye- a háfi wé de figbé a?
 to child 1SG DEF before 3PL go thieving Q
 'Was it the child of the judge himself who was directing my child
 when they went to steal?' (Kpodzo 1982:9)

[35] $\text{du \ lolo \ \acute{a}\acute{c}\acute{e} \ le \ eve\text{-}ny\acute{i}gb\acute{a} \ blibo \ l\acute{a} \ \phi\acute{e}}$
 town largeINDEF be Ewe land whole DEF poss
 tíína tútútú
 middle exactly
 'There is a large town right in the middle of the whole Ewe
 territory.' (Nyaku 1984:7)³

Example [34] is particularly significant because it contains two instances of *v\`{i}* 'child'. The first one employs the NP $\phi\acute{e}$ NP device while the second occurs in the NP NP structure. Notice that in the former case the two individuals are separately highlighted. The possessor is emphasised by an intensifier and the possessum is focus marked. The message of the structure of the second instance (of *v\`{i}*) is the closeness between the possessor and the possessum. These data seem to confirm the view that the NP $\phi\acute{e}$ NP structure is more alienable than the NP NP construction.

While these inherent relational terms can participate in either the NP NP or NP $\phi\acute{e}$ NP constructions, the other categories of possessa - body parts, other meronyms and material possessions - occur only in the latter. Observe that examples [36] and [37] would be unacceptable if the possessive connective were deleted.

³ It is interesting to note that in the next paragraph the same author has a similar sentence in which the possessive marker is not used to link Ewe land and middle:

$\text{\acute{e}si \ w\grave{e} \ ny\acute{e} \ eve\text{-}ny\acute{i}gb\acute{a} \ blibo \ l\acute{a} \ tíína \ tútútú \ \acute{e}}$
 when 3SG be Ewe land whole DEF middle exactly NFOC
 dūnyo le ta lá ...
 D. be because TP

'Since it is the case that Dūnyo is right in the middle of the whole Ewe territory ...'
 Here the author does not wish to emphasize the location of this large town, rather he is emphasizing the reason for the next piece of information that is contained in the main clause of the sentence. Hence he uses the unmarked means of expressing spatial relations.

[36] kofi *(ϕ é) abó ñé
K. poss arm break
'Kofi's arm is broken.'

[37] kofi *(ϕ é) dó gblé
K. poss work spoil
'Kofi's work is ruined.'

7.4.4 NP [POSS] 1/2 PRO [POR] : an egocentric construction

There is one caveat however with respect to this property. When the possessor is the first or second person singular, it is possible for the relationship between the possessor and these categories of possessa to be expressed using the NP NP strategy. This means that these possessa could occur either in the frame 1/2 PRO (+high tone) [POR] NP [POSS] or in the frame NP [POSS] 1/2 PRO [POR]. The first pattern has already been exemplified in §7.4.1.2. The second pattern is illustrated below:

[38] ahuhõε- nye gba.
mirror 1SG break.
'My mirror is broken.'

[39] afókpa- wò nyá kpó na ñútó
footwear 2SG MOD see HAB much
'Your shoes are very nice.'

How can the felicity of these forms be explained? I suggest that this is possible because the use of the first and second person singular pronouns in this construction presents the possessive relationship from an egocentric perspective. That is to say that the configuration of NP PRO is chosen depending on the speaker's empathy or identification with the possessor and the proximity of the possessor to the speaker. Naturally, people tend to be more interested in themselves and in the relations they bear to the participants in the speech situation. It can be claimed that on the nominal hierarchy the first and second person pronominals are the closest to the speaker in proximity, empathy and topicality (Kuno 1987, Langacker 1985, Kuno and Kaburaki 1977, Silverstein 1976). In fact, in most cases the speaker and the first person are identical. In these cases the possessor is treated as more important, and is of more interest to the speaker, than the possessum and is therefore put in the position where the head would normally occur in such a construction. It is not uncommon for languages to treat first and second person possessors differently

from other kinds of possessors (see e.g. Seiler 1980, 1983 and Reh et al 1981 for some examples).

It can be claimed that a syntagm of the form NP (=POSS) - PRO (= 1/2 SG, POR) irrespective of the semantic domain covered by the possessum nominal implies an egocentric orientation to the possessive relation. When the possessum is one which would not normally occur in such a structure the configuration tends to signify the personal dimension as well as the closeness between the possessor and the possessum. It also shows that it is the possessor rather than the possessum who is of focal interest to the speaker.

7.4.5.1 The possessed pronoun *t̀*

Another linguistic device for the codification of possession in Ewe is the use of a pronominal *t̀* which stands for the possessum, and may hence be called the possessed/possessum pronoun. Duthie (in press:71) calls it a postnominal pronoun because it occurs after the possessor nominal. Example [40b] below, which could be said in response to [40a] illustrates the use of this form:

[40a] ame- ka ϕ ́ e agbalẽ ẽ
 person WH poss book aFOC
 'Whose book is it?'

[40b] kofí t̀ é
 K. POSSPRO aFOC
 'It is Kofi's.'

It should be observed that in the answer, *t̀* is used in reference to the possessum, i.e. the book. Note also that there is no overt possessive linker when *t̀* is used. It is just juxtaposed to the possessor. In general, the possessor precedes the possessed pronoun unless it is a first or second person singular pronoun. There are two possible orders for these: the first or second person singular may occur suffixed to the possessed pronoun, or may be preposed to it. In other words, like other structures we have seen before, the possessive relation may be presented from an egocentric perspective when the personal pronouns are suffixed to the possessed pronoun. Consider the following examples with personal pronouns:

[41] nye t̀ é bú
 1SG POSSPRO aFOC lost
 'Mine is lost'.

[42] t̀ nye- é bú

POSSPRO 1SG aFOC lost
 'Mine is lost'.

[43] é t̀ kú
 3SG POSSPRO die
 'His/hers is dead.'

[44] miá t̀ gblé
 1PL POSSPRO spoil
 'Ours is spoilt.'

[45] wó t̀ fiá
 3PL POSSPRO burn
 'Theirs is burnt'.

The basic assumption associated with the use of the possessed pronoun is that the addressee can identify the possessum from the context. The following explication is proposed to account for the significance of X t̀ constructions:

NP (=X) t̀ (=Y)

One can think this:

Y is like a part of X

I think you know what I am thinking of
 when I say it like this

It has already been argued that the syntactic apposition of possessor and possessum in Ewe indicates that the possessive relation is viewed as an inherent one (see §7.4.2). Presumably, the use of that strategy with respect to the possessed pronoun implies that the speaker views the possessum, at least in the speech context, as having a close association with the possessor and therefore could be identified by the addressee.

The possessed pronoun t̀ should be distinguished clearly from the possessive suffix t́ described in §7.4.7 below, and a comparative nominalising suffix t̃ (see Chapter 5 on adjectives). Apart from their tonal differences, these forms also differ in their functions and semantics as the labels suggest. These distinctions are not recognised by Ultan (1978:28) who claims that the three forms are a unitary one. He writes:

Ewe which makes use of a G[enitive]- class marker, basically a noun meaning 'owner, master' prefixed to some personal pronouns and postposed to the others and possessor nouns. Although this is not the ordinary genitive marker, it functions as such in substantive

constructions and also to mark the standard of comparison in some comparative constructions.

It must be observed that the forms that Ultan is talking about are three distinct forms which are identical segmentally, but different supra-segmentally. There may be some diachronic relation between them and there is some semantic component that the forms share, nevertheless they are separate morphemes.

7.4.5.2 The possessive definite clitic: á

The possessive definiteness marker is very restricted in its use. Its main function is to signal a third person singular kin possession. The structure involves the definite form á occurring as a post-clitic on a kin term with or without a third person singular pronominal form preposed to it. The sequence of elements in this construction could be represented as follows:

3SG PRO - Kin term - DEF Z

It must be emphasised that the definiteness marker is obligatory in this structure. Consider the following examples:

[46] (è)- srã á dzi ví
 3SG spouse DEF bear child
 'The wife has given birth'.

[47] (é)- nɔví á sí dzó
 3SG sibling DEF run leave
 'The brother/sister escaped'.⁴

Typically in anaphoric usage, the 3SG pronoun may be dropped and the only overt signal of the possessive relation is the definiteness marker on the possessum as in the following example:

[48] éya ηutó srã á kplé vi- á wó
 3SG INT spouse DEF and child DEF PL
 nɔ é øé kaa me
 sit 3SG poss car in
 'He himself, the wife and the children went in his car.' (Akpatsi 79)

⁴ Ansre (1966:195) makes a formal distinction between kin terms and spatial relational terms on the basis of the tone of the third person singular pronominal form that they occur with. He claims that for the kin terms, the form is è and for spatial orientation, it is é. I do not think the data is as clear-cut as Ansre suggests. As the examples above show, the 3SG form with kin terms can be either high or low. The phenomenon deserves further investigation.

It could be argued that the definiteness marker *per se* has nothing to do with possession. But when it enters into construction with a kin term a possessive interpretation results. In addition, anaphoric reference which is already associated with the definiteness marker may make a pronominal form redundant.

Definiteness markers are employed in a number of languages for the expression of possession, for instance French, with different nuances of meaning (cf. Hatcher 1944a and b). Some English speakers consider that the use of a definite article and a kin term together can convey a disparaging attitude of the speaker towards the relationship. Others feel that there is a distancing between the two people involved in the relationship if the article rather than the possessive pronoun is used. Compare: 'the boyfriend' vs. 'her boyfriend', 'the wife' vs. 'his wife'. Some speakers of English think that the first member of each pair is disparaging, and in general the definite article is less well interpreted as a possessive than the indefinite article (cf. Birner 1988.) Thus the English equivalents of the Ewe sentences could be viewed by some English speakers as disparaging. Ewe forms however do not carry any connotations of distance or low opinion of the relationship from the point of view of the speaker.

7.4.6 Syntactic compounds: N1 - N2 + high tone suffix

7.4.6.1 Orientation

All relational terms - spatial orientation, kin, socio-cultural and body parts and other meronyms - can be compounded syntactically with other nominals to indicate a permanent relationship between them. Phonologically, the compound is marked by a high tone suffix which is particularly noticeable when the last syllable has a low tone. The coalescence of the low and the high produces a rising tone on the last syllable. For example, the nominals *ɲútsu* 'man' and *afɔkpa* 'footwear' can be compounded and note the tone of the final syllable:

- [49] *ɲútsu-* 'fɔkpǎ
 man footwear
 'men's footwear'

Two functional types of these nominal compounds may be distinguished: a possessive one which is used to express a habitual association between two individuals, and a classificatory one (as in example [49] above) in which the referent of the compound is a member of the class of things denoted by the head nominal, N2. Thus in the above example, the generic nominal 'man' acts as a classifier of the referential nominal 'footwear' to indicate the kind of footwear that the item is. The two functional types are discussed in turn.

7.4.6.2 Possessive nominal compounds

In this type of syntactic compound, N2 is a kin or social relation of N1. In this case the two people are represented by personal names or by address terms. More specifically, N1 may be the parent or spouse or guardian or master (i.e. male boss) or mistress (i.e. female boss) of N2. This is the kind of relationship between the components of the following compounds:

- [50] *dzinaku-* 'kɔsuá
 D. A.
 'Dzinaku's Akɔsua'

- [51] *gbede-* kɔdzó
 blacksmith K.
 'Gbede's Kɔdzo'⁵

⁵ The form *gbedé* means 'blacksmith' and it is used as a proper address term for blacksmiths (see the chapter on modes of address in Ewe).

The affinal relationship between two individuals may be expressed through the compounding of their names. Typically, the husband is N1 (= possessor) and the wife is N2 (= possessum). For example:

[52] klemensi- 'kɔsuá
Clemence A.
'Clemence's Akɔsua'

[53] viktɔ- 'brã
Victor Abra
'Victor's Abra'

It should be noted that both nominals are proper names or address titles and both are thus referential and denote specific individuals. On account of this, these compounds are not classificatory because in a classificatory compound, the modifying nominal which acts as a classifier is usually generic, not specific (cf Chappell and McGregor 1989). In addition since these compounds encode a kin or social relationship between the individuals involved, it can be argued that they are possessive. This does not imply that there may not be some associated classificatory inference. Nevertheless, it should be noted that these compounds do not say what kind of person the possessum is. Rather they provide a description of the possessum with respect to the possessor such as: child of X, or apprentice of X, or wife of X etc. In these compounds, N2 is defined or identified with respect to a specific individual represented by N1. The basis of this identification is a kin or social relationship that may exist between N1 and N2. N1 is thus determinative of N2 rather than being a classifier of it as is the situation with the classificatory compounds. Several compounds of this type are used extensively in the Ewe address system (see Chapter 13 on Ewe modes of address).

Another piece of evidence in support of the possessive rather than classificatory nature of these compounds is that they can be paraphrased as N1 ϕ é N2. Thus [54] and [55] are paraphrases of [52] and [53] respectively:

[54] klémensi ϕ é akɔsuá
Clemence poss A
'Clemence's Akɔsua'

[55] gbedé ϕ é kɔdzó
blacksmith poss K.
'Gbede's Kɔdzó'

Apart from being used to draw attention to the individuals separately, the N1 $\phi\acute{e}$ N2 device tends to imply that N1 has some control over N2. This is particularly evident when it is used to express the association between a husband and a wife. N1 (= wife) - N2 (= husband) syntactic compounds are rare. Such structures are after all grammatical, but their meaning is perceived to be culturally odd. Nevertheless, N1 (= wife) $\phi\acute{e}$ N2 (= husband) expressions have been attested (see example [48b]). The inference carried by such a structure is that the wife dominates the husband which is a poor reflection on the husband⁶.

[56] ama $\phi\acute{e}$ kɔmla
 A. poss K.
 'Ama's Komla.'

This piece of evidence would seem to confirm the view that the $\phi\acute{e}$ possessive connective constructions have an element of the possessor having the right to do things with the possessum.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following semantic representation for the meaning of nominal compounds that express kin and social relations:

X (=N1 [POR]) - Y (=N2 [POSS])
 One can think of X and Y like this:
 Y is part of something
 X is part of the same thing
 When one thinks of Y, one cannot not think of X
 One can think this: X does things for Y

The first and second components account for the fact that the two individuals could be thought of as belonging to the same socio-cultural group. The third component captures the very close association between the people involved. The last component is meant to represent the idea that the referent of N1 is socially responsible for the referent of N2. Recall that N1 is either a parent, a guardian, a master/mistress or a spouse. All of these people occupy positions of social responsibility with respect to their dependants.

A subtype of these possessive compounds is a construct in which the N1 is a place name and N2 is a human noun, typically a personal name or a status term.

⁶ In Ewe traditional culture, a husband is the one that has authority in the family and provides for his spouse and children. Wives are expected to submit to their husbands and not to dominate them. A husband who is ruled by his wife is said to be effeminate. Given this cultural background it should be clear why these structures are rare and are perceived to be odd.

These compounds express the idea that a person (N2) is closely associated with the place N1. If N1 is a proper name then it could be that they were born there, or married or are working there or are residing at that place. The specific nature of the association between the two entities may be determined by contextual or extra-linguistic factors. For example:

- [57] avaté kofi
 A. K.
 'Kofi of Avate'

If N2 is a status term, then the referent of the compound holds that position in the locality represented by N1. For instance:

- [58] kpando- fiă
 K. chief
 'chief of Kpando'

These compounds can be paraphrased with the possessive connective which confirms their possessive nature. Compare [57] and [58] above with [59] and [60] below:

- [59] avatéφé kofi
 A. poss K.
 'Avate's Kofi'

- [60] kpando φé fia
 K. poss chief
 'Kpando's chief'

7.4.6.3 Classificatory compounds

The essential thing about classificatory compounds is that one of the nominals is non-referential and usually generic. This nominal acts as a classifier of the other nominal in the compound. If the the generic nominal is made specific the NP φé NP structure has to be used. In this case both nominals could be modified. Such modification, of course, is not available for the nominals in the compound.

In the N1 - N2 compounds which express meronymic relations, N1 represents the whole and N2 the part. Such structures have generic, as opposed to specific, interpretations. Observe that in the example below, N1 is a generic nominal 'person' and N2 is a term for a part of such nominals. The referent of the compound is a type of head: a human head, and N1 tells us what type it is. Compare the following:

- [61] ame- tă
 person head

‘human head’

- [62] ame- á *(ϕ é) ta tsútsɔ́é má
 person DEF poss head pointedDEM
 ‘the person’s pointed head’

Parts of animals, plants and implements can be similarly expressed (see examples below). The same principles of interpretation apply in these cases as well.

- [63] gbɔ- fʃ
 goat leg
 ‘goat leg’

- cp. [64] gbɔ vɛvɛ́ má *(ϕ é) a-fɔ́ ɲéɲě lá...
 goat smelly DEMposs leg broken DEF
 ‘that smelly goat’s broken leg ...’

- [65] ań lʃ
 tree branch
 ‘tree branch’

- cp. [66] atigã lá *(ϕ é) a-lɔ́ ɖɛká ...
 tree big DEF poss branch one
 ‘one branch of the big tree ...’

The relationship between N1 and N2 in such compounds may be one of spatial attachment. Thus N2 may denote the spatial orientation of N1. Like the part-whole compounds, these structures also have generic interpretation (see example [67]). It is noteworthy that when the generic term in the entity-spatial relation compounds are definitised they do not normally take the possessive connective unlike the other types of compounds. This probably suggests that the spatial relation terms are the least ‘alienable’ of the relational nominals. Compare these examples:

- [67] kplɛ́ dzí
 table top
 ‘table-top’

- [68] kplɛ́ á *(ϕ é) dzí
 table DEF poss top
 ‘top of the table ...’

The basic features of the compounds described so far may be captured in the following formula. This explication could be taken as the semantic prototype for the compound structures for meronymic relations:

X (= N1) - Y (=N2)

One can think of X and Y like this:

Y is (always) a part of Xs

One can think this: X and Y are one thing

This thing is a kind of Y

The second component captures the part-whole relation between these terms. It also shows that the first nominal is generic, that is, Xs. The third component represents the idea that the referent of the compound is an entity. The last component tells of the classificatory nature of these compounds.

There are other kinds of classificatory compounds. In some of them N1 represents the user of N2. Thus the item the compound refers to is used by a category of people or entities designated by N1:

[69] nyónu - dǒ
 womancloth
 'ladies' cloth'

Other compounds are of the specific-generic type. For example:

[70] du - fiă
 town chief
 'town chief'

When the N1's in these compounds are modified the possessive construction involving the linker $\phi\acute{e}$ would have to be used as in the case of the other compounds illustrated earlier. Note that the denotata of these compounds can be persons as in [70], or places.

Another type of classificatory compound is that in which N1 is the proper name of a specific N2. Typically, these compounds consist of a proper noun and a common noun of place denoting the kind of place that N1 names. In these constructions, the relationship between the constituents could be paraphrased very roughly as: 'the name of this place, which is a kind of N2, is N1'. Thus N1 specifies the name of the place N2, hence such compounds could be considered identification compounds. Consider the following examples:

[71] ghana- dukó
 G. nation
 'the Ghana nation'

[72] gemí tó
 G mountain
 'Mt. Gemi'

In these compounds the order of elements with respect to the generic-specific feature is: specific-generic. The meaning of these compounds could be represented, tentatively, as follows:

N1 (=X; place name)-N2 (=Y)

One can think of X and Y as one place

This place is a kind of Y

People could say X, when they think of this place

All these classificatory compounds have two features at least in common: first, they have one referent and second, the compound is a hyponym of the non-referential member of the compound. These features constitute the semantic prototype for the classificatory compounds which can be formulated as follows:

X (= N1) - Y (=N2)

One can think of X and Y like this:

One can think this: X and Y are one thing/place/person

This thing/place/person is a kind of Y

The semantics of the various subtypes are systematically linked to this prototype.

7.4.7 Possessive suffixes

The possessive suffixes -tá -nɔ, and -ví discussed in this section are homophonous with the kin terms tó 'father', nɔ 'mother', and vi 'child' respectively. Claudi and Heine (1986:313ff) argue, quite plausibly, that the former have evolved from the latter through metaphorical language usage and conceptualisation. Similarly, the affix -si is homophonous with the root of the affinal term a-si 'wife'. There is no doubt that the affix has developed from it. The other suffix discussed here is -dĕ. It is related to a dialectal variant of ame 'person'.

One can distinguish between the use of these forms as possessum suffixes where they maintain their kin term sense and their use as possessor suffixes where they have acquired new meanings. The form -dĕ is only used as a

possessor suffix. The discussion is organised around these two uses: first their use as possessum suffixes followed by their use as possessor suffixes.

7.4.7.1 Possessum suffixes

The constructions that are formed by the use of these forms as possessum suffixes are hard to describe in terms of either words or phrases formed by the juxtaposition of two nominals. This is the situation when the two parts of the construction are not modified as in:

[73] kofí tǒ
K father
'Kofi's father'

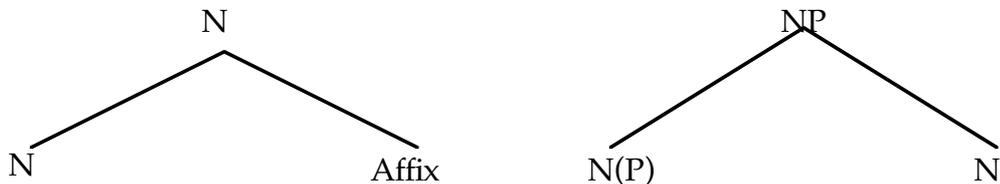
[74] veví nǒ
twin mother
'mother of twins'

If either of the constituents are modified then one can be certain that we are dealing with a phrase rather than a lexeme. Thus we can be certain that [75b] below is a phrase but we cannot be sure about the status of [75a] :

[75a] fia- ví
chief child
'child of a chief'

[75b] fia- tsitsi tǒ ví
chief eldercomp child
'the child of the oldest chief'

When the terms are not modified, either of these structures below could account for the forms:



There does not seem to be any criteria that would help one to decide on a structure like (a) or (b) above for these expressions. There is no discernible phonological juncture between the constituents. Nevertheless, in order to provide the necessary contrast between the usages of the forms, we would assume that they are suffixes.

When the forms -tó -nɔ, -ví and -sí are attached to personal names or address terms they have their kin senses as the examples and their paraphrases below show:

N (=X) - tó 'father of X'
[proper name/ FATHER
address term]

[76] kofi tó
K FATHER
'Kofi's father'

[77] fada- tó
Rev. Fr. FATHER
'Rev. Fr's father'

[78] vi - tó
child FATHER
'father'

N (=X)- nɔ 'mother of X'
[proper name/ MOTHER
address term]

[79] ama- nɔ
A. MOTHER
'Ama's mother'

[80] gbede-´ nɔ
blacksmith MOTHER
'Gbede's mother'

[81] ví nɔ
child MOTHER
'mother'

N (=X)- ví 'child of X'
[address term/ CHILD
personal name]

[82] fia- ví
chief CHILD

'a chief's child, i.e. a prince(ss)'

[83] titsya- v́
 teacher CHILD
 'a teacher's child'

[84] kofí v́
 K. CHILD
 'Kofi's child' or 'young/small Kofi'.

N (=X)- si 'wife of X'
 [address term/ WIFE
 personal name]

[85] kɔmla- si
 K. WIFE
 'Kɔmla's wife'

[86] fia- si
 chief WIFE
 'chief's wife'

[87] osófo- si
 pastor WIFE
 'pastor's wife'

Two comments are in order here. First, in Ewe society it is common to refer to and address parents teknonymically, that is through the names of their children. Terms based on a spouse's or parent's name or title can also be used to address spouses and children respectively. Hence the use of constructions of this kind are quite common (see Chapter 13 on address terms). The second comment concerns the multiple interpretation of the X - v́ structures. In one sense we are only concerned here with those constructions that code a relationship between two individuals, hence only with the 'child of X' interpretation. With address terms, this interpretation seems to be the favoured one. Ambiguity arises with situations where X is a personal name as in the example above. In this context, in addition to the 'child of X' reading, 'the small or young X' interpretation is possible. This last reading however is not a possessive one because it does not represent a relationship between two entities. There is only one individual involved whose size or age is being described (see Heine and Hünemeyer 1988 on the polysemy of v́ in Ewe).

7.4.7.2 Possessor suffixes

The same forms described above $t\acute{o}$, $n\acute{o}$, $v\acute{i}$ and $-si$ as well as another item $d\check{e}$ can be affixed to different nominals to indicate different kinds of relationship between the referent of the derived word and the nominal stem. The kinds of relationship thus signalled may be broadly divided into the following categories: ownership, attributive, group membership, and association with a place. The discussion is organised around these categories⁷. The structures formed with these possessor suffixes can be used to modify other nouns in an endocentric construction and may thus have an adjectival function (see the chapter on adjectives for the details of their adjectival usage).

7.4.7.2.1 'Ownership' function

$-t\acute{o}$ and to a limited extent $-n\acute{o}$ are used to mark 'ownership'. That is structures of the form $Y-t\acute{o}$ and $Y-n\acute{o}$ can be roughly and broadly paraphrased as 'owner of Y '. It should be noted that the suffixes $-t\acute{o}$ and $-n\acute{o}$ are gender based when used as possessum suffixes as described above. They are however neutral with respect to gender when they are used as possessor suffixes. In this usage, they only reflect the gender of the referent when the forms in which they occur have become lexicalised as in the following pair of words:

[88a] $a\phi\acute{e}$ $t\acute{o}$	[88b] $a\phi\acute{e}$ $n\acute{o}$
house FATHER	house MOTHER
'master'	'mistress/madam'

In all other instances the suffixes can be used to refer to males or females. See examples below.

Claudi and Serzisko (1985:152 fn 8) report an analogous construction in Dizi - an Afroasiatic (Omotic) language of Ethiopia. In this language, possession based on property is indicated by a construction meaning 'to be owner of' which is expressed by **bab** 'male owner' and **bayn** 'female owner'. These two elements are derived from $bab\omega$ 'father' and $baynen$ 'wife' respectively. Notice that the Ewe forms do not carry a male/female distinction as explained above. It would be interesting and worth investigating how widespread this kind of construction is crosslinguistically.

7.4.7.2.1.1 'Ownership' function of $t\acute{o}$

⁷Duthie (in press:71) describes the form $t\acute{o}$ as a personalising pronoun which 'converts any NP into a personal nominal'. he does not offer different sub-functions as we have done here. It seems to me that this characterisation of the form captures a common feature of all the uses outlined here. In each case a personal dimension is involved. Hence I think the the label possessive form is appropriate for them.

Common nouns denoting concrete entities can be suffixed with -tɔ́ where the resulting structure refers to someone who is thought of as the ‘owner’ of the concrete entity. Consider the following examples:

[89] srɛ́ tɔ́
 spouse FATHER
 ‘a married person (either male or female)’

[90] ga- tɔ́
 money FATHER
 ‘owner of money’ i.e. ‘rich person’

[91] kaa- tɔ́
 car OWNER
 ‘car owner’

This last example may be rendered in Ghanaian English as ‘car-ful’. In this respect ‘-ful’ or ‘someone is full of N’ is another English equivalent of the suffix. The meaning of this sub-category of the **X-tɔ́** construction may be explicated as follows:

N (=Y) - tɔ́
 [concrete] FATHER

Y is like a part of (someone) X
 when one thinks of Y, one can think of X
 when one thinks of X, one can think of Y
 X could do things with Y
 like a father could do with the child

The last line of this formula is based on the insight provided by Claudi and Heine (1986:313) in terms of the grammaticalisation of the suffix tɔ́. They argue that:

the noun tɔ́ has come to be used to express ‘the owner of something’ i.e. it has given rise to the conceptual metaphor AN OWNER IS A FATHER (...). Out of the various semantic attributes that may be characteristic of the concept ‘father’ one has been selected for metaphorical purposes, whereby a fullfledged lexeme has assumed a reduced meaning.

The analogy between ‘father’ and ‘owner’, or as we shall see below more extensively, between ‘parent’ and ‘owner’ should be captured in the formula. Perhaps the exact interpretation of how a father ‘owns’ a child should be left to be inferred from the cultural (socio-pragmatics à la Leech 1983) rules.

It is also the case that there is a habitual association (at least in people’s minds, and certainly in the estimation of the speaker) between the possessor and the possessed entity, that is the concrete nominal. There is something about the possessor that makes one think of the possessed entity. And the reverse, it would appear, is also true, the thought of the possessed entity evokes the thought of the possessor. This is what is captured by the two relational components: ‘when one thinks of Y, one can think of X’ and ‘when one thinks of X, one can think of Y’.

One usage of these constructions which seems to support the analysis proposed here is with structures where the noun stem represents a commodity. In this context, the specific interpretation of the N-tó expression is ‘vendor of N’. For example:

[92] akpa- tó
 fish FATHER
 ‘fishmonger’

[93] dze- tó
 salt FATHER
 ‘salt vendor’

[94] sigareti- tó
 cigarette FATHER
 ‘vendor of cigarette’

Note that the last example would not be used to refer to a cigarette-vending machine. This points to the human constraint on the referent. This is why in the formula we have ‘someone X’. Secondly, someone who sells a commodity is someone who has that commodity and has the right to dispose of it. This right to dispose of it is one of the things that the possessor can do with the possessum. This is accounted for in the last but one line of the formula. Someone who sells something becomes permanently associated with that commodity such that when one needs this commodity they could go and ask this person. He or she could be identified with respect to it as having an occupation of selling or dealing in that commodity. These aspects of these structures is reflected in the rest of the formula, namely in the components that express the idea that the N is like a part of the possessor and that there is an

established relationship between the two entities such that the thought of one evokes the thought of the other. In a sense, then, the formula is predictive of the range of usages that this subconstruction may have.

7.4.7.2.1.2 'Ownership' function of *nɔ*

While *-tɔ* is a very productive derivational suffix, *-nɔ* has limited applicability in this usage. It may be affixed to a small number of nouns to indicate 'owner of something'. It is thus partially synonymous with *-tɔ* in this sense. I think they differ, however, in the way the 'ownership' is conceptualised. For *tɔ* the possession is modelled on how a father 'owns' a child, metaphorically speaking. The possession involving *nɔ* is modelled on how a mother 'owns' a child, so to speak. One of the nominals that are formed with this suffix with the meaning of 'ownership' include the following:

[95] *dze-* *nɔ*
 flute MOTHER
 'vocalist/ soloist'

[96] *aɸé* *nɔ*
 house MOTHER
 'mistress/ madam/ (house)wife' (cp. *aɸé tɔ* 'master')

[97] *he-* *nɔ*
 ?poem MOTHER
 'poet, composer of songs/poems'

It is hard to delimit the class of the nouns that are the possessa in these *-nɔ* constructions. However the meaning of the construction as a whole could be paraphrased as follows:

N (=Y) - *nɔ*
 [concrete] MOTHER

Y is like a part of (someone) X
 when one thinks of Y, one can think of X
 when one thinks of X, one can think of Y
 X could do things with Y
 like a mother could do with the child

This formula also indicates a conceptualisation of 'ownership' of certain things as pertaining to motherhood. This particular sense of the *-nɔ* suffix has received very little mention in the Ewe literature, perhaps because it is so

restricted in its applicability. Nevertheless, this sense should be distinguished, first because it parallels that of *tó* and second because it is different from the use of the affix to express attributes of people - a sense which has been over-emphasised in the literature (see the next section).

7.4.7.2.2 Attributive use of the suffixes

In a sense, the usage of the suffixes *-tó* and *-nɔ* to express an attribute or property of the referent of the expression implies 'ownership'. These uses are distinguished here because there are formal and semantic differences between them. In the attributive usage, the suffixes are attached to nominals that are either abstract concepts or denote states or qualities. The attribute so represented is ascribed to the referent of the derived item. The **Y- *tó/nɔ*** constructions of this type may be paraphrased roughly as 'X is full of attribute/quality/state Y'. In this usage too, the suffixes are by and large not sensitive to the gender of the referent. Each of the morphemes is described in turn.

*7.4.7.2.2.1 The attributive use of *tó**

Consider the following expressions:

[98] *lɔlɛ* *tó*
 love
 'lover, well wisher, benefactor'

[99] *fu-* *tó*
 hatred
 'enemy'

[100] *kpó* *tó*
 hunchback
 'hunchback'

[101] *aso-* *tó*
 fool
 'fool(ish)'

[102] *kalɛ* *tó*
 bravery
 'courageous one'

The common feature of these items is that the idea represented by the nominal stem is an aspect or attribute of the referent of the derived expression. In addition, this attribute enables the referent to do certain things. Furthermore there seems to be an element of categorization or classification involved. That is, the referent is presented as belonging to the class of other people who have the same attribute. For instance, a *fiáfi-tó* 'thief' is someone who is a thief and belongs to the gang of thieves. The properties and propensities of people characterised in these constructions are viewed as permanent or habitual aspects of the possessors. Hence, the attribute makes one think of the possessor or the possessor can make one think of the attribute. With these considerations in mind, I propose the following semantic representations for these constructions:

N (=Y)- tó
 [abstract
 state, quality]

When one thinks of this person (X), one can think of Y

When one thinks of Y, one can think of this person (X)

Y is part of the things people can say about this person (X)

One can think this:

This person (X) could do some things because of that

Like other people about whom one can say the same thing

7.4.7.2.2.2 *Attributive use of -nɔ*

The use of -nɔ as a possessor suffix to express attributes is perhaps the usage that has received the most attention in the Ewe literature (Westermann 1930:173 - 4; Claudi and Heine 1986:314). The affix occurs on nominals that denote adverse states, for example, a disease, an infirmity or a handicap to indicate that someone is the undergoer of the unpleasant condition. One could say that the nominal represents the experience and the suffix the experiencer. As such this structure could be construed as a subtype of the part-whole relation (cf. Winston et al. 1987). Consider the following examples:

[103] go- nɔ
 gourd
 'pregnant woman'

[104] dɔ- nɔ
 sickness
 'sick one/patient'

[105] tsukú nɔ
 madness
 'mad one'

[106] kle- nɔ
 cowardice
 'a coward'

The meaning of the construction involving this suffix can be explicated as follows:

N (=Y) - nɔ
[abstract
state, quality]

When one thinks of this person (X), one can think of Y

When one thinks of Y, one can think of this person (X)

Y is part of the things people can say about this person (X)

Because of something that happened to this person (X)

Because of that this person (X) cannot do some things
like other people

One can think: because of this,

Y is something bad for this person

This semantic formula reflects the idea that the possessor has the condition because of something that may have happened earlier to/in him/her. And also that the experiencer/possessor is affected by it in the sense that the condition interferes with their performance of normal activities. This is consistent with the Ewe cultural conception of sickness and pregnancy, for example (cf. Agblemagnon 1969). Claudi and Heine (1986:314) suggest that the conceptual metaphor underlying the development of this suffix from the 'mother' term is A SUFFERING PERSON IS A MOTHER. This may be so, but it is not entirely clear to me how this metaphor will explain the pragmatic sameness of the following pair of terms:

[107a]	kpó	tó	[107b]	kpó	nɔ
	hunchback			hunchback	
	'hunchback'			'hunchback'	

These two terms are used to refer to hunchbacks. A semantic perspective, it seems to me, would easily account for the partial synonymy: kpó nɔ presents the referent as someone who is handicapped and dominated by his/her hunched back while kpó tó indicates that the hunchback is a feature of the referent and s/he is classified as belonging to the class of those who suffer from hunchbacks.

In a sense the existence of pairs of words with -tó and -nɔ with different meanings supports the present analysis. Compare the following pairs of expressions:

[108a]	ɲkú	tó	[108b]	ɲkú	nɔ
	eye			eye	
	'a person with good sight/a visionary'			'a blind person'	
[109a]	ko-	tó	[109b]	ko-	nɔ
	want			want	
	'a poor person'			'a barren woman'	

It seems that the semantics of the suffixes as described above are consistent with the differences between these pairs of terms. Thus the present analysis would appear to be more predictive than the metaphorical explanation.

Indeed, one could even explain the non-occurrence of certain forms which are otherwise hard to explain with metaphor. For instance, how can one explain the following data:

[110a] abi- tó sore 'a wounded/injured person'	[110b] * abi- nɔ sore
--	--------------------------

One would have thought that a wounded person is someone who is suffering from a wound, so *abi-nɔ* should be a possible word in the language since the *-nɔ* is meant to denote or be based upon the notion of a suffering person. I think **abi-nɔ* is not a possible word because a sore is not thought of as obstructing one's mobility and activities as much as the conditions represented in the examples do. A closer look at all the examples of *nɔ* words shows that the person is handicapped in a sense by the condition. This does not seem to be the conception of wounds.

7.4.7.2.2.3 *Some complex forms*

In some highly lexicalised items one can get both the *-tɔ́* and *-nɔ* suffixes, as illustrated below:

[111] tó kú nɔ- tó ear die 'a deaf person'
--

[112] vɔvɛ́ nɔ- tó fear 'a coward'
--

One way of looking at these items is to suggest that first a nominal stem is formed with the *-nɔ* suffix to indicate that the referent is dominated by the condition and then the suffix *-tɔ́* is added to signal that the person belongs to the class of people who suffer from that condition or possesses the attribute of one who suffers from N, the root.

Indeed the stem for these suffixes could be simple as most of the examples have been or they could comprise derived nominals. One can get (near) synonyms which differ just in the complexity of the nominal stem. Compare this pair of items:

[113a] dzo- tó magic 'a sorcerer'	[113b] dzo- ɖu- ame- tó magic eat person 'someone who bewitches people'
---	---

It is worth noting that the difference in complexity of the stems in this pair of words corresponds to the difference in the function of the suffix. Thus in the simple stem word, the suffix has an 'ownership' function, that is the person has something concrete like a talisman, while in the complex stem word, it has an

attributive function, that is, the person has the propensity to bewitch people. In fact this word can be used to insult someone who does something wicked, even though the person may not have any magic to use on people.

The nominal stem could also be made up of a noun and adjective complex as in the following examples:

[114] ϕ odo- gā tó	[115] η kú gba- gba- tó
belly big	eye break break
'a pot-bellied person'	'a blind person'

These complex stem forms are instructive pieces of evidence for the productive nature of tó forms and especially of their ownership function.

7.4.7.2.3 'Group membership' indicating function of the suffixes

The suffixes tó ví d̥e and si have a further function when they are attached to nouns that have or could be interpreted as having a collective meaning. These may be either common nouns or proper nouns which denote or may be interpreted as representing a social, political, geographical, linguistic or ethnic group. In this context, the suffixes tó ví and d̥e partake in constructions which roughly speaking indicate that 'someone X belongs to a group of people Y'. The suffix -si carries a more specific meaning which could be informally paraphrased as 'a female person X is associated with place Y'. The -tó and -ví forms will be discussed first.

7.4.7.2.3.1 'Group membership' function of tó and ví

Consider the following common expressions:

[116a] eve- tó	[116b] eve- ví
Ewe FATHER	Ewe CHILD
'an Ewe'	'an Ewe'
[117a] togo- tó	[117b] togo- ví
Togo FATHER	Togo CHILD
'a Togolese'	'a Togolese'
[118a] yeve-tó	[118b] yeve-vi
Yeve FATHER	Yeve CHILD
'a member of Yewecult'	'a member of Yewecult'

Although these pairs of words have been given equivalent translations in English, their meanings are slightly different, as is evident from a comparison of the semantic representations proposed for the constructions below:

N (=Y)- tó
[collective] FATHER

Person X is part of the group of people Y
as a father is part of the same thing
as people who come from the same womb
when one thinks of person X, one can think of (group) Y
when one thinks of (group) Y, one can think of person X

N (=Y)- ví
[collective] CHILD

Person X is part of the group of people Y
Like people who have the same mother and father
are part of the same thing
when one thinks of person X, one can think of (group) Y
when one thinks of (group) Y, one can think of person X

These formulae reflect the close similarity between -tó and -ví in this usage. The first components are identical. The second components of the formulae are inspired by the hints offered by Claudi and Heine (1986:315) on the conceptual metaphor that underlies the grammaticalisation of these affixes. They observe that the underlying metaphor is A PART IS THE FATHER/ CHILD OF THE WHOLE. They also note that this metaphor implies that ‘both “father of X” and “child of X” are conceived of as expressing the same thing i.e. “being a member of X”’ (Claudi and Heine 1986:316; see also Heine and Hünne Meyer 1988 on ví). At one level both morphemes do express the idea of ‘X is a member of the group Y’. This is the reason for the identical nature of the last component in both formulae. The association between the possessor and the group is a fairly permanent one - the possessor could bear some marks or behave in ways in which one would expect members of that group to behave.

However, the conceptualisation that is associated with each morpheme is different. The affixes differ with respect to how the membership is construed. This difference is what I have attempted to capture in the second component of each of the formulae above. It seems that the membership conveyed by -tó relates to how a father is a member of a family. On the other hand, -ví relates to how a child or children belong to a family. It should be noted that these frames of membership are not identical.

Perhaps a pair of words that provides a clue to this difference is the following:

[119a]	ϕome- tó	[119b]	ϕome- ví
	family		family
	'family/lineage member/ a relative'		'type/kind'

Note that the suffixes are attached to the same collective term for family but they register different specialised meanings. ϕomeví as can be seen from the gloss, has become very lexicalised to the extent that its meaning does not bear a transparent relationship to its compositional semantics.

The suffix -tó in this usage contrasts paradigmatically with the definiteness marker in the plural.⁸ Compare the following constructions:

[120a]	ϕome- tó wó	[120b]	ϕome- á wó
	family FATHER PL		family DEF PL
	'family members'		'the family members'
[121a]	eve- tó wó	[121b]	eve- á wó
	Ewe FATHER PL		Ewe DEF PL
	'Ewes'		'The Ewes'
[122a]	togo- tó wó	[122b]	togo- á wó
	Togo FATHER PL		Togo DEF PL
	'Togolese'		'The Togolese'

The essential difference between the forms involving the definiteness marker and those involving the -tó suffix is that the latter focusses on the individual parts coming together to form the group. The former, i.e. the definiteness marker, by contrast, focusses on the group as a whole, as a collective. There is not an interest in the individual members of the group. It should be noted that the definiteness marker is used only in the plural for this group membership indicating function.

⁸In one use of the definiteness marker as a kind of nominaliser, it may contrast with the attributive suffix -tó in the singular. Compare:

lólě tó	lólě a
love	love DEF
'a lover etc'	'the loved one'

Note that the one with the definiteness marker has a comparative sense. That is, the referent of the term is someone who is loved among other people whereas lólětó does not imply that the referent is chosen from a group of people.

7.4.7.2.3.2 'Group membership' function of *dě*

The suffix *-dě* which comes from the form *dě* 'person/someone' of the interior dialects is also used to indicate that someone belongs to a group or a place. The suffix may be attached to a nominal representing a geographical place to indicate that a person comes from that place. Typically, the origin implied here is one based on birth. For example:

[123] *anjɔɛ- dɛ*
 Anfoe PERSON
 'an Anfoe person'

[124] *lɔgba- dɛ*
 Logba PERSON
 'a Logba person'

[125] *togo- dɛ*
 Togo PERSON
 'a Togolese'

As some of the glosses suggest, the constructions involving this suffix *dě* can be interpreted as the person belongs to a group of people who are associated with a place. In this respect, this suffix has the same function of indicating group membership as the forms *tó* and *ví* discussed above.

This is consistent with the fact that *dě* may be suffixed to other nouns which designate ethnic or socio-religious groups to signal that someone belongs to that group or comes from that group. For instance:

[126] *yeve- dɛ*
 Yeve PERSON
 'a member of Yewecult'

[127] *eve- dɛ*
 Ewe PERSON
 'an Ewe'

[128] *blu- dɛ*
 Akan PERSON
 'an Akan'

Although the significance of this suffix would appear to be similar to that of the other suffixes in this context, they are different. In particular the *dě* suffix does

not employ the frame of family membership in its semantics as the other suffixes do. Its meaning may be paraphrased very simply as follows:

N (=Y) - de
[collective] PERSON

Person X is part of the group of people Y
when one thinks of person X, one can think of Y
when one thinks of (group) Y, one can think of person X

7.4.7.2.3.3 'Belonging to a place/group' function of -si

The suffix -si comes from the affinal term a-si 'wife' and it is attached to a proper noun of place to signal that a woman is associated with that specific place. This association may be due to the person having been born there, or having married from there, or just through habitually living there perhaps because of her work. In one sense, since the place name could be interpreted as designating the group of people from that place, these constructions can be interpreted as an instantiation of the group membership function. That is, **Y-si** expressions indicate that 'female person X belongs to a group of people/place Y'. These forms may be used as address terms (see Chapter 13 on address). Unlike the other possessive suffixes discussed above, this form is gender-specific: it is used only in relation to females. This is not unexpected since it comes from the term for 'wife', which in other contexts has been extended to cover 'female' or 'feminine' in the language. (Note that in some languages the word for 'woman' and 'wife' are the same.) Consider the following examples:

[129] aɖame- si
A. WOMAN
 'a woman associated with Adame'

[130] wɔdzé si
W. WOMAN
 'a woman associated with Wodze'

Perhaps the meaning of these constructions can be paraphrased as follows:

N (= Y) - si
[Place]

Female person X is part of a group of people in place Y
like a wife is part of the same group as a husband
When one thinks of person X, one can think of place Y
when one thinks of place Y, one can think of person X

The first component in the formula reflects the idea of membership of a group that is associated with a place. This is meant to account for the fact that the suffix is attached to place names. The second component tries to capture the idea that the association between person X and the place Y is similar to the way a wife is a member of a family with her husband. This is parallel to the components we had before for the other kin-term-based possessive affixes. Since this affix comes from the term for 'wife' it seems reasonable to include a component like that. The last component indicates that there is a habitual association between the referent of the expression and the place which is the stem. Thus the thought of person X can evoke the thought of a place that she is associated with, either by birth, marriage or work, and vice versa.

There is a derivational use of this suffix which would seem to support the analysis presented here. A female born in the field or farm may be named thus:

[131] agble- si
farm WOMAN
'name for a girl born in the field'

One can interpret agble 'farm' as a generic place noun to which is attached the 'woman of place Y' suffix to form the name of someone who is associated with the farm as her place of birth. The only deviation from the basic meaning of such structures is that one cannot really talk of a homogeneous group of people being associated with the farm as their place of origin. (Of course, women born in the fields could constitute a disparate class.) Nevertheless, this extension to the suffix in naming is consistent with the general meaning of the construction that has been outlined above.

7.4.8 Summary of the nominal constructions

One can say several things about the adnominal constructions that have been described by way of some generalisations about nominal possessive structures in Ewe:

First, the order of the entities is one of possessor followed by the possessum. This is consistent with the basic SVO syntax of the language. A deviation from this order under a specifiable condition is discussed in the next generalisation.

Second, in the pronominal constructions, the order of POR followed by POSS may be reversed if the POR is first or second person singular. This has been explained in terms of a topicality hierarchy of nominals and as a manifestation of the 'me-first' principle in language.

Third, it is possible to use either the phrasal 'alienable' or 'inalienable' structure for several categories of possessa. It is only body parts and other part terms, as well as non-relational nominals, which do not allow this alternation. These occur only in the 'alienable' construction.

Fourth, in the 'alienable' structure, the possessive indicator is a free word. The possessive phrase therefore shows neither head nor dependent marking (Nichols 1985, 1986, 1988). (Although it could be argued that the signalling of the third person kin possession on the possessum by a definiteness clitic is an instance of head marking. But this is not a systematic strategy available in the language.)

Fifth, it was shown that Ewe has a number of special possessive forms: a possessive article, a possessed pronoun, and a set of possessive suffixes for indicating 'ownership', attributes and group membership. These suffixes are based on kin and human categories of PERSON, FATHER, MOTHER, CHILD, and WIFE. One could speculate on the basis of these forms that some possessive relations are conceptualised in terms of human relationships - a view which is not inconsistent with the claims of anthropologists and sociologists about Ewe society (see e.g. Agblemagnon 1969 and Chapter 13 on address).

Finally, there are possessive compounds which are used to signal kin and social relations between individuals.

7.5 The predicative constructions

In this section, the possessive constructions that make use of stative, event and process verbals in combination with other linguistic devices such as the dative preposition *ná* 'to/for' and the postpositional nominal *sí* 'hand, space' are described. These constructions enable distinctions to be made between, say, stative and inchoative possession as well as between present and non-present possession.

Throughout the discussion of the predicative constructions, it will be necessary and useful to distinguish between the definiteness and the non-definiteness of NP's, especially of the possessum NP. By definiteness, I mean grammatical definiteness, that is, the nominal phrase in question contains the definite article/clitic (l)á or the demonstratives *sia* 'this' or *má* 'that' (see Seiler

1983; Birner 1988 on the role of definiteness and indefiniteness in the interpretation of possessive sentences in English and other languages).

An NP is non-definite if it is not marked either for definiteness as described above, or indefiniteness with the determiner áǰé INDEF ‘a certain’, or modified by other qualifiers such as quantifiers. In other words, a non-definite NP is a bare nominal which is neither generic nor referentially indefinite. The use of the term non-definite here is similar to its use by Givón (1976:296) who describes it as follows: ‘The category ‘non-definite’ ... stands somewhere in the middle between ‘non-referential’ and ‘referential indefinite’ in the sense that while logically a particular individual or individuals are taken to exist, their actual individual identity is not an essential part of the message’ (underlining in original). In a footnote, he adds: ‘The category NON-DEFINITE may be viewed as a subcategory of referential indefinite, in ... that while the verbal expression indicates that the speaker is committed to the existence of some individual, the actual identity of that individual is left unspecified, ... A reasonable inference is ... that it is the genus affiliation of the individual which really matters.’⁹

The following examples illustrate the distinctions that have been outlined above:

[132]	awu	lá	DEFINITE
	dress	DEF	
		‘the dress’	
[133]	awu	áǰé	INDEFINITE
	dress	INDEF	
		‘a certain dress’	
[134]	awu		NON-DEFINITE
	dress		
[135]	awu	eve	QUANTIFIED
	dress	two	
		‘two dresses’	

For general possession, the non-definite and quantified phrases tend to be used. Indefinite phrases may be used for talking about specific possession. When a definite phrase is used in these possessive structures, it may have a temporary

⁹ In later work Givón (e.g. 1984) appears to have abandoned this category and talks of two separate categories: semi-definiteness and semi-referentiality; both of which lie somewhere on the scales of definiteness and referentiality respectively. It seems to me that non-definiteness shares these features of semi-definiteness and semi-referentiality.

possession implication or there may not be any possessive relation conveyed. The implications are different for the different constructions and will be discussed under the individual structures.

7.5.1 'The possessum located at the possessor's hand/space' constructions

These constructions have the following form:

NP POSS V LOC/EXIST [NP POR sí] NP

Literally, and as the title of this section suggests, constructions of this form may be paraphrased as 'the possessum is in the hands/space of the possessor'. A more precise paraphrase might be 'the possessum is located within the space of the possessor' where the form *sí* is taken to mean 'space of X' instead of 'hand'. Idiomatically, the constructions are equivalent to 'the possessor has the possessum' structures in English (cf. Westermann 1930:93; Welmers 1973:308-9). The locative/existential verb 'to be' that is used in these constructions has two forms: *lè* 'PREsEnt; be at' and *nɔ* 'Non-PREsEnt; be at'. Thus the former is used in the expression of present possession and the latter is used for non-present, that is past, future and habitual, possession.

7.5.1.1 The verbal **le X sí** construction: present possession.

The form *lè* may function either as a verb or a preposition. In both functions it can be used in conjunction with an NP *sí* phrase to express possession. The focus of the present section is on the verbal construction. The prepositional structure is described in §7.5.1.3.

All things being equal, any nominal except those that denote spatial orientation (see [140] below) can occur in the possessum slot in these constructions. Thus kinship terms, body part terms and other part terms as well as socio-cultural and other common nouns can occur as subjects in these constructions as illustrated in the following examples with the present locative verb:

[136] *tó le deví má sí*
 father be:PRES child DEMHAND
 'That child has a father.'

[137] *ga le kofí sí*
 money be:PRES K. HAND
 'Kofi has money.'

[138] *e-nu le áma hã sí ...*
 mouth be:PRES A. also HAND
 'Ama also has a mouth ... (allow her to speak for herself).'

[139] a- ϕ é le miá sí
 home be:PRES 1PL HAND
 'We have a home'.

[140] * gbɔ - é le así - wò
 side aFOC be:PRES HAND 2SG
 'It is a side you have'.

It should be noted that the form sí is not linked by the possessive connective ϕ é to its modifying noun phrase. This suggests that the form is not used in its literal body part sense of 'hand' since body parts have to be related to their owners as we have seen in §7.4.1.3 by the possessive linker. One conclusion that may be drawn from the absence of the possessive connective in the examples above is that the form sí has become grammaticalised as a postposition expressing a spatial relational meaning: 'space of X'. This is the reason for the use of capitals for 'hand' in the interlinear glosses. This is not surprising since it is common for body part terms to develop into spatial orientation terms as we have seen. Furthermore, it will also become evident that the form sí is also used with the same spatial sense in combination with other verbs (see §7.5.3 below).

Indeed if the body part sense of 'hand' is involved in a construction with the locative/existential 'be', the favoured construction makes use of the possessive linker. For example:

[141] ba le kofi ϕ é así
 mud be:PRES K. poss hand
 'There is mud on Kofi's hand'.

Although the felicitous examples of possession we have seen so far all make use of the reduced form of the word a-sí 'hand', the full form shows up when the possessor is realised as a first or second person singular pronoun as in the following examples:

[142] awu ulayale así nye
 dress wide be:PRES HAND 1SG
 'I have got a robe'.

[143] ga le así wò a?
 money be:PRES HAND 2SG Q
 'Do you have money?'. (compare [137] above)

In the body part sense, the first or second person singular pronouns may either occur before or after the body part term. However, when used to express possession as in the above examples, the pronouns always come after the form *así*. It can thus be said that even though the full form of the word appears in these structures, there is a special grammatical form, a word order pattern, associated with it. This suggests that in this context as well, the form *así* has become grammaticalised for the expression of possession.

From the foregoing it can be said that the use of the locative/existential 'be' verb and the postposition *sí* together with the NPs constitute a special grammatical construction for the expression of possession. The semantics of this construction may be represented as follows:

NP POSS (=Y) *lè* [NP POR (=X) *sí*]_{NP}

I want to say something about Y

I say: Y is at a place

One can think of this place like this:

It is (like) a part of X

Because of this, one can think this: Y is a part of X

The first component is meant to capture the fact that the possessum is the subject of the clause. The grammatical subject being the proposition initial element is the point of departure of the message in the clause. The dictum part of the clause (the 'I say:' component) is a paraphrase of the locative/existential *lè*. The rest of the formula tries to characterise the location, so to speak, of the possessum. Note that the operative morpheme is a postposition which has a spatial relational meaning: 'space of X'. The structure thus indicates that the possessum is located within the physical or abstract space of the possessor. This seems to be the basis for the possessive relation between the two entities. Claudi and Heine (1986:306) argue that the metaphor that underlies this construction is POSSESSION IS SPACE. Ewe is not unique in using a locative/existential verb or spatial terms to express possession (see e.g. Lyons 1977, Clark 1978).

All the examples so far have grammatically non-definite possessa. As such they express the general possession of the elements, rather than the specific or individual items. The possessum nominal could however be marked for indefiniteness as in [144a], or modified by quantifiers or other modifiers to show the quantity or properties of the individual tokens of the possessed item. Consider these examples:

[144a] *alé ví ádé le áma sí*
 sheep DIM INDEF be:PRES A. HAND

lit.: A certain lamb is in the space of Ama
 ‘Ama has a (certain) lamb.’

[144b] *ɲútsu-ví ɖeká pé ko- é le así nye*
 man-DIM one just only aFOC be:PRES HAND 1SG
 lit.: only one boy is in my space
 ‘I have only one son.’ (Nyaku in press:12)

When the possessum nominal is definite, the message of the construction tends to be one of temporary and specific possession. Such constructions have the inference that the POR is not the normal owner but just a custodian of the specific item (presumably for someone else which is determined by extra-linguistic factors). Such constructions may be glossed as ‘the Y is with X’ rather than ‘X has Y’. This interpretation is induced by the specific and definite nature of the nominal that fills the possessum slot. Note the following examples:

[145] *ga lá le kofí sí*
 money DEF be:PRES K. HAND
 lit.: the money is in Kofi’s space.
 ‘The money is with Kofi.’

[146] *awu- a- wó le áma sí*
 dress DEF PL be:PRES A. HAND
 lit.: the dresses are in the space of Ama.
 ‘The dresses are with Ama’.

In my view, these constructions are pragmatically equivalent to sentences which make use of the locative/existential *le* and the postposition *gbó* ‘side, near.’ Compare the following example to [145] above:

[147] *ga lá le kofí gbó*
 money DEF be:PRES K. side
 lit.: the money is near Kofi
 ‘The money is with Kofi.’

Such structures are not conceived of by native speakers as possessive constructions. This is an indirect piece of evidence for the claim that if there is any sense of possessive relation associated with the definite NP *le X sí* structures, it is an inference rather than an encoded message.

Similarly, if the possessum nominal is modified by a demonstrative, the structure is interpreted as ‘the Y is with X’, as in example [148] below. However, if there is another modifier, for example an intensifier which acts as a

hedge on the definiteness of the possessum, for example by indicating that it is the class of those nominals that is being talked about, then a possessive reading is preferred. Compare these sentences:

[148] *uu má le kofí sí*
 lorry DEMbe:PRES K. HAND
 ‘That lorry is with Kofi’.

[149] *uu má tɔgbi le kofí sí*
 lorry DEMkind be:PRES K. HAND
 lit.: that type of lorry is in Kofi’s space
 ‘Kofi has that type of lorry’.

It should be evident then that the definiteness property of the possessed nominal influences the possessive or otherwise interpretation of the construction.

7.5.1.2 The **nɔ X sí** construction: non-present possession.

The non-present form of the locative/existential ‘be’ verb *nɔ* is used in similar fashion as *lè* to express past, future or habitual possession. The following examples illustrate its use:

[150] *srɔ̃ ɖɛká nɔ melenya sí*
 spouse one be:NPRES M. HAND
 ‘Melenya had one wife’. (Akpatsi 1980:1)

[151] *aɖaɖɔ́lǎ nyuí aɖéké mé ga- nɔ*
 counsellor good none NEG REP be:NPRES
ame- tsitsi-a- wó sí o
 person old DEF PL HAND NEG
 ‘The elders did not have any good counsellor left’
 (Akpatsi 1980:44)

[152] *ɖɛwóhɿ ga a- nɔ áma sí*
 perhaps money IRR be:NPRES A. HAND
 ‘Perhaps, Ama might have some money.’

[153] *fia aɖéké mé nɔ- a anyi*
 chief none NEG sit HAB ground
fia-zikpui mé nɔ- a é sí o
 chief-stool NEG be:NPRES HAB 3SG HAND NEG
 ‘There is no chief who doesn’t have a chief’s stool.’

(Nyaku in press:11)

The crucial difference between *le* and *nɔ* is in terms of tense. Hence the only thing one needs to add to the formula for the *le* construction is a component that specifies the temporal element of the validity of the statement not for the present, but for any other time. The semantic formula for the *nɔ* structures could look like this:

NP POSS (=Y) *nɔ* [NP POR (=X) *sí*]_{NP}

I want to say something about Y

I say: at a time *t*, not this time, one could say this: Y is at a place

One can think of this place like this:

It is (like) a part of X

Because of this, one can think this: Y is a part of X

7.5.1.3 The prepositional **le X sí** construction.

The constructions discussed so far involve the use of the locative/existential forms as the main predicates of the clause. The present form *le* together with the possessor phrase NP *si* can also function as a prepositional phrase adjunct or complement to some other verbs. The structural description of such constructions is:

NP V[transfer/loss] NP POSS (=Y) [*lè* [NP POR (=X) *sí*]_{NP}]_{PP}

The syntactic formula above represents the situation with respect to transitive verbs. When the verb of loss is intransitive the possessum NP occurs as subject and the prepositional phrase immediately follows the verb (see examples [155] and [156] below). The syntactic frame of such sentences is this:

NP POSS (=Y) V[transfer/loss] [*lè* [NP POR (=X) *sí*]_{NP}]_{PP}

In general such constructions signal the cessation or transfer of possession. This interpretation is an effect of the semantics of the verbs that enter into construction with the *le* NP *sí* constituent. Consider the following examples:

[154] *áma xɔ atsu le aku sí*

A.get husband at A.HAND

'Ama snatched Aku's husband'.

[155] *atí gé le tógbé á sí*

stick drop at old man DEF HAND

lit.: a stick dropped from the old man's hand

'The old man died'.

[156] ga vɔ le así nye
 money finish at HAND 1SG
 lit.: money finished in my hand'
 'My money is finished'.

[157] miá øé ɕetugbuiɕeka ye dzonú le mia mamá sí
 1PL poss girl one borrowbeads at 2PL grandm HAND
 'One of our girls borrowed some beads from your grandmother'.
 (Nyaku in press:35)

Thus a combination of a verb indicating termination, transfer or loss and the le NP sí construction signals loss of possession - a removal, so to speak, of the possessum from the space of the possessor. Very roughly the message of such constructions could be explicated as follows:

NP V[transfer/loss] NP POSS (=Y) I lè [NP POR (=X) sí] NP] PP

at a time before t, one could say:

Y is at a place

this place is a part of X

because of this one could think:

Y is a part of X

after this, something happened to Y/someone did something to Y

because of this, Y came not to be in the same place (as before)

[one could think: Y came to be in the same place like Z]

Other structures in which the possessor is coded in an NP whose head is the postposition sí will be discussed in later sections (see §7.5.3 below). In the section immediately following this one, the use of the locative/existential 'be' in another possessive construction will be described.

7.5.2 'The possessor as the goal of the existence of possessum' constructions

The Y le X sí structures described in the previous sections are primarily based on the locative use of both le and sí. The construction described in this section is primarily based on the existential use of le (and its extension to locative expressions) and the dative preposition ná coding the possessor as the goal or recipient of the possessum. The syntactic frame for the construction is:

NP POSS V LOC/EXIST NP [ná NP POR] PP

Roughly speaking, this construction indicates that ‘there is Y (somewhere) to/for X’. Two structural types of this construction have to be distinguished: in the first type, the predicate NP, i.e. the NP immediately following the existential verb, is realised as a dummy pronoun if the verb is present, i.e. *le*, and by a generic temporal or locative nominal if the verb is non-present, i. e. *nɔ*. In the second type, the exponent of the predicate nominal is an NP that designates a location. This second type may be sub-classified on the basis of whether the location is specific or definite or non-definite. The form and significance of each of these construction types are described in turn.

7.5.2.1 NP POSS *le* PRO *ná* NP POR constructions.

To understand these constructions fully, one should first understand the nature of existential sentences in Ewe which have the following structure:

NP *le* PRO

The pronominal element is underlyingly an *-i*. Two alternative processes of assimilation between the pronominal element and the verb *le* are possible in the standard colloquial dialect (which turn out to be dialect variants). Either the *-i* assimilates the *è* of *lè* to its height to produce *lí* [li:] or the *è* of *lè* assimilates the *-i* to itself to become *lě* [le:] (see Part 1 and Capo 1985). Both forms are used interchangeably here. Consider the following existential sentences:

[158] *máwú lí*

God be: 3SG

‘God exists.’/‘There is a God.’¹⁰

[159] *tógbé wó lě*

ancestor PL be:3SG

‘Ancestors exist.’/‘Ancestors are there’.

[160] A.: *nánéké mé lí nà wɔ- m o.*

nothing NEG be:3SG 2SG:IRR do 1SG NEG

‘There is nothing you can do (to) me’.

K.: *nú lí ma- wɔ*

thing be:3SG 1SG:IRR do

‘There is something I will do’. (Nyaku in press:29)

¹⁰ The nominalised form of this sentence: ‘Mawuli’ may be used as a name for people, institutions or pets to affirm the belief in and the existence of God.

Each of the sentences above affirms or denies the existence of the subject NP. They can thus be described as existential sentences. It has already been noted that the pronoun in the above structure is a dummy one. It is worth noting that even if the subject is plural, the form of the pronoun does not change. It is an invariable (see [159] above). The presence of this pronoun in the structure can be explained by saying that the existence of something implies existence in a place and it is this place of existence which is represented by the pronoun. This idea of existence being linked to location in a place has been pointed out by several investigators. For example, Bolinger (1977:99) notes that 'To exist, a thing has to be somewhere'. He further cites the pre-Socratic dictum from Thorne (1973:863): 'Whatever is is somewhere, whatever is nowhere is nothing'.¹¹ This view of existence as location in space has been used to explain and argue for the widespread crosslinguistic expression of existence in locative terms (cf. Clark 1978, Lyons 1977). Indeed, in Ewe the verbs of existence and of location are identical, as we have seen. Thus the pronoun is present with the verb in these existential constructions to designate, as it were, the abstract space of existence.

From a language internal point of view, the presence of the pronoun in the expression of current or universal existence parallels the use of a generic nominal anyí 'ground, down' with the non-present form of the existential verb: nɔ, to express non-present existence. (Note that nɔ anyí also means 'to sit down'). The following example involves non-present existence:

[161] nǔtsu áǰé nɔ anyí gbaǰégbe
 man INDEF be:NPRES ground one day
 'A certain man was one day' / 'Once there was a certain man'
 lit.: 'A certain man sat (existed) one day' (Akpatsi 1980:1)

These existential constructions may be used to introduce participants into discourse, i.e. they may be used to bring them onto the stage. Thus they may have a presentative function (Hetzron 1971, 1975). In this function the NP whose existence is at issue is non-definite. For instance:

[162] nú ǰeká áǰé ñí
 thing one INDEF be:3SG
 é si mi ma té nǔ á má o

¹¹ Other writers have provided variations on the same theme. I will cite only two here: G. Lakoff (1987:518) comments as follows: 'things that exist, exist in locations' and adds the slogan: 'to be is to be located'. In another vein Lyons (1977:723) claims that 'existence is but the limiting case of location in an abstract deictically neutral space.'

3SG REL 2PL NEG:IRR ABILI IRR share NEG
 'There is one thing which you cannot divide up ...' (Nunyamɔ:16)

From the foregoing it can be said that the primary function of NP *le PRO* is to express the existence of something somewhere. Having outlined the structure and functions of existential sentences, we now return to their use in possessive constructions.

The existential construction has been extended to express possession by the addition of a dative prepositional phrase whose object is presented as the possessor. It must be emphasised that without the prepositional phrase the construction is merely an existential one. The possessive construction is related to the existential one only in so far as the entity whose existence is at stake (the possessum) is presented as existing to/for the possessor. The message of the construction seems to be that the *raison d'être* of the existence of the possessum is the possessor.

Westermann (1930:93ff) offers a very instructive description of this structure as follows:

Should one wish to express that a thing is possessed naturally, is a part of oneself, one uses *le ... with ... ná*
it is present for, but this often expresses possession in the same way as *le así*.

Earlier on he observes that '*le así* shows real possession' (Westermann 1930:93).

From these statements one could conclude that the two constructions are largely synonymous, however, there are differences between them. One crucial difference between them is that the possessum in the '*le ... ná*' construction can be a spatial orientation term. A spatial orientation term cannot occur as the possessum in the '*le .. así*' construction (see the examples below). Thus while [164] is a felicitous response to [163], [165] is not:

[163] bú le gbó nye
 lose be:PRES side 1SG
 'Get lost (from my side)!'

[164] gbɔ - é le é ná wò
 side aFOC be:PRES 3SG GIVE 2SG
 'You have a side (that I should get away from)!'

[165] * gbɔ - é le así - wò
 side aFOC be:PRES HAND 2SG
 'It is a side you have'

But Westermann is correct in claiming that the construction is used to express natural possession. Thus the possessa can be body parts or parts of wholes, or kin terms, or any nominal for that matter:¹²

[166] ɲkú lě ná wó wó mé kpó á nú o
 eye be:3SG to 3PL 3PL NEG see HAB thing NEG
 lit.: eye exist/are to them, they don't see
 'They have eyes but they cannot see.'

[167] fofó kple dadá ñ ná ðeví má
 father and mother be:3SG to child DEM
 lit.: father and mother exist to that child
 'That child has a father and a mother'

[168] sísoḡé aḡéké mé ñ ná m o.
 refuge none NEG be:3SG to 1SG NEG
 lit.: no refuge exist for me
 'I don't have any (place of) refuge' (Akpatsi 1980:74)

The main thing about the possessa is that it must be non-definite in the sense defined in §7.5. Thus the possessum NP may be marked as indefinite, or quantified or pluralised:

[169] dɔ gã áḡé lě ná kofí
 work big INDEF be:3SG to K
 lit.: a certain big work exist to Kofi
 'Kofi has a big job (to do).'

[170] kpéḡḡúḡ wó lě ná mí
 assistant PL be:3SG to 1PL
 lit.: assistants exist to us
 'We have assistants.'

If the NP filling the role of possessum is definite and specific, that is, if it is a proper name or a common noun marked for definiteness by a determiner such

¹² This construction is perhaps parallel to the 'Dativus possessivus' construction of Latin. For example: Mihi est liber
 1SG:DAT be book
 lit.: 'To me is a book' i.e. 'I have a book'.

as the definite article or demonstratives, the preferred interpretation is that the entity has been reserved or saved for the dative prepositional object. It does not necessarily imply a possessive relation between the entities, although it may be possible to infer a temporary association between the nominals. For instance, [171] below is an utterance that may be used by someone to threaten the addressee because they know that Kofi is a bully or a terror for the addressee:

[171] kofí lě ná wò
 K.be:3SG to 2SG
 ‘There is Kofi for you’ (he will sort you out for me).

[172] dɔ lá lě ná kofí
 work DEF be:3SG to K.
 ‘The work is there for Kofi’ (he will have to do it).

It should also be noted that the possessor in these constructions need not be animate. Thus generic statements about parts and wholes of inanimates may be expressed using this construction. For example:

[173] fia lí ná du dɛsiádé
 chief be:3SG to village every
 lit.: Chief exists to every village
 ‘Every village has a chief’.

[174] nuwúwú lí ná núsianú
 end be:3SG to everything
 lit.: there is an end to everything
 ‘Everything has an end’.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following semantic formula for this construction:

NP POSS (=Y) lě PRO ná NP POR (=X)
 I want to say something about Y
 I say: Y is at a place because of X
 because of this, one can think of Y like this:
 it is a part of X

The second component in the formula is an attempt to capture the idea that the possessum (Y) exists for the use of the possessor or as an integral part of the

possessor. At this stage it is not very satisfactory because I have used the word 'because' to express the idea that the possessum exists 'for' the possessor.

7.5.2.2 NP POSS le NP ná NP POR constructions

At least three subconstructions may be distinguished depending on the features of the NP that follows the verb. This NP will be referred to as the predicate nominal or the locative nominal. The distinct nature of these constructions from the one described in the previous section has not been clearly articulated in previous descriptions.

In one sub-construction, the predicate nominal designates a non-definite location which may be viewed as part of the personal sphere of the possessor. In the second sub-construction, the locative NP represents places and spaces which are referential but non-specific and which are not thought of as belonging to the personal sphere of the possessor. The third sub-construction is the one in which the locative NP is definite and specific. Each of these sub-constructions is described in turn.

7.5.2.2.1 Location of POSS as part of the personal sphere of POR

The predicate nominals in these constructions represent locations which may be thought of as part of the personal sphere (Bally 1926) of the possessor. They may be thought of in this way because they may designate parts or places on the body (see e.g. [175] and [176] below), items or pieces of clothing [178], culturally significant items [177] or spatial orientation terms [179]. One piece of evidence in support of this claim is that the predicate nominal and the dative prepositional NP, the possessor, can be paraphrased as a possessive phrase. Consider the following pairs of examples:

[175a] dziɖuɖu lè abɔ- ta nɛ
 government be:PRES arm-head to:3SG
 lit.: ‘Government is on shoulder to him’
 ‘He has power’

cp: [175b] dziɖuɖu lè é ɸé abɔ- ta
 government be:PRES 3SG poss arm-head
 lit.: ‘Government is on his shoulder’

[176a] dzonú le ali ná áma
 beads be:PRES waist to A.
 lit.: ‘beads are on waist to Ama’
 ‘Ama has beads on/ Ama is wearing beads around the waist.’

cp: [176b] dzonú le áma ɸé ali
 beads be:PRES A.poss waist
 lit.: ‘beads are around Ama’s waist’

[177a] srɔ̃ eve le aɸé me ná ɲútsu má
 spouse two be:PRES house in to man DEM
 lit.: ‘two spouses are in house to that man’
 ‘That man has two wives at home’

cp: [177b] srɔ̃ eve le ɲútsu má ɸé aɸé me
 spouse two be:PRES man DEMposs house in
 lit.: ‘Two spouses are in that man’s house’

[178a] kóba-ví gɔ̃ hã mé le gónu nɛ o
 half penny even too NEG be:PRES money belt to:3SG NEG
 lit.: ‘even half penny is not in money belt to him/her’
 ‘S/he does not even have half penny in his/her money belt.’
 (Akpatsi 1980:1)

[178b] kóba-ví gɔ̃ hã mé le é ɸé gónu o.
 half penny even too NEG be:PRES 3SG poss money belt NEG
 lit.: ‘even half penny is not in his/her money belt’

[179a] agbe víví manyágbɔ̃ ádé le ɲɔ̃ ná mí
 life sweet indescribable INDEF be:PRES frontto 1PL
 lit.: ‘an undescribably sweet life is in front to us’

‘There is a pleasant and undescrivable life ahead for us.’
(Akpatsi 1980.17)

cp. [179b] agbe víví manyágblo ádé le miá ṅṅo
life sweet undescrivable INDEF be:PRES 1PL front
lit.: ‘an undescrivable sweet life is in our front’

Note that in this last example, the possessive paraphrase does not have a possessive linker because the locative phrase is a spatial orientation term. The main thing about this sub-construction then is that the possessum is located in a place because of the possessor. But this place is like a part of the possessor because it falls within the personal sphere of the possessor.

The message conveyed by this structure may be represented as follows:

NP POSS (=Y) lè NP náNP POR (=X)
I want to say something about Y
I say: Y is at a place because of X
One can think of this place like a part of X
Because of this, one can think of Y like this:
it is a part of X

Note that the third component in the formula above is what distinguishes this construction from the structure described in the previous section.

7.5.2.2.2 Location of POSS not viewed as part of the personal sphere of POR

In the second sub-construction, the locative NP designates a place or space which may not be considered to be within the personal sphere of the dative prepositional object or possessor. These places or spaces may be institutions or geographical locations which an individual cannot lay claim to - they are communal places, so to speak, which do not belong exclusively to the possessor. Indeed, one cannot paraphrase the locative NP and the dative prepositional object as a possessive phrase. This suggests that there is no necessary possessive relation between the location of the possessum and the possessor, as is the case with the first sub-construction. Consider the following pairs of examples, note that there is no equivalence between the possessive paraphrase and the dative construction:

[180a] ga ví ádé le bank ná m
money small INDEF be:PRES bankto 1SG
lit.: ‘a little money is in bank to me’

‘I have a little money in the bank’.

≠[180b] ga ví áḍé le nyě bank
 money small INDEF be:PRES 1SG:poss bank
 lit.: ‘a little money is in my bank’
 ‘There is a little money in my bank.’

Note that in this example, ‘bank’ in the possessive paraphrase may be interpreted as a personal money box. But in the dative construction, ‘bank’ is used to refer to the bank as an institution. Here are further examples:

[181a] xɔ eve le gẽ nááma srɔ
 house two be:PRES Accra to A. spouse
 lit.: ‘Two houses are in Accra for Ama’s spouse’
 ‘Ama’s husband has two houses in Accra.’

cp: [181b] # xɔ eve le ama srɔ φé gẽ
 house two be:PRES A. spouse poss Accra
 ‘Two houses are in Ama’s spouse’s Accra.’

Similarly [182b] below is not equivalent to [182a]:

[182a] agbo le ka- me ná mí
 ram be:PRES tether in to 1PL
 lit.: ‘a ram is in a tether to us’
 ‘There is a ram tethered for us’.

cp: [182b] # agbo le miá φé ka- me
 ram be:PRES 1PL poss tether in
 lit.: ‘a ram is in our tether.’

The essential difference between this sub-construction and the first one is that the location of the possessum is not within the sphere of the possessor. Both constructions are similar in the sense that the possessum is presented as being located in a place for the possessor. Since the location of the possessum is not a part of the possessor, it can be expected that when the possessor is in the place where the possessum is located, s/he can make use of it. These aspects of the message of this sub-construction may be explicated as follows:

NP POSS (=Y) lè NP náNP POR (=X)

I want to say something about Y

I say: Y is at a place because of X

(Because of this,) one can think this:

when X is in the same place like Y

X can do things with Y

Thus if ‘there is some money in the bank for someone’, one can expect that if this person is in the bank s/he can have access to the money and make use of it. The last component in the formula captures this idea. And it is in this component that this subconstruction differs from the first sub-construction. However it is this component that relates it to the third sub-construction, to which we now turn.

7.5.2.2.3 Locative NP specified as definite

The predicate nominal in constructions in this category have the feature of definiteness. That is the NPs contain either the definite article/clitic or a demonstrative. The message conveyed by such structures is that the possessum NP is located in the specific place for the specific use of the dative prepositional object and perhaps at a particular time as well. There is definitely some restriction on the duration of the location of the possessum NP at the place implied in the definiteness feature of the locative NP.

Again, this construction, like the one described in §7.5.2.2.2, the possessive paraphrase of the locative NP and the dative prepositional object is not equivalent to the dative construction. Consider the following examples:

[183a] núɖuɖu le xɔ- á me náɖéví á wó
 food be:PRES room DEF in to child DEF PL
 lit.: ‘food is in the room to the children’
 ‘There is food in the room for the children’.

[183b] ≠ núɖuɖu le ɖéví á wó øé xɔ- á me
 food be:PRES child DEF PL poss room DEF in
 ‘There is food in the children’s room’.

(This may be just for storage purposes and may not be meant for the children’s use).

[184a] aha le ze- a- me ná mi
 wine be:PRES pot DEF in to 2PL
 lit.: ‘wine is in the pot to you’
 ‘There is wine in the pot for you’.

[184b] aha le mia- φέ ze- a- me
 wine be:PRES 2PL poss pot DEF in
 ‘There is wine in your pot’.

The dative construction utterance can be used by a palm-wine tapper to his helpers at the end of their work. The implication of the utterance is that the wine is in that pot for these helpers to drink. In this respect the helpers are the temporary possessors of the wine (from the point of view of the fact they can use it). Note that the possessive paraphrase of this construction only establishes a possessive relation between the pot and the possessor and there does not seem to be any implication that the wine also belongs to the people whose pot it is. That sentence only expresses the location or existence of something, wine, in a certain place. This place happens to be the pot of some people.

It seems that the specific and limited possessive relation that exists between the possessor and the possessum correlates with a shift from existential to locative interpretation of the structure. That is, when the predicate nominal is definite, the structure of locative/existential verb followed by this definite nominal is interpreted as a locative rather than an existential construction (cf. Clark’s (1978:98) observation that locative phrases are in general always definite).

The meaning of the sub-construction under discussion here may be paraphrased as follows:

NP POSS (=Y) lè NP<DEF> (=Z) náNP POR (=X)

I want to say something about Y

I say: Y is at this place Z

one can think: Y is at this place because of X

(Because of this,) one can think this:

when X is in the same place like Y

X can do things with Y (at that time).

The third component is meant to capture the idea that the purpose of the location of the possessum with respect to the possessor is less direct than it is in the case of the other sub-constructions discussed. I have also added a temporal element to the last component to capture the limited duration and restricted nature of the possessive relation.

A comparison of the three formulae for the sub-constructions can reveal the minute differences that exist between them which correlates in a way with the

semi-formal differences between them. One could be tempted to think that these are rather subtle differences which probably verge on hair-splitting. I can only quote Bolinger's rhetorical question in my defense: 'True, these are subtle differences, but who says semantic differences have to be gross?' (Bolinger 1977:17)

7.5.3 'Inchoative' possession

The predicative structures described in the previous sections have all been stative in nature making use of stative predicates. In this section two main structures will be described. These have dynamic or event verbs as their predicates. In the first construction the predicate is an achievement verb of contact and the possessor phrase headed by the postposition *sí* functions as the object to these predicates. In the second construction, the possessor phrase is the object of a 'goal' preposition. The predicates in this structure have to do with quantity or a telic verb of loss, for example, *gé* 'drop/fall'. These structures are described in turn.

7.5.3.1 NP POSS V [contact]— [NP POR *sí*] NP

Event verbs of contact such as *dó* 'reach', *sū* 'grasp', and *ká* 'get to, touch' may be used in combination with the possessor phrase NP *sí* to indicate that something has come into the possession of the possessor. The possession is presented as if the possessum literally comes into contact with the possessor from somewhere. The possessum functions as subject and the possessor phrase is the object. This syntactic coding of roles is consistent with the fact that the possessor may or may not do anything to bring about the possession of the possessum. Thus the acquisition of an inheritance could be expressed using this construction. For example:

[185] *agble- a sū kofí sí*
 farm DEF obtain K HAND
 'The farm has become Kofi's'.

[186] ... *mó zɔ- ga kplé nú ɖu-ga ká wó sí*
 travel money and food money touch 3PL HAND
 '... they got money for travel and food expenses'
 lit.: ... 'travel money and food money touched their hand.'
 (Nyaku 1984:15)

[187] *ga dó áma sí*

money reach A.hand

'Ama has become rich.' lit.: 'money reached Ama's hand'

It should be noted that in this construction, the possessum can be either definite as in [185] or non-definite as in the other examples above. It may be assumed that once the possessor has got the possessum s/he may do things with it. The amount of control exercised depends on the kind of possessum it is. To account for this fact one of the components of the meaning of the construction will be specified as 'X could do things with Y, if X wants to'. This will account for the fact that kin terms, but not spatial relation terms, can occur as possessa in these constructions. Consider these examples:

[188] vi - wó dǒ mia sí
child PL reach 2PL HAND
'You now have children.'

[189] * dzí dǒ kplã a sí
top reach table DEF HAND
? 'The table has now got a top.'

Note that the unacceptability of this sentence is not due to the inanimacy of the possessor because inanimate possessors can occur in the sí possessor phrase. In any case an animate possessor with a spatial relational term as possessum is equally unacceptable:

[190] * ɲgɔ dǒ miá sí
frontreach 1PL HAND
?? 'We have a front.'

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication for this construction:

NP POSS (=Y) V [contact] [NP POR (=X) sí] NP

I want to say something about Y

I say: something happened (V)

because of this, Y is in a place

One can think of this place like this: it is like a part of X

Because of this one can think of Y like this:

it is like a part of X

X could do things with Y if X wants to

The main difference between this formula and that of the **le X sí** structure in §7.5.1 is that the former focusses on the inchoative nature of the possession

while the latter is stative. Part of the second component in the above formula is enclosed in brackets to show that it is a condensed form of the lexical semantics of the specific verb in a particular sentence. Essentially, it is an attempt to show that the possession came about as a result of some happening which is represented in the verb.

7.5.3.2 NP POSS –V[event]–[dɛ NP POR sí]PP

The same idea of inchoative possession may be expressed by structures involving the preposition *dɛ* ‘to, at’ which signals an attained goal (of motion) (see Part I) with an NP *sí* complement where the NP represents the possessor. Typically, this prepositional phrase functions as an adjunct to a verb whose meaning has to do with quantity of things. Or it may be a punctual verb. Verbs which occur in this structure include: *bó* ‘abound’, *sɔgbɔ* ‘be plentiful’, and *susɔ* ‘leave, remain’. The whole construction characterises the acquisition of possession by the possessum ‘entering’ the space of the possessor or by a gradual build up or depletion of the tokens of the possessum. The construction also indicates the limit that has been reached. Consider the following examples:

[191] *núqudu bó dɛ yiyi sí n̄útɔ*
 food abound at spider HAND much
 lit.: ‘food abound at Yiyi’s space’
 ‘(At that time,) Yiyi [= Anancy ‘Spider’] had a lot of food’.

[192] *lɔri- wó sɔgbɔ dɛ é sí*
 lorryPL plentiful at 3SG HAND
 lit.: ‘lorries are plentiful at his hand/space’
 ‘He has several lorries.’ (Akpatsi 1980:82)

[193] *koklóatɔ ko- é susɔ dɛ así nye*
 hen five only aFOC remain at HAND 1SG
 lit.: ‘only five hens remain at my hand’
 ‘I have only five hens left.’

Thus inchoative possession may be expressed by a prepositional phrase whose complement is the possessor phrase when they are in construction with other verbs.

7.5.4 'Temporary' possession:

NP POR V [handle] NP POSS *dé así* (ná NP)

Structures in which verbs of exchange or transfer or handling verbs like *xɔ* 'receive' and *lé* 'hold, catch' enter into construction with a prepositional phrase *dé así* 'at hand' may be used to express temporary possession. In this case, the 'accidental' or 'temporary' possessor is the subject and the possessum the object. An optional dative prepositional phrase may be used to encode the person on whose behalf custody is being kept of the possession.

It should be observed first that, in certain usages, these verbs by themselves can signal the acquisition of possession. Here the subject is the possessor and the object is the possessum. There is a further implication in these cases that the possessor did something to bring about the acquisition. In any case the possessor is the 'recipient' of the object. Consider the following examples:

[194] *kofí xɔ sati nyitsɔ*
 K. receive certificate other day
 lit.: 'Kofi received a certificate the other day'
 'Kofi got a certificate the other day.' (therefore he has one now)

[195] *áma xɔ øeblá eve*
 A. receive year tietwo
 lit.: 'Ama received twenty years'
 'Ama became/is twenty years old.' (i.e. Ama has twenty years)

[196] *dɛví á wó lé botoe*
 child DEF PL catch rat
 'The children caught a rat.'
 (i.e. they now have it and can do what they want with it; eat it or sell it)

The possessive sense of these verbs is exploited in the expression of temporary possession. As mentioned earlier, in this function, they occur with the prepositional phrase *dé así*. Here are some examples:

[197] *kofí lé agbalẽ - a dé así ná nífialá*
 K. catchbook DEF at hand to teacher
 'Kofi held the book for the teacher.' (for some time)

- [198] áma xɔ ɖéví á ɖé así ná dada- á
 A. receive child DEF at hand to mother DEF
 ‘Ama carried the child for the mother.’ (for a while)

Two pieces of evidence suggest that these constructions express ‘temporary’ or accidental possession. First, the form *así* ‘hand’ appears to be used in its literal sense here and not in its spatial orientation sense. The examples imply physical contact between the possessum and the temporary possessor. Second, there is an aphorism which says that to hold or receive something (on someone’s behalf) does not mean that it is yours. The Ewe form is this:

- [199] xɔ- ɖe-’ así mé nyé ame tɔ o.
 receive at hand NEG be person POSSPRO NEG
 lit. ‘Something held in the hand’ is not yours’.

The message of this expression is quite transparent: you may be the temporary custodian of something but you are not its possessor because of that. The meaning of these temporary possession constructions may be paraphrased as follows:

NP POR (=X) V [handle] NP POSS (=Y) ɖé así (ná NP [=Z])

I want to say something about X

I say: X was somewhere

X did something

after this: Y was in the same place as X (for some time)

X can do something with Y because of that

X cannot do with Y anything X wants to

It is reasonable to assume that X’s hand is in the same place as X, so when something is in X’s hand, then it follows that it is in the same place as X. This is the rationale behind the second component. The third component is meant to capture the idea that the original possessor granted permission for the possessum to move into the possession of the temporary possessor. The subject possessor must move his hands at least to receive or catch the possessum, hence the indirect way in which the fourth component is phrased. The last two components capture the idea that there is a restriction on the things that the temporary possessor can do with the possessum since it is not truly his/hers.

7.5.5 ‘Experiential’ possession: NP POR kpó NP POSS

The verb *kpó* ‘see, experience’ is also used to express possession of material things like *ga* ‘money’ and *dó* ‘work’, as well as abstract attributes and states such as *ɲúsě* ‘strength’ or *vovo* ‘free’. The possessor is the subject (and experiencer) and the possessum is the object (the percept). Given the semantics of this verb it seems reasonable to claim that possession is presented in this construction as an experiential one in the sense that the possessor is viewed as an experiencer of the possessive relation between him/her and the possessum. Indeed certain emotional states and physical experiences are expressed using this verb and a nominal denoting the emotion as object (see Chapter 10 for further details). For example:

[200] wó kpó dzidzɔ bé...
 3PL see happiness COMP
 ‘they were happy that ...’ (Akpatsi 1980:79)

[201] fofó nye kpó afókú nyitsɔ
 father 1SG see accident other day
 ‘My father had an accident the other day.’

Note that the above sentences can be interpreted as possessive in the sense that the emotion or accident came to be part of the things one can say about the subject in each case. This view is further supported by the fact that nominals that denote attributes or qualities can be predicated of the subject in these constructions. For instance:

[202] fia sia kpó ɲúsě blibo dɛ e- té ví wó dzí
 chief DEM see strength whole at 3SG under child PL top
 ‘This chief had a lot of power over his subordinates.’
 (Nyaku 1984:7)

[203] dɛví á kpó lā me
 child DEF see flesh in
 ‘The child is fat.’

The possessive meaning of these structures are even more evident when the object is a nominal that designates a material or concrete item that could be possessed:

[204] wó kpó dɔ kábá le siká do- me
 3PL see work quickly at gold mine in

‘They got a job quickly in a gold mine.’ (Nyaku 1984:15)

[205] kofi kpó ga ηútó
 K. see money much
 ‘Kofi has/got a lot of money.’

[206] mé kpó srɔ̃ ɖe o
 3SG:NEG see spouse take NEG
 ‘S/he did not get a spouse to marry.’

There is no doubt that the verb *kpó* ‘see, experience’ is used to express possession. The question is whether there is any linguistic clue to distinguishing between the possessive meaning and the perception sense of the verb. When one examines all the sentences provided so far, one thing that is common to all the object nominals is that they are non-definite. When the object nominal is marked for definiteness then a different sense of the verb is at play such as ‘to see’ or ‘to find’. Consider the following examples:

[207] me- kpó ga lá
 1SG see money DEF
 ‘I saw/found the money.’ (cp. [205] above)

[208] wó kpó dɔ lá
 3PL see work DEF
 ‘They saw/inspected the work.’ (cp. [204] above)

One can conclude that if the object of the verb *kpó* ‘see’ is non-definite then it may be interpreted as a possessive verb.

Indeed it does not seem strange that a perception verb of this kind should be used to express possession because when someone brings something into their field of view, that is by perceiving it with their eyes, they could be said to possess that thing. In these constructions, it is not far-fetched to think that the possessum is at the locus of the possessor. The verb *kpó* ‘see, experience’ in Ewe is an interesting one. It has been grammaticalised to express existential or experiential perfective aspect (see Chapter 6 on aspect) and also to express a modal meaning of ‘to have opportunity to do/be something’ (see Part 1). The connections between the existential and the possessive in Ewe have already been encountered in the use of locative/existential verbs for the expression of possession (see §7.5.1 and §7.5.2). Perhaps the use of the verb for ‘see, experience’ is another instance which manifests the relationship between existence, experience and possession.

An important aspect of these constructions is that the possessor functions as the subject and as the experiencer. These features imply that the possessor perceives or senses or experiences something as a result perhaps of something that they do. Thus the acquisition of the possession is brought about by something happening in the possessor. But the possessor is not a passive experiencer. S/he is an active experiencer.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following semantic formula:

NP POR (=X) kpó NP POSS (=Y)
 I want to say something about X
 I say: something happened in X
 because of this, Y is now like a part of X
 One couldn't say this if X did not do something
 (to cause it to happen)
 X could do things with Y

7.5.6 Summary of predicative constructions

The description of the predicative constructions has revealed that Ewe employs a locative/existential verb in combination with other devices to express stative possession. We have also seen that the possessor in these constructions may be coded as a modifier of a postposition sí which is derived from the body part term for 'hand'. The possessor may also be coded as the object of the dative preposition. In addition, the semantics of various verbs of transfer, achievement and contact are also exploited to express inchoative and temporary kinds of possession. It was pointed out finally that the verb meaning 'to see' or 'experience' may function as a verb of possession where the possessor is coded as the subject and the experiencer, thus portraying the possessive relation from an experiential point of view.

7.6 Ewe possessive constructions in a typological perspective.

7.6.1 Preliminaries

The constructions that are dedicated to the expression of possession in Ewe have been described in the preceding sections of this chapter. In the rest of this chapter, I want to put these constructions in a typological context. Anyone familiar with the discussion of possession in the linguistic literature might be pleasantly surprised about some of the features of the Ewe possessive structures. Some other features may not be that surprising. In the discussion that follows, we shall concentrate on how to account for the alienable/inalienable possession distinction in Ewe grammar with respect to (i)

implicational hierarchies of nominals that have been used to account for such distinctions in linguistic typological research; and (ii) explanation of grammatical behaviour.

It should be recalled that possession involving body parts (and other part terms) is expressed by an alienable structure, that is, the use of the possessive linker (NP ϕ é NP). Whereas spatial relational terms, kin terms and socio-cultural possessa typically occur in the inalienable structure, that is, without the possessive linker (NP NP). This distribution of categories of terms across the construction types is at odds with the general tendency and the sort of natural intuition which is coded in some other languages. In many languages, as Haiman (1985:130), among others, observes: ‘[T]ypically, inalienable possession is indicated when the possessum is a body part, a kinsman, or a personal attribute: all of these denotata are viewed as permanently associated with the possessor.’ Thus for body parts to be coded in an alienable structure in a language like Ewe is seen as a deviation from the norm, i.e the real world facts. This mismatch between the real world facts and the linguistic representation of body parts in some languages has presented a puzzle to typologists interested in implicational universals. Haiman’s outline of what the concerns are for such linguists with respect to Mandarin Chinese, which also makes use of an alienable construction for body parts but an inalienable one for kin terms, is pertinent to the discussion and so is quoted here in extenso:

‘One could maintain à la Whorf, that Mandarin simply conceptualises the *alienable/inalienable* contrast differently. We cannot, however, accept this. Although we may expect languages to conceptualise categories in different ways (and this is the essence of the linguistic relativity hypothesis and the emic principle), there must be universal limits to this variation, or the cross-linguistic validity of the category labels simply disappears. In this particular case we cannot wish to characterise as an example of the *alienable/inalienable* distinction a contrast such as the one that exists in Mandarin, and treat kin as “less alienable” than arms, legs, or hearts.’ (Haiman 1985:135)

To accommodate such languages the implicational scale is revised with a disjunction at the top:

body part and/or kin terms > socio-cultural terms > others
(cf. e.g Haiman 1985; Nichols 1985; Seiler 1983; Chappell and McGregor 1989)

I will argue below that such a linear implicational scale does not account adequately for the linguistic facts of Ewe. I employ circular diagrams to account for both the construction types and categories of possessa. In addition, evidence will be presented to show that body parts are consistently treated differently from other relational nominals at the clause level as well in Ewe.

The discussion of these issues is of interest for at least two reasons: Firstly, the belief or assumption that the grammatical treatment of body parts as more alienable than kin terms is odd or counter-intuitive (cf. Claudi and Heine 1986; Haiman 1985 cited above). I will contend that the grammatical behaviour of body parts in any language reflects the conceptualisation that the speakers of the language have of them. And the cross-linguistic differences in this area reflect the differences in conceptualisation of body parts across languages. Like Robins (1978:104) I believe that the domain of possession (including body part syntax) may well provide the testing ground for the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (see also Wierzbicka 1988 chapter 2 and Chappell and McGregor ed. 1991). Secondly, the issue of motivation and explanation in grammar is of current relevance. Specifically, the view that the odd distribution of alienable/inalienable in Ewe grammar can be explained by appealing to metaphor as advocated by Claudi and Heine (1986). This will be examined and contrasted with a semantically based explanation of the same phenomenon.

Contra Claudi and Heine (1986) and others like them, I will argue that metaphor is not an explanation, and in line with the general orientation of this work, I argue (i) that there is a semantic basis for the way the alienable/inalienable constructions are distributed in the grammar; and (ii) that 'inalienability', understood as a construction type rather than a class of concepts, can be semantically defined in Ewe. In addition, it is shown that there are fundamental empirical problems associated with the metaphor argument.

The discussion will proceed as follows: first, the 'metaphorical base of grammar' hypothesis of Claudi and Heine is discussed and a critique offered with specific reference to its application to the explanation of the distribution of alienable/inalienable grammatical distinctions in Ewe; second, the clausal syntax of body parts is discussed in partial support of a semantically oriented explanation; finally, the non-arbitrary coding of possession in Ewe is explored. It is demonstrated that there is an iconic relationship between the possessive meanings and the forms in which they are expressed in Ewe. Some implicational hierarchies are suggested.

7.6.2 The metaphorical base of grammar hypothesis

7.6.2.1 Background

In a number of recent studies, Bernd Heine and his colleagues have argued for a ‘metaphor to grammar’ hypothesis with particular reference to Ewe (and other African languages). (See for example Claudi and Heine 1985, 1986, 1989; Heine and Claudi 1986; Heine, Hünemeyer and Claudi 1988, Heine and Hünemeyer 1988; Heine 1989). In doing this, they play down on the importance of the semantic basis of grammar, especially of synchronic grammar, in my view. This is painfully evident in their exposition on the distinction between alienable and inalienable possession in Ewe.

At the beginning of this chapter, it was noted that Claudi and Heine (1986) claim that the semantics corresponding to the alienable/inalienable distinction in Ewe is peculiar (see the quote on p. 1). They therefore argue that in line with their ‘metaphor to grammar’ hypothesis ‘this strange relationship between morphological and semantic structure must have some metaphorical base’ (Claudi and Heine 1986:316).

Claudi and Heine go on to provide a number of arguments to support their claim and conclude rather assertively that:

... inalienability in Ewe cannot be defined in terms of the semantics of possession; it is rather the result of metaphorical usage: Whenever the POSSESSION IS SPACE metaphor applies we are dealing with ‘alienable’ possession, elsewhere we are confronted with an odd class of inalienable concepts.

(Claudi and Heine (1986:318).

In the following paragraphs, I will attempt to explain what is meant by the metaphorical base argument and by the POSSESSION IS SPACE metaphor. I will also attempt to show that the alleged peculiarity of the semantics of the alienable/inalienable distinction is a myth rather than a real representation of the linguistic facts.

7.6.2.2 The major claims of the ‘metaphor to grammar’ hypothesis

As I understand it, the metaphorical base of grammar hypothesis has two main claims. The first claim is that ‘it is metaphorical language use which is responsible (...) for the rise of grammar.’ (Claudi and Heine 1986:313). The second claim is that ‘a knowledge of metaphorical conceptualisation may also be important in understanding certain synchronic structures which are otherwise hard to account for’ (op. cit: 298). In essence the contention of the hypothesis is that we can understand and explain grammar both diachronically and synchronically from a metaphorical conceptualisation point of view. (This approach to grammar is influenced in many ways by Lakoff and Johnson’s

(1980) approach to the lexicon; see also Lakoff 1987, Langacker 1987, Taylor 1989b, and Matlock 1989 among others.)

For over a century, it is fair to say, several investigators have argued that metaphor is a motivation for grammaticalization. It seems that there is some truth in this, but there is no universal agreement on this matter. Some researchers have expressed doubts about the role of metaphorisation in grammaticalisation (see e.g. Bybee 1990). Nevertheless, it seems that there is a cognitive association between the source term and the item that it is grammaticalised into. Perhaps the process involved is really metonymy, but the term metaphor tends to be used for all these (see Taylor 1989b and see also Heine et al. (1988:32) who claim that 'metaphor and metonymy are part and parcel of the same thing'). Be that as it may, I think it is reasonable to say that some metaphorical process is involved in grammaticalisation. Thus the first claim of the hypothesis may be valid.

However, the explanatory value of metaphor in synchronic grammar is severely limited, in my view. This is evident from the problems that arise when it is employed to account for the distinction between 'alienable' and 'inalienable' possession.

Before turning to these problems, let us first explore what is meant by metaphor as a motivation for grammar. The basic idea is that metaphor allows us to express and understand conceptually complex and abstract ideas in terms of less complex and concrete things. In this view, 'the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another' (Lakoff and Johnson 1980:5).

Following from this, Claudi and Heine argue that there are some categories of concepts which are less complex which serve as vehicles for the expression of other abstract grammatical categories. The categories arrived at for Ewe (and which may be valid for other African languages) are arranged as follows according to their degree of complexity:¹³

QUALITY <-- PROCESS <-- SPACE <-- OBJECT <-- PERSON

This scale is to be understood to be unidirectional and complexity increases as you move from right to left. Consequently a category on the right can serve

¹³ These categories have been arranged in two different ways in the work of Heine and his colleagues: (i) complexity increases from right to left (Claudi and Heine 1986) or (ii) from left to right (Heine et al 1988). I adopt the 1986 version for consistency. But the 1988 version looks like this:

PERSON > OBJECT > SPACE > TIME > PROCESS > QUALITY

Another difference between this version and the 1986 version is that the 1988 version has the category TIME which is not in the 1986 version .

as a vehicle for the expression of a concept to its left and not vice versa. These categories can therefore be used as categorial metaphors in an equation. For instance one conceptual metaphor is QUALITY IS SPACE. This metaphor is based on the fact that abstract qualities such as time are usually expressed in spatial terms. In fact, Claudi and Heine claim that there are two subtypes of this metaphor; one of them is TIME IS SPACE, and the other is POSSESSION IS SPACE. 'Underlying [the TIME IS SPACE metaphor F.A.] is the fact that the structure of time tends to be conceptualised in terms of spatial parameters' (Claudi and Heine 1986:307).

Possession is said to be difficult to locate on the scale (Heine et al. 1988:18). (Note that in later work, TIME was no longer considered as part of the QUALITY domain but as a domain on its own (cf fn 13 above).) However it has been assumed that it belongs to the domain of QUALITY. Hence POSSESSION IS SPACE is a subtype of the QUALITY IS SPACE metaphor. The conceptual rationale behind the POSSESSION IS SPACE metaphor is that what is at one's place is considered to be at one's disposal. This is what motivates the grammaticalisation of locative terms as an expression of possession.

Claudi and Heine argue, quite plausibly, that this conceptual metaphor of POSSESSION IS SPACE underlies the development of the Ewe possessive marker $\phi\acute{e}$ from the lexical root $-\phi\acute{e}$ meaning 'place'. That is, $\phi\acute{e}$ as a SPACE notion is used as a vehicle to denote possession - a QUALITY concept which is more abstract than a spatial concept. Similarly, a spatial structure underlies the common verbal expression of possession in Ewe: Y le X sí (see §7.5.1.1). In general they claim that structures involving 'Y is at X's place' develop into 'X owns Y' structures. The motivation for this grammaticalisation process is the metaphor POSSESSION IS SPACE.

From this premise, Claudi and Heine go on to explain why kinship terms and locative relational or spatial orientation terms do not normally occur in the alienable structure marked by $\phi\acute{e}$. It will be recalled that these terms typically occur as possessa in the inalienable construction which involves the juxtaposition of the NPs involved in the relationship. We now turn to these explanations.

7.6.2.3 The metaphorical explanation of Ewe split possession: a critique.

In this section, the explanations offered for kin terms and spatial orientation terms not occurring in the alienable construction are examined and are shown to be flawed in many respects, but above all on empirical grounds.

Concerning the spatial orientation terms, Claudi and Heine claim that the POSSESSION IS SPACE metaphor is ruled out because these nominals contain locative reference. It is contended that $\phi\acute{e}$ which is spatial in origin, does not

occur with these nominals because a sequence of two locative nominals is not allowed in Ewe. This explanation has no empirical basis because it is not true that the possessive marker does not link spatial relational terms to their possessors (see §7.4.3 for our arguments on alternation of the two constructions). In fact, elsewhere in their paper, Claudi and Heine have the following example in which $\phi\acute{e}$ occurs before a locative relational noun $\eta\eta\textcircled{\small\circ}$ ‘front’:

[209] amádéké mé nyá é $\phi\acute{e}$ $\eta\eta\textcircled{\small\circ}$ o.
 nobody NEG know 3SG poss frontNEG
 ‘Nobody knows his future.’ (Claudi and Heine 1986:307)

If the explanation given above were correct this sentence should be unacceptable, but this is grammatical. In later work Heine (1989) shows clearly in a table that several spatial orientation terms can occur with the possessive linker $\phi\acute{e}$. One can only conclude from this that the explanation is not tenable on empirical grounds. [That is, the explanation does not account for all the data.] The metaphorical base hypothesis with respect to spatial orientation terms, then, lacks the necessary predictive power.

Similar problems arise with the metaphor-based explanation of the behaviour of kin terms vis-à-vis the alienable/inalienable distinction. Claudi and Heine claim that the POSSESSION IS SPACE metaphor does not apply to kinship terms because they do not typically imply a locative notion. For this reason they are not expected to be connected to their possessors by $\phi\acute{e}$.

On the surface, this analysis sounds plausible, however it has two problems. First, the supporting details provided for the argument are not accurate. Second, there is evidence (some of which has already been given in §7.4.3) that the $\phi\acute{e}$ possessive marker has ‘spread to genitive constructions involving kinship terms’, to use the words of Claudi and Heine (1986:316). Thus in the area of kinship too the metaphorical explanation lacks empirical validity and predictive power.

It will be recalled that the POSSESSION IS SPACE metaphor is the motivation for the use of the locative expressions of the form: **Y le X sí** to signal possession. This is fairly uncontroversial. Hence a test case for the view that this metaphor is not relevant for kinship nouns is whether kinship terms can occur in this verbal structure. Claudi and Heine consider this possibility and claim mistakenly, in my view, that kin terms do not occur in the ‘Y le X sí’ construction. They claim that the sentence below is unacceptable, and this, for them, constitutes proof that kin terms do not have anything to do with location. Therefore, the POSSESSION IS SPACE metaphor did not apply to introduce, as

it were, the possessive marker $\phi\acute{e}$ as a connective between the kin terms and their possessors:

[210] fofó mé le así nye o
 father NEG be:PRES HAND 3SG NEG
 ‘I don’t have a father.’ (cf. Claudi and Heine 1986:317)

Several native speakers I have consulted agree with my judgement that this utterance is perfectly acceptable. This shows that the argument about the metaphor not being relevant to kin terms is founded on inaccurate data.

Furthermore, kin terms do occur in the alienable construction. The implicaton in this case for Claudi and Heine’s analysis would be that the POSSESSION IS SPACE metaphor is after all relevant to kin terms. We have already seen examples of this in §7.4.3. However the sentence below is taken from a GBC TV drama uttered by the same speaker, who, a few minutes earlier, used *ví* ‘child’ in an inalienable structure:

[211a] atsú si $\phi\acute{e}$ ví á
 husband wife poss child TP
 $\text{\textcircled{d}}$ e wó lé á be ne
 pFOC 3PL take HAB care to:3SG
 ‘A step-child, one has to take (good) care of him/her.’

An objection may be raised concerning the above example in the sense that in many languages the ‘alienable’ structure is what is used to express the relationship between children and their step-parents while the ‘inalienable’ one is used for real parents. Such a distinction is not relevant for Ewe because both structures can be used with real parents as well as with step parents. The following is a line from a children’s rhyme where the alienable structure is used to express the relationship between a child and his parent:

[211b] amuzu $\phi\acute{e}$ ví le fu kpé m’ lóo
 A. poss child be:PRES trouble suffer PROG ADD
 ‘Amuzu’s child is suffering, you know.’

Obviously, the metaphorical base hypothesis is based on a wrong assumption concerning the spread of the possessive connective to kin and other terms.

It is evident from the discussion so far that there are difficulties with the metaphorical base hypothesis with respect to the variation that occurs with kin terms and spatial orientation terms.

One further piece of evidence which is not readily explained in the metaphorical basis of grammar framework is the existence of a dialect variant of the possessive linker which does not necessarily have an underlying spatial metaphor. In the northern varieties of the standard colloquial dialect of Ewe, $\phi\acute{e}$ alternates with $w\acute{o}$ as the possessive connective. For example:

- [212] kofí $\phi\acute{e}$ krante/
 kofí $w\acute{o}$ krante
 K. poss cutlass
 ‘Kofi’s cutlass.’

The distribution appears to be that $w\acute{o}$ is used in free variation with singular possessors and only $\phi\acute{e}$ (pronounced sometimes as $\phi\acute{o}$ in these varieties) occurs with plural possessors. Consider the following examples:

- [213] kokló $w\acute{o}/\phi\acute{e}$ ble
 hen poss tail
 ‘a hen’s tail’
- [214] kokló $w\acute{o}$ (* $w\acute{o}$) / $\phi\acute{e}$ ble
 hen PL poss poss tail
 ‘the tail of hens’

The possessive linker $w\acute{o}$ is homophonous with the plural morpheme as well as the third person plural pronoun. The similarity in meaning shared by these identical forms is based on number or quantity (cf. Jakobson on the relationship between the genitive and the plural in Russian). It is not based on spatial notions. It is thus not clear to me how the metaphorical explanation can be extended to account for the use of this variant which in many respects parallels the use of $\phi\acute{e}$ ¹⁴

Thus it appears that there are several deficiencies in invoking metaphor as an explanation of synchronic grammar. Chief among these are (i) that it is empirically inadequate and (ii) that it lacks predictive power. It must be stressed however in summing up that I do not wish to condemn the ‘grammar as frozen metaphor’ hypothesis in its entirety. I think it can help in explaining the motivation of grammaticization of linguistic elements. I would insist however that once grammaticalisation is accomplished, the forms are associated

¹⁴ Perhaps, one could link the same metaphor to $w\acute{o}$ through a chain of other metaphors that might link PLACE/SPACE with discourse deixis and then with person (see Greenberg 1985). At another level one could claim that given the ubiquity of spatial metaphors, it could be linked through a cluster of metaphors (cf. Traugott 1985). These are plausible views but they remain to be validated. The point here is that in the present formulation of the hypothesis there is no obvious way of linking it to the $w\acute{o}$ form.

with particular meanings from which their range of use can be predicted. Thus although synchronic grammar may be viewed in a diachronic sense as frozen metaphor, its use is based on semantic distinctions that have become grammaticalised. The seemingly arbitrary nature of the grammatical distinction between 'alienable' and 'inalienable' possession, I maintain, should and can be explained from a semantic standpoint.

7.6.3 Towards a semantic account of split possession in Ewe

It seems that there is a very simple semantic explanation for the distribution of alienable and inalienable possessive structures in Ewe. This explanation is based on two principles: first, that each of the constructions has a specific semantics; and second, that a speaker chooses a particular construction in a particular context according to the meaning they want to convey (cf. García 1975, Bolinger 1977, Kirsner 1985). We have described the semantics of the alienable and inalienable constructions in §7.4 *passim*.

The core meaning of the inalienable construction is that the relationship between the two entities is seen as being very close, permanent or habitual, or inherent, and by and large there is a restriction on the things that the possessor can do with the possessum. Thus the relationship between two entities, X and Y, coded as an inalienable one in Ewe could be represented as follows:

One can think of X and Y like this:

they are like parts of the same thing

When one thinks of Y

one cannot not think of X

X cannot do with Y anything X wants to

The prototype meaning of the alienable structure, on the other hand, is that the two entities are viewed as conceptually separate and that the possessor is less restricted in the things s/he can do with the possessum. The message of the alienable construction can be represented as follows:

X (=POR) $\phi\acute{e}$ Y (=POSS)

One can think of Y like this:

Y is like a part of X

X can do things with Y

Given the semantics of these constructions, one can explain the occurrence of kin and spatial orientation in the alienable construction by appealing to the notion of the choice of a construction to fit the meaning the speaker wants to convey. Thus it can be said that a speaker chooses alienable morphology for terms that would otherwise occur in the inalienable structure, for example, kin and spatial orientation terms, when the speaker wants to draw attention to the two parts and de-emphasise the close relationship between them and present them as being conceptually separate.

In further support of this semantic approach to possession phenomena we turn to the grammar of body parts, which have an alienable morphology as well as syntax in Ewe.

7.7 On the alienable grammar of body parts in Ewe

7.7.1 Towards an explanation

In §7.4.1.3 it was shown that body parts occur with the $\phi\acute{e}$ connective unlike other inherently relational nouns. It was also pointed out in §7.4.3 that they cannot occur in the phrasal inalienable construction. On the basis of these syntactic properties it is concluded that body part terms have alienable grammar in adnominal constructions. This behaviour in a sense is counter-intuitive, as has been explained in §7.6.1 and is in need of explanation. It is important to attempt to explain this seemingly odd behaviour¹⁵. It could be

¹⁵ Perhaps it is worth mentioning that Ewe does not seem to be the only language in which body parts have alienable grammar and kin terms have inalienable grammar. Haiman

explained in two ways. One can resort to diachrony or one could indulge in some kind of Whorfianism, that is one can explore the possibility that the Ewes conceptualise the relation between a body and its parts differently from what obtains in the real world. These two viewpoints are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

From a historical perspective, the difference between spatial relational terms in particular and body parts could be said to be the result of grammaticalization and reanalysis. Several spatial relational terms in Ewe have evolved from body part terms. One of the effects of this is that many body parts are homophonous with spatial relational terms. Some examples are given in [215]:

[215]	body part meaning	>	spatial relational sense
ta	head	>	fore part, top, above
ɲkúme	face	>	front part
meɣbé	back	>	back part, behind
ɲúti	skin	>	outer surface, near
nũ	mouth	>	front, edge
ɸo	belly	>	surface
tó	ear	>	edge, near

It is plausible that body part terms and spatial relation terms receive different grammatical treatment so that they could be more easily distinguished from each other (cf. Reh et al. 1981 for a similar view). Since spatial relational terms would appear to be less separable from their possessors than body parts are from their owners, the latter was given alienable syntax while the former has inalienable grammar. Perhaps this is an instance in which form constrains the grammatical expression of content (cf. Nichols 1986, 1988). The claim being made here is that the grammatical alienability of body parts emanates from the homonymy which they share with spatial relational terms for historical reasons. From this viewpoint, it is the phonological form that these body part terms have which determines the grammatical expression and consequently imposes a certain semantics on the grammar of body parts in the language.

From an ethnolinguistic viewpoint, one can claim that the Ewes construe the relationship between body parts and the 'owner' to be one in which the owner can do things with the parts. In this respect the relationship is viewed to be similar to the relationship between the owner of say a basket and the basket. This conceptualisation of the relationship between the body and its owner is

(1985:135) discusses some examples. One of such languages "is Menya, a Papuan language of the Angan family In Menya, kin terms are possessed by pronominal prefixes: *t- apiqu* "your father". But all other nouns including body parts require the interposition of a genitive/possessive suffix between possessor and possessum: *t- ga angä* "you gen house" *t- ga hangüä* "you-gen shoulder"" (Haiman *ibid*).

[218] kofi φέ abó tró
 K. poss arm twist
 'Kofi's arm is twisted.'

[219] abo tró ná kofi
 arm twist to K.
 'Kofi has a twisted arm.'

(I shall revert to using the variables X and Y for possessor and possessum respectively, and I will introduce Z as another variable for other nominals.)

The first structure in each set will be referred to as the possessive construction because it employs the possessive connective. The second may be characterised as a possessor ascension construction. This latter description requires some explanation. Possessor ascension constructions are usually described in terms of structures in which 'the possessor is "promoted" to the status of direct object or dative while the possessed NP is "demoted" to the status of some sort of oblique phrase.' (Fox 1981:323; cf. Hyman et al. 1970, Hyman 1977, Blake 1984). From this definition, the Ewe construction is not a prototypical possessor ascension structure because the possessed NP is not demoted to any oblique phrase, nor is it promoted to a different role such that the structure might be labelled a possessum promotion construction. Rather the possessum retains the grammatical role of the possessive NP in the alternative structure. The term possessor ascension can however be justified in the sense that the possessor can be thought of as being promoted, as it were, from a genitive modifier in an NP to a dative-oblique in a prepositional phrase. It should be remembered that datives and obliques are higher than genitives on the NP accessibility hierarchy à la Keenan and Comrie (1977). Thus the examples in [61] and [63] above may be thought of as 'possessor ascension' constructions. The type of operation involved is the promotion of the possessor of a subject or direct object to an oblique object.¹⁶ It should be noted that the pairs of sentences [216] and [217] vs [218] and [219] respectively describe essentially the same situations. That is, they are referentially the same. The differences between the members of each set lie in how the participants are presented syntactically and viewed semantically. In [216] the possessive NP is the direct object and in [218] it is the subject. In these cases the association between the possessor and the possessum (body part) is explicitly indicated by

¹⁶ This operation is perhaps similar to the type of 'possessor ascension' proposed for languages like Albanian, Choctaw and Georgian (Blake 1984:438).

the appropriate possessive construction. In [217], however, the possessum (body part) retains the object role but its dependent possessor occurs as an oblique object. Similarly, in [219] the body part term has the subject role and the possessor occurs in a prepositional phrase. In sum, in these structures the body part has a core grammatical role while the possessor has a peripheral role.

The preposition *ná* which is used to introduce the promoted possessor in these constructions is homophonous with the verb *ná* ‘give, cause, let etc.’ from which it has evolved (Ansre 1966, Heine and Reh 1984, Claudi and Heine 1986 Westermann 1930; see Part 1 for the range of uses of this form). It is instructive that in the possessor ascension construction, the possessor is governed by the preposition *ná*. From the semantics of *ná* it can be said that the possessor is being presented as the ‘recipient’ in the clause and contextualises perhaps as the goal and/or the experiencer of the situation. Nevertheless, the possessor is coded syntactically as a peripheral argument while the body part term is assigned a core role.

The *raison d’être* of this strategy of assigning the body part a core role and its possessor a peripheral role appears to be the presentation of the body part as a central participant in the situation. In every situation there is one argument which is critically involved in its realisation. This argument tends to be the object in transitive clauses and the subject in intransitive clauses (cf. Halliday (1985:146ff) on medium; Starosta (1988:128) on the patient centrality hypothesis in Lexicase grammar). It can be argued that when body parts are construed as being the most critical arguments involved in the situation then the possessor ascension constructions are used as the body parts assume subject or object roles in such structures. Thus these constructions are used to specify the body part as the locus of effect of an event and the possessor as the recipient/experiencer by virtue of the connection it has with the body part. The linguistic separation of the possessor from the body part in these structures through its promotion serves to de-emphasise the partitive nature of the body part and its close association or attachment to the possessor and highlights its distinct nature.

The marking of the promoted possessor by *ná* is consistent in a way with the coding of possessors in general in one of the stative predicative possessive constructions described in §7.5.2.2. Although in the case of the possessor ascension construction, the preposition seems to signal the experiential dimension of the situation.

7.7.2.2 Body part as object in possessor ascension constructions

To return to the possessor ascension constructions of the frame:

Z V Y (body part) *ná* X(= POR),

it should be noted that such forms are quite frequent in the language. In particular, it is a conventionalised pattern for talking about familiar ritual practices such as circumcision [220] and ear piercing [221] which involve something being done to a specific part of one's body.

[220] atíkewɔlá tso ava (gǎ lá)ná kofí
 doctor cut penis big DEF to K.
 'The doctor circumcised (the big penis for) Kofi.'

[221] mamá ɲɔ́ tó (gbaba má wó) ná vídzí lá
 grandma pierce ear flat DEMPL to child DEF
 'Grandmother pierced (those flat) ear(s) for the child.'

Notice that the body part terms can be modified even in these constructions for conventionalised practices. This suggests, I think, that in such constructions the body part is individuated - conceptualised and treated as a separate entity distinct from the possessor.

The construction pattern under discussion here is not used only for the sorts of ritualistic practices described above. It can be used in any situation where the specificity of the body part is highly relevant and where the speaker wants to communicate the view that a body part is the critical participant in a situation, be it a state, a process or an event. Consider the occurrences described in the following examples:

[222] avu lá ɖu afɔ́ ná kofí
 dog DEF eat leg to K.
 'The dog bit the leg of Kofi.'

[223] kofí le tume (gbadza má) ku- mí ná áma.
 K. PRES back broad DEMscratch PROG to A.
 'Kofi is scratching (the broad) back of Ama.'

The possessor NP in the ná phrase could be reflexive, that is coreferential with the subject of the clause:

[224] kofí ɲé afɔ́ ná é ɖókui.
 K. break leg to 3SG REFL
 'Kofi broke his own leg.'

Furthermore, the construction is not restricted only to human body parts but applies also to parts of animals as exemplified in [225].

[225] ka blá afɔ́ (ɲéɲé lá) ná alě á

cord tieleg broken DEF to sheep DEF
 'The (broken) leg of the sheep is entangled by a cord.'
 (lit. 'A cord has entangled the (broken) leg for the sheep.')

cp. [226]ka blá alē á φέ afɔ (ηέηέ lá).
 cord tiesheep DEF poss leg broken DEF
 'The sheep's (broken) leg is entangled by a cord.'
 (lit.: 'A cord has entangled the sheep's (broken) leg.')

On the basis of the discussion so far, one can represent the meaning of the construction as follows:

Z V Y [body part] ná X [POR]
 I want to say something about Z
 I say: Z did something to Y
 One can think of Y as part of X's body
 Because of that, one can think of
 what happened like this:
 Z did something to X
 X could feel something because of that

This formula reflects two essential things about this construction: first, the undergoer of the event is the body part as an entity in itself; second, it captures the feature that the possessor of the body part is only indirectly affected by the event by virtue of the fact that it is related to the primary undergoer, the body part.

The message of the structure with body part alone as direct object is different from that of a construction in which the object role is filled by an NP φέ NP structure. Thus although [216] and [217] (repeated below) are pragmatically similar, they have different semantic values. It appears that in a Z V X φέ Y construction, X and Y together are the single undergoers of the event. In this case the body part is presented as a part of the possessor and not necessarily as an entity distinct from it.

[216]kwami tró kofí φέ abó
 K. twist K. poss arm
 'Kwami twisted Kofi's arm.'

[217]kwami tró abɔ ná kofí
 K. twist arm to K.
 'Kwami twisted arm for Kofi.'

Perhaps this construction could be paraphrased simply as:

Z V X φέY

I want to say something about Z

I say: Z did something to part Y of X's body

[One could think that Z did it to X and Y]

This analysis of the constructions may be supported in part by the behaviour of spatial orientation terms in relation to possessor ascension constructions. Spatial relation terms cannot occur by themselves as direct objects in such constructions. Compare the acceptability of these pairs of sentences [227] vs [229] and [228] vs [230].

[227] áma tútú kofí φέ ηkúme

A. wipe K. poss face

'Ama wiped Kofi's face.'

[228] áma tútú ηkúme ná kofí

A. wipe face to K.

'Ama wiped the face for Kofi.'

[229] áma tútú kplã á dzí

A. wipe table DEF top

'Ama wiped the table top.'

[230] * ama tútú dzí ná kplã á

A. wipe top to table DEF

'Ama wiped the top for the table.'

From the premise that spatial relation terms are 'inalienable' terms, one can draw two inferences from the unacceptability of [230]. First, the possessor construed to be in an 'inalienable' possessive relation cannot be promoted to a higher grammatical role. Consequently, it could be said that possessor ascension constructions are used when the relation between the possessor and the possessum is viewed in a specific instance as not being a close one. Indeed, the possessors of non-relational terms can also occur in such structures. Compare the following:

[231] é vú nyě abaká lá [possessive]

3SG tear 1SG:poss basket DEF

'S/he broke my basket.'

[232] é vú abaká lá ná m· [possessor ascension]
 3SG tear basket DEF to 1SG
 'S/he broke the basket on me.'

Second, the inseparability of an entity and its spatial orientation suggests that where the possessive phrase occurs as the direct object, the situation should be interpreted as one in which the possessor and the possessum take part in the event together. This point is consistent with the view that adnominal possessive constructions are a kind of coordination or multiplication of the entities involved. (Cf. Jakobson's (1971:149) explanation of the syncretism of nominative plural and genitive singular in some Russian paradigms in terms of semantic quantification. In fact, the same kind of explanation could be offered for the homonymy in the northern dialects of Ewe between the dialectal variant of the possessive connective which is wó the plural morpheme wó and the third person plural form wó).

The behaviour of kin terms in possessor ascension constructions is somewhat different from that of body parts in the same constructions. Structurally, the kin constructions are analogous with the body part constructions. Schematically the kin term possessor ascension constructions can be represented as: Z V Y (kin) ná X (POR). It has been stated earlier on that the body part possessor ascension constructions and their corresponding possessive variants are by and large synonymous. However, for some of the structures involving kin terms, the possessor ascension and possessive constructions are not referentially the same. Compare the pairs of sentences in the following examples:

[233] papá ɖɛ srɔ̃ (tsitsšímá) ná kofi
 'Papa' take spouse old DEMfor K.
 'Papa took (that old) wife for Kofi.'

≠ [234] papá ɖɛ kofi srɔ̃ (tsitsšímá).
 'Papa' take K. spouse old DEM
 'Papa took Kofi's (old) wife.'

[235] é dzu ví nye.
 3SG insult child 1SG
 'S/he insulted my child.'

≠ [236] é dzu ví ná m.
 3SG insult child to me
 ‘S/he insulted child to me.’ i.e. ‘S/he insulted my childlessness.’

Notice that there is no synonymic relation between the two types of constructions even when the kin term is modified (see [233] and [234] above). One could explain the incongruence of these kin term constructions by saying that the possessor ascension constructions have become lexicalised for the expression of specific meanings.

Apart from the absence of synonymy between the kin possessor ascension and possessive constructions, some instances of the possessive constructions of kin terms do not seem to have possessor ascension counterparts. It is not entirely clear why this is the case. However from the hypothesis put forward earlier that the possessor ascension constructions tend to present the possessor and possessum as being conceptually distant and individuated, it may be that in the instances where the possessor cannot be promoted, the conceptual bond of the entities is at issue. Observe that in the following examples the kin term and the predicate can occur in possessor ascension constructions, so the unacceptability of [238] may not be due to the lexical items per se.

[237] áma φokofí srõ
 A.beat K.spouse
 ‘Ama beat Kofi’s wife.’

[238] * áma φo srõ ná kofí
 A.beat spouse to K.
 ‘Ama beat the wife of Kofi on him’

From these observations one can only conclude that kin and spatial relation and body part terms behave differently with respect to possessor ascension constructions. Spatial relation terms do not participate in them. Kin terms can occur in the possessor ascension constructions with severe semantic and lexical restrictions. Body parts do not have anything constraining their occurrence in these structures. It has already been argued in connection with adnominal constructions that these three categories of possessa are treated differently in terms of their occurrence in the alienable and inalienable structures. It will be argued below that the spatial orientation terms are the least alienable and the kin terms less alienable than body part terms (see Fig 7.4 below). If one attempts to correlate the degree of alienability of the categories of possessa with their behaviour in possessor ascension constructions, a discernible pattern emerges: the possessors of the least alienable possessa, the spatial orientation

terms, are the least accessible to the ascension constructions and the possessors of the most alienable, the body parts, are the most accessible to promotion. This correlation can be more generally stated as follows: the degree of alienability assigned to a possessed nominal in a particular situation corresponds to the potential of its possessor to be promoted to an oblique dative. This generalisation is consistent with one of the effects of the possessor ascension construction which has been noted, namely, that of de-emphasising the dependence of the possessor on the possessum and placing emphasis on the distinct character of each of the related entities.

Further support for the generalisation is provided by the fact that the wholes of other meronyms which do not receive inalienable grammatical treatment behave like the 'owners' of body parts with respect to possessor ascension. For example, [239] involves an instrument and one of its parts, and it can be paraphrased as [240] to describe the same external reality.

[239] kofi kpa agblenú á òé atí
 K. carve hoe DEF poss stick
 'Kofi carved the handle of the hoe.'

[240] kofi kpa atí ná agblenú á
 K. carve stick to hoe DEF
 'Kofi made a handle for the hoe.'

7.7.2.3 Body part as subject in possessor ascension constructions.

Similar observations can be made with respect to the promotion of a possessor of a subject to an oblique object. Consider the following examples:

[241] áma φέ ηκú (toφóé má wó) gba·

A. poss eye round DEMPL break

'Ama's (round) eyes are broken.' (= Ama is blind).

[242] ηκú (toφóé má wó) gba ná áma.

eye round DEMPL break to A.

'(Those round) eyes are broken to Ama.' (= Ama is blind).

The essential difference between [241] and [242] stems from the way the body part - possessor relation is viewed. In [241] the body part in conjunction with the possessor serve as the grammatical subject. In [242] the role of subject is singularly filled by the body part term. It is presented as a distinct participant and its relation to the possessor is an indirect one. Notice that in either construction the body part term could be qualified as demonstrated in the examples above.

With these considerations in mind, one could characterise the semantics of the constructions as follows:

NP (=X) φέ NP (=Y= [body part]) V (see example [241])

I want to say something about part Y of X ('s body)

I say: something happened to part Y of X ('s body)

[One could think that it happened to X and Y]

NP (=Y = [body part]) V ná NP (=X) (see example [242])

I want to say something about Y

I say: something happened to Y

One can think of Y like this:

Y is a part of X('s body)

Because of that one can think of what happened like this:

it happened to X

X could feel something because of that

It should be mentioned here that when body parts are used metaphorically to express emotions and sensations they tend to occur as grammatical subjects. The experiencer of the emotion or sensation, however, occurs as the direct

object. As is evident from the examples below, body parts used metaphorically can be modified.

[243] dzi (gã aḍé) le kú ye- mí
 heart big INDEF PRES die 1SG PROG
 'I am very angry.'

[244] ta (sésě aḍé) le ama ḍu- mí
 head hard INDEF PRES A. eat PROG
 'Ama has a severe headache.'

Spatial orientation terms do not occur by themselves as the grammatical subject of process and event verbs. Kin terms like *tó* 'father' *nɔ* 'mother' and *vi* 'child' could occur as subjects of event verbs like *kú* 'die' as exemplified below:

[245] vi geḍe- wó kú ná nyónu má
 child several PL die to woman DEM
 'Several children have died on that woman.'

These constructions are rather restricted. It is hard to have any other acceptable utterances with kin terms alone as subjects. It is perhaps worth noting that the kin terms involved in this construction are used only referentially and not in address. This may suggest that they are less endearing and could be used in distance creating situations as this construction is perceived to be.

This section has presented data to show that by and large body parts are set apart from other relational terms. In particular they can be more readily presented as distinct and individual entities which are connected to the whole in some way in possessor ascension constructions. I maintain that this treatment is consistent with the conceptualisation of body parts as things that the owner could do things with. This claim is further supported in the next section with respect to the constructions in which body parts are presented as instruments.

7.7.3 Body part as instrument.

Just as body parts can be isolated and focussed on as locus of effect in possessor ascension constructions, they can also be presented as the instruments used by the possessor to perform activities. Instrumental NPs may be marked in one of two ways in Ewe (see Part 1): (1) they may occur as direct objects of the verb *tsó* 'take' in serial verbal constructions; (2) they may occur as oblique objects of the preposition *kplé* 'with'. Body parts with or without qualifiers may occur by

themselves in either of these constructions. Alternatively the instrumental role could be filled by a possessive phrase in which a body part is the possessed item. These instances are illustrated below:

[246] kofi tsó (é φέ) ηγό (glame lá)φύgli.
 K. take 3SG poss forehead pointedDEF hit wall
 ‘Kofi hit a wall with (his pointed) forehead.’ /
 ‘Kofi hit (his pointed) forehead against a wall.’

[247] me- lō wò kplé (nyě) dzi (blíbo).
 1SG love 2SG with 1SG:poss heart whole
 ‘I love you with (all my) heart.’

In this respect body parts behave like any ordinary nominal. Compare the forms in [248] and [249] which involve non-relational terms with the last two examples.

[248] kofi tsó (é φέ) he (dádǎlá)lǎ te- á
 K. take 3SG poss knifesharp DEF cut yam DEF
 ‘Kofi took (his sharp) knife and cut the yam.’

[249] áma φle aφé á kplé (é φέ) ga (kátǎ).
 A. buy house DEF with 3SG poss money all
 ‘Ama bought the house with (all her) money.’

By contrast, spatial orientation [250] and kin terms [251], [252] cannot be separated from their possessors in these constructions. That is, unlike body parts which can occur by themselves as instruments, only multiple phrases with kin or spatial relation terms as heads are allowed as objects of the instrumental verb tsó. Notice that the presence or absence of a qualifier such as the definite article in [250] does not affect this constraint.

[250] é tsó *(kplǎ á) dzí wɔ dɔ- φέ
 3SG take table DEF top make sleepplace
 ‘S/he has made the top of the table his bed.’

The definite article in the examples below is the possessive article (see §7.4.5.2). It is generally used with kin terms. If the possessor is a third person singular pronominal, the pronoun may be elided and the article becomes the only signal

for possession, as is the case in the examples below. Note that the article cannot be omitted in these examples without making them ungrammatical:

[251] é tsó vi- *(á) xɔ nzima.
 3SG take child DEF get juju
 'S/he used his/her child to get money.'
 (ie. 'S/he sacrificed his/her child to a fetish for money.')

[252] é xɔ nzima kplé vi- *(á).
 3SG get juju with child DEF
 'S/he used his/her child to get money.'
 (i.e. 'S/he performed a sacrifice with his/her child for money.')

The main point about the instrumental constructions is that body parts are treated as entities which can be handled like other 'alienable' possessions. They also show that body parts behave differently from other relational concepts in this context as well.

In some instances, body parts can be presented as effectors (Foley and Van Valin 1984) of situations. Compare [253] and [254].

[253] kofi nye abó xlá dɛ nyě ŋkú
 K. swing arm hit at 1SG:poss eye
 'Kofi swung his arm and hit my eye.'

[254] kofi nye abó wè xlá dɛ nyě ŋkú
 K. swing arm 3SG hit at 1SG:poss eye
 'Kofi swung his arm and it hit my eye.'

Structurally, [253] is a serial verbal construction in which the subject of the first verb is identical with the subject of the second verb. Hence there is no formal marking of subject on the second verb. By contrast, [254] is an overlapping clause (Duthie, in press) in which the subject of the second verb is coreferential with the object of the first verb. Hence there is a pronominal marking for subject on the second verb. The semantic implication of this structural difference is that in [253] 'Kofi' is the agent of both actions, but in [254] 'Kofi' is the agent of the first event (swinging of the arm) and the 'arm' is the effector of the second - hitting the eye. Thus in such constructions body parts can be presented as entities that can bring about some situations.

7.7.4 'Possessor deletion'

In this section, the conditions under which a possessor can be deleted will be considered. Different principles seem to apply to different categories of possessa. In a clause where the possessor does something to part of their body, the possessor could be deleted. Consider these examples:

[255] kofi kló ηkúme (φoɔ̃ má) háfi yi tɔme.
 K. wash face dirty DEMbefore go river side
 ‘Kofi washed his (dirty) face before going to the riverside.’

[256] do así ɔ́á
 send hand forward
 ‘Stretch out your hand.’

In example [255], the possessor is deleted under coreference with the subject of the clause. In example [256], it is obvious that the possessor of ‘hand’ is the addressee of the imperative. Thus in both examples, it can be said that the deleted possessor of a body part term is recoverable from the syntactic environment.

The deleted possessor of a spatial relational term however is only recoverable from the extra-linguistic context of the utterance as can be deduced from examples [257] and [258] below. Observe that in [258], for instance, which is an imperative, the deleted possessor of gbó ‘side’ is not the addressee but something else.

[257] me- tútú ηú vɔ̃.
 1SG wipe surfacePFV
 ‘I have wiped its surface.’

[258] nɔ gbó m-á vá
 stay side 1SG SBJV come
 ‘Stay at its side till I come.’

For kin terms, one has to distinguish between those that are used referentially, for example, tó ‘father’, nɔ ‘mother’ and nɔví ‘brother/sister’, and those that may be used both in address and referentially. For instance, mamá ‘grandmother’, tógbé ‘grandfather’, and papá ‘father’. If the possessor of a referentially used kin term is omitted, it is interpreted as being identical with the addressee.

[259] kofi le nɔví (tsitsitɔ)φo- mí

K.be:PRES sibling elder beat PROG
'Kofi is beating your elder sister.'

[260]kpó nɔ dá
see mother there
'Look at your mother.'

Indeterminacy arises in the interpretation of the deleted possessor of kin terms which can be used referentially and in address. In [261], for instance, the possessor of *tógbé* 'grandfather' can be understood to be the addressee or the speaker or someone else.

[261]me- kpó tógbé le má á dzí
1SG see grandfather on way DEF top
'I saw grandfather on the way.'

It can be said that the interpretation of possessor deletion operates on different principles for body parts and for other relational terms. For body parts, the deleted possessor is by and large recoverable from the syntactic context. For spatial orientation and kin terms, however, the identification of the deleted possessor is determined by extra-linguistic factors.

7.7.5 Summary of body part syntax

The foregoing has been a survey of the clausal syntax of body parts in Ewe grammar. It is evident that body parts tend to be treated differently from other categories of relational terms such as spatial orientation and kin terms. Body parts could be assigned core grammatical roles distinct from their possessors in some constructions.

What is the motivation for body parts to be set apart from other relational nouns in their treatment in Ewe grammar? The suggestions that have been made concerning the syntax of body parts in universal grammar do not seem to be applicable to the Ewe situation. Hopper and Thompson (1985:167), for example, contend that body part nominals tend to be low in categoriality and they are treated in grammar and discourse as 'dependent, unindividuated entities' because they are 'physically undifferentiated from their "possessors"'. Body part nominals in Ewe are central members of the nominal class; they have all the formal properties of a prototypical noun. Furthermore, the Ewe data suggest that there are instances in the grammar where body parts are treated as individuated entities, independent of their possessors. It appears that for Ewe, Hopper and Thompson's explanation fits spatial orientation terms better

than body parts. Spatial relational terms are marginal nominals. Recall that they do not normally take any modifiers in the ‘inalienable’ nominal construction. Besides, they are physically undifferentiated from their possessors.

Similarly, the alienable nominal morphology of body parts in Ewe grammar does not seem to be ‘a reflection of the real-world fact that body parts are physically contiguous with their “possessors”’ (Fox 1981:323).

It seems that the treatment of body parts in the grammar is the result of the way the Ewes conceptualise them and their relationship with their possessors. Body parts are construed as entities with which their possessors can do things. To understand the body part phenomenon in Ewe one should perhaps pay attention to the fact that ‘language is not about scenes [i.e. real-world facts F.A.]; it is about how people see scenes’ (García 1975:300).

7.8 The non-arbitrary coding of possession in Ewe

By way of a general summary of the chapter, I want to demonstrate in this section that there is an iconic relationship between the nature of the linguistic structures that are used to code possession and the various meanings that they convey about the possessive relation in Ewe. A basic assumption of iconicity in syntax is that the linguistic distance between expressions in a construction is a reflection in some way of the conceptual distance between them (see e.g. Haiman 1985). This assumption has already been employed in labelling the nominal phrasal ‘alienable’ and ‘inalienable’ structures. This view can now be extended to all the nominal structures.

7.8.1 Hierarchies of possessive constructions

On the basis of the structural properties and the type of syntactic unit that the possessive structure as a whole forms, one can rank the nominal constructions along the following scale of linguistic distance. Note that different ‘minor’ constructions are subsumed under one of the structures listed, for instance, the possessed pronoun and the possessive article constructions are grouped together with the NP NP constructions:

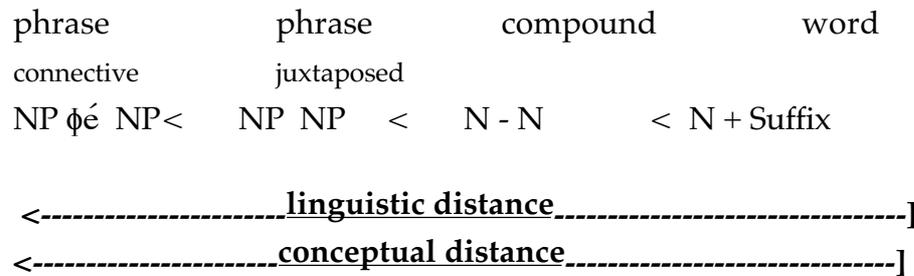


Fig 7.1 Hierarchy of nominal constructions

This hierarchy is self-explanatory: syntactic complexity implies increasing conceptual distance between the entities whose relationship is represented in the construction. This implies that one can view the relationship between the entities coded by means of N+ Suffix structures as an inherent and more permanent one than those coded by means of the possessive connective. This scale can be supported by the semantics of the constructions that have already been proposed (see Fig 7.3 below where the formulae are displayed along with the constructions in a unified scale).

Similarly the predicative constructions can also be ranked with respect to whether they code a stative possession, i.e. permanent/inherent relationship between the entities, or an acquired or temporary possession, which implies that the conceptual bond between the entities represented is less close than that involved in the stative ones. (For convenience, the predicative constructions hierarchy has been rotated from the horizontal to the vertical). It should be noted that the semantic representations postulated for these constructions support the arrangement of these structures along the scale (see Fig 7.3 below where the formulae are displayed along with the constructions in a unified scale).

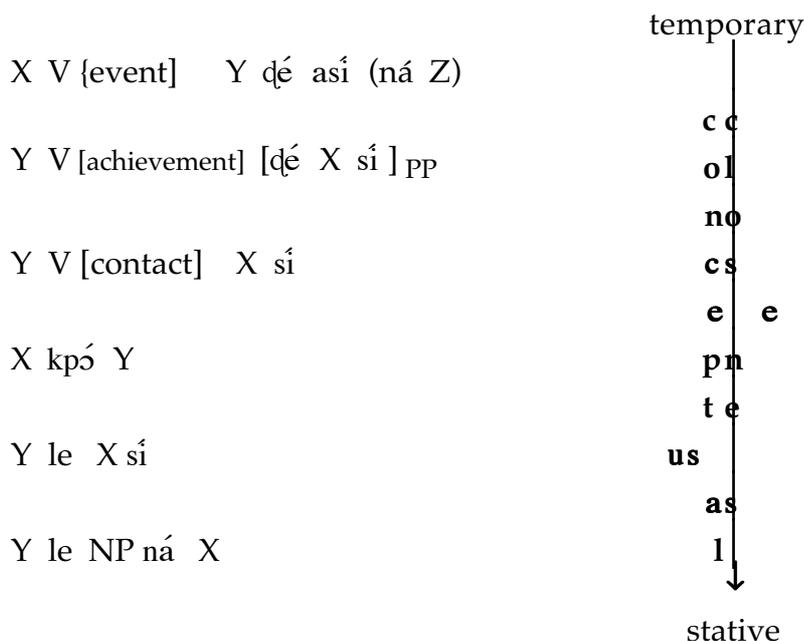


Fig 7. 2 Hierarchy of predicative constructions

To provide a holistic picture of the linguistic coding of the possession dimension in Ewe, the nominal and predicative constructions hierarchies can be combined to reflect their iconic coding. A useful way to do this is to use a circular diagram in which one-half is occupied by the nominal means of representing possession and the other half by the predicative constructions. At one end of the diameter is the feature inherent or permanent relationship, and as one moves along both sides of the circle the conceptual distance between the nominals involved in the relationship increases. Similarly the distinctiveness of the individual also increases.

These observations are supported when one examines the semantic explications proposed for the prototypes of the constructions. For instance along the nominal dimension, a comparison of the semantic prototypes associated with each construction shows that the conceptual bond between the possessor and the possessum is closest in the N + suffix structure and least in the NP poss NP construction. Although the N+suffix structures and the N-N compounds each designate only one entity, there are still differences in the conceptualisations that underly them. Note for instance that in the N+suffix constructions, both the possessor and the possessum evoke thoughts of each other, but in the compounds, especially the classificatory ones, it is N1 and N2 which are thought of as one thing, and it is N2 which evokes the thought of N1. The distinctiveness of the referents involved in the structures also increases as their alienability increases (see the Fig 7.3 below). This is in part evident from a

comparison of the first lines of the formulae especially those from the compounds onwards: Note that as we move from the point where the compounds are on the scale downwards, the wording of the first line of the formulae also changes from 'One can think of X and Y like this' to 'One can think of Y like this'. These components capture in part the increasing distinctness of the referents involved in the constructions.

Similarly, along the predicative constructions dimension, the close association of the nominals involved in the constructions is reflected in the structure of the formulae. For instance, for the stative constructions that make use of the locative existential verb, the location is conceptualised as being part of the sphere of the possessor but as we go down along the circle, the two entities are rather clearly separated

Various people have proposed hierarchies especially for nominal possessive constructions for specific languages (e.g. Mosel 1982:39 for Tolai) or with universal application (e.g. Seiler 1983; Haiman 1985; Nichols 1985; Chappell and McGregor 1989). But these have been linear scales. And those which included predicative constructions (e.g. Seiler 1983) tend to suggest that the predicative constructions code established, less inherent relationships. This view is not necessarily true. One can claim, at least for Ewe, that the stative constructions code permanent or inherent relationships in much the same way as the juxtaposed nominal construction does. It seems that a circular diagram as the one below helps to present a unified view of these constructions with respect to their semantics in a systematic way more than a linear diagram could capture.

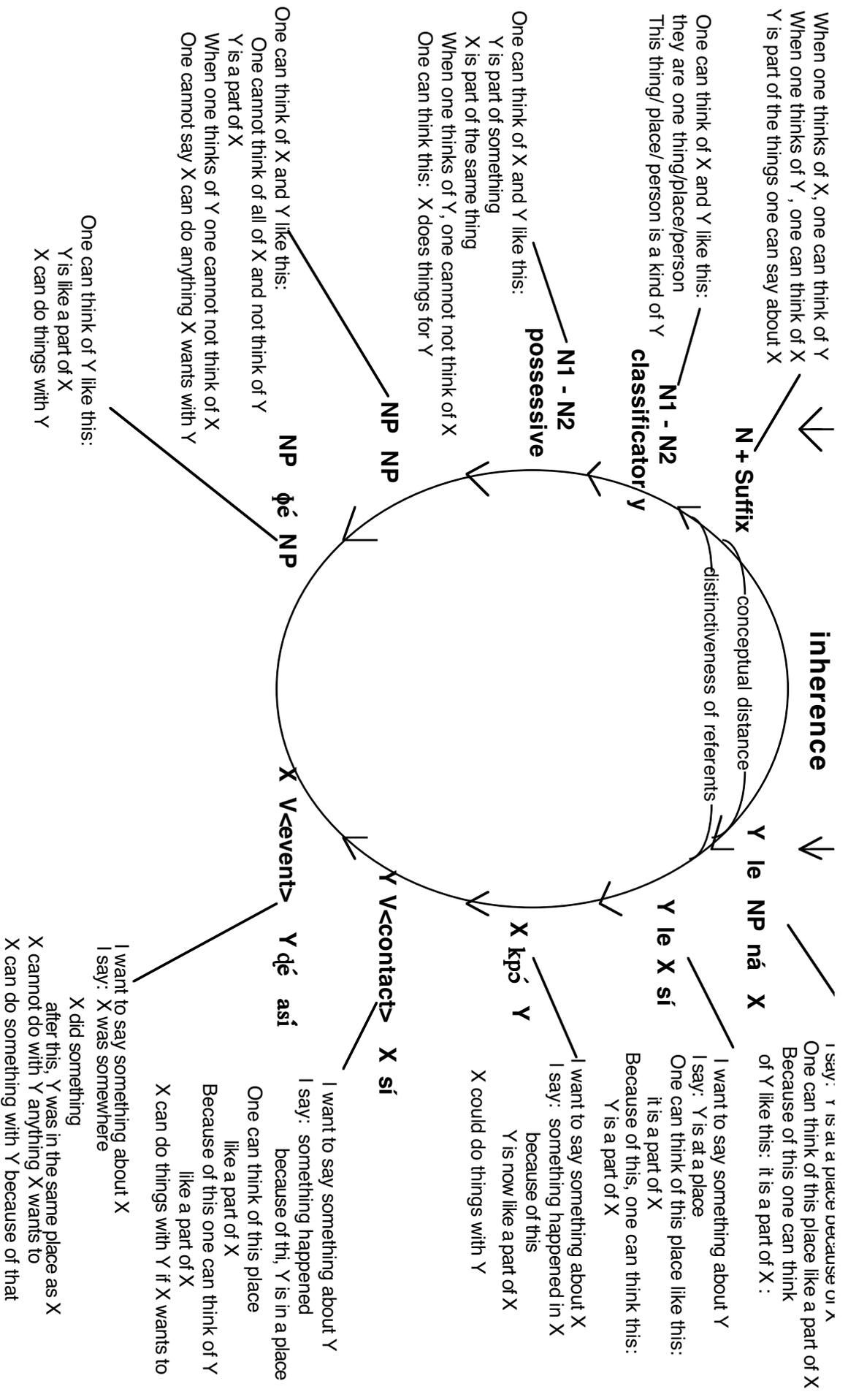


Fig 7.3 Summary of possessive constructions and their core meanings

7.8.2 Hierarchies of semantic classes of possessed nominals

What is probably harder to substantiate is an 'alienability' scale for the classes of possessed nominals. Not surprisingly, Claudi and Heine (1986:318) assert that one cannot define inalienability in terms of the semantic classes of nominals. However, Figure 7.4 below represents an attempt to capture the linguistic facts as well as the intuitive ideas related to the various categories of possessa.

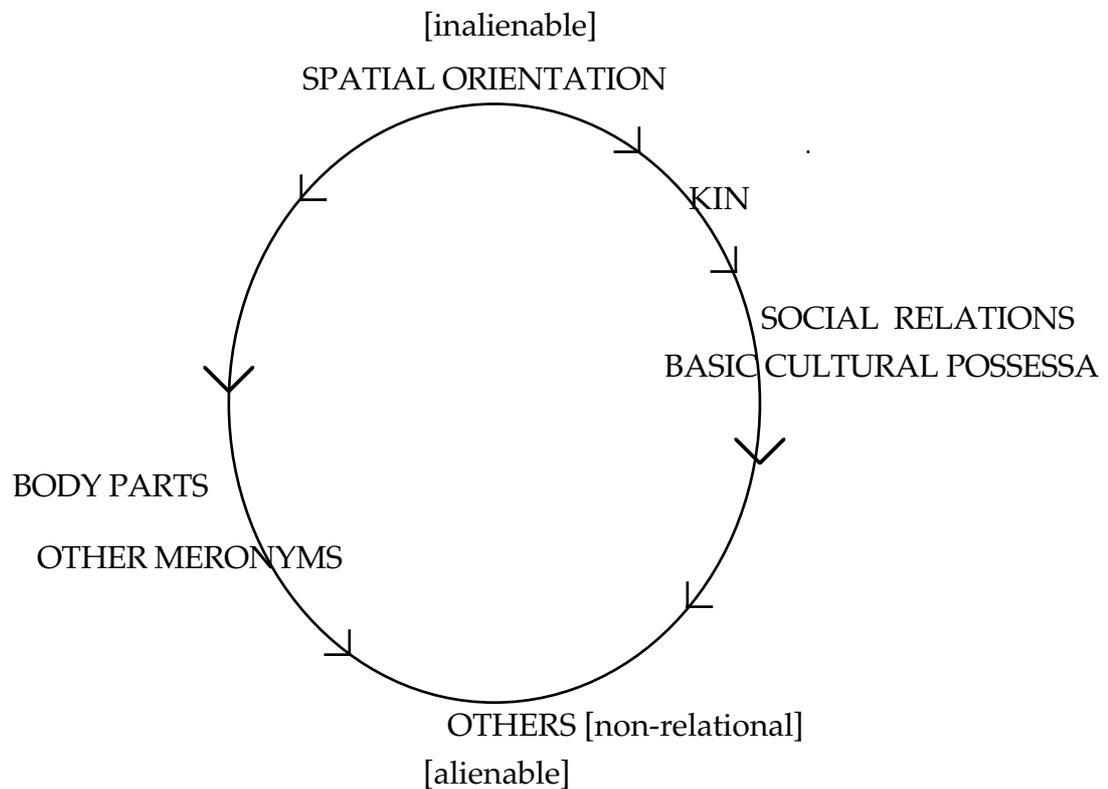


Fig 7.4 'alienability' of semantic classes of possessed items.

The Ewe linguistic facts discussed so far suggest that spatial orientation terms are the possessa that are most inherently associated with their possessors. Recall that these terms are not usually modified in the NP NP construction. It should also be remembered that their nominal compounds cannot be paraphrased as NP ϕ é NP constructions like other compounds involving other relational terms. In addition the spatial relational terms are constrained in the number of possessive predicative constructions in which they can occur more than the other relational categories. In fact, they can only occur as possessa in the 'Y le PRO ná X' constructions and no other predicative structure. It was also shown in §7.7.1.2 that the possessors of spatial relation terms cannot be promoted to oblique objects in possessor ascension constructions. Conceptually, it is clear that an entity, so to speak, wears its spatial orientations on its sleeves. The validity of this is borne out in Ewe by the fact that spatial

relation terms do not normally occur by themselves without an associated nominal.

Thus taking spatial relational terms as the most inalienable, i.e. the most inherently or permanently associated with their possessors, and as the starting point one can proceed clockwise or anticlockwise along the circle. In either direction, there is increasing alienability until one gets to the non-relational terms. Recall that among the relational nominals, the kin and socio-cultural terms typically occur in the juxtaposed nominal construction while body parts and other part/whole relations are coded using the possessive linker. One of the advantages of presenting the classes of nominals vis-à-vis alienability in this way is that it captures the intuitive, and linguistically valid, connections between spatial relational terms and body part terms. It should be remembered that most spatial relational terms developed historically from body part terms and are homophonous with them. A unidirectional implicational hierarchy such as Figure 7.5 cannot adequately depict this relationship.

SPATIAL > KIN > BASIC CULTURAL POSSESSA/ > BODY > OTHER > OTHERS
 RELATIONS SOCIAL RELATIONS PARTS MERONYMS

Fig. 7.5 A linear alienability hierarchy of nominals.

In the circular diagram (Fig. 7.4), body parts and spatial orientation terms are contiguous as it should be. But in the linear diagram they are separated by other categories as though there were no relation between them. Perhaps, typologists should explore the use of non-linear hierarchies in their endeavours to explain cross-linguistic variation. The circular diagram seems to be able to capture the definition of inalienability with respect to categories of possessa in Ewe without resort to metaphor.

7.9 Conclusion

The foregoing has been an attempt to present a comprehensive description of the linguistic mechanisms for the coding of possession in Ewe. Semantic explications have been proposed for each of the nominal and predicative constructions or sub-constructions. Semantic and diachronic explanations have been offered for the observed peculiarity of the alienable grammar of body parts in Ewe. Furthermore, it was argued that metaphor does not constitute an explanation of synchronic grammar, although its role in grammaticalisation is acknowledged. Perhaps, the moral that can be drawn from the debate about the metaphorical vs. the semantic bases of grammar is that grammatical behaviour can be explained from several perspectives: diachronic, (including metaphor); discourse-pragmatic; socio-cultural and above all semantic

viewpoints (cf. Jespersen 1964:345). It appears that these are not necessarily mutually exclusive, but complementary. Furthermore however, it appears that the most important and the one with the highest predictive power is the semantic one.

The foregoing study has also shown that possession is indeed a complex concept and by no means a homogenous domain. While the label as such may be delimited from a semantic functional point of view in terms of different kinds of relationships that may exist between two entities, it is evident from the analyses of constructions in this chapter that it is not a primitive. And it does seem 'adviseable not to operate with terms such as "possession" or "possessive" in general semantics, because such terms ... obscure more than they reveal' (Isačenko 1964:77). Perhaps for cross-linguistic studies one should explore the terms that have featured as 'building blocks' of this domain in this chapter, namely: PART, KIND, and PLACE (and their combinations with other terms such as THINK OF, and BECAUSE). This in a way confirms the views (i) that the domain of possession is made up of several types of relationships (or prototypes) and (ii) that possessive constructions are connected with other domains such as classification and location/existence.

PART III

INFORMATION PACKAGING DEVICES

OVERVIEW

This part is concerned with the devices for the organisation and presentation of the message that a speaker wants to present in a clause. The first chapter deals with the framing of background information through the use of discourse particles. The second chapter in this part investigates the function of inverse constructions. The last chapter is concerned with the conceptualisation that is associated with the grammatical relation that is given to an experiencer in a situation. Chapters 9 and 10 pertain to the grammatical constraints on information packaging while the strategy described in Chapter 8 seems to be constrained by discourse factors.

Chapter 8

SCENE-SETTING TOPIC CONSTRUCTIONS

8.1 Introduction

Part of the meaning of an utterance comes from the way in which the message being conveyed is structured. One of the tasks of the speaker is to package the information being conveyed in a manner that articulates what it is about and which part is most salient from the speaker's perspective in that particular communicative situation. A speaker should also indicate the status of information units with respect to grounding, i.e. what information should be assumed to be setting the scene for the rest of the utterance and what is the main or new information. In short, a speaker or writer can indicate what the topic and comment structure of his/her message is. Languages tend to have various phonological, syntactic and morpho-lexical devices for coding these speaker perspective meanings.

Ewe makes use of the ordering of constituents, or linearity, and particles to signal the information value of various units in a clause or sentence. Thus background information or scene-setting information is signalled by preposing the constituent or information unit to the clause and marking the preposed element with either the particle *la'* or *ɔe'*. These particles have been referred to as 'terminal' particles because they occur at the ends of phrases and clauses. I shall use this structural label in the discussion. An argument within a clause which is focussed is fronted and typically marked by the particle/clitic (y)e'. whereas a predication which is presented as focal is marked by the particle *ɔe'*. This chapter is concerned with these scene-setting constructions and they will be investigated through an examination of the particles *la'* and *ɔe'* that are used to mark them. The relationship between these particles and the focus marking particles will also be explored.

The chapter is organised as follows. Firstly an overview of the particles and the previous analyses of these items that have been provided in the literature are presented. The analysis that is argued for in this chapter is then outlined. In the subsequent sections, a detailed analysis of the *la'* and *ɔe'* particles and the various environments in which they occur is presented. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the cross-linguistic analogues of these Ewe particles.

8.2 The 'terminal' particles: *la'* and *ɔe'*

8.2.1 An overview

It is assumed in this study that there are three *la'* heterosemic forms: a definite article as in [1a], a nominaliser as in [1b], and a 'terminal' particle as the

examples in [2] illustrate¹. Following Persson (1980) I use the term heterosemy to refer to a situation where two or more functions/meanings in a simple language are derived from the same source, but belong to different morphosyntactic categories (see also Lichtenberk 1991). Two *ɬe'* particles are also recognised: an utterance-medial or 'terminal' particle as exemplified in [3] and an utterance-final particle that has a question function as in [4a], or an addressive function as in [4b].

[1a] *nyɔ́nu la' va'*
 womanDEF come
 'The woman came'

[1b] i. *ade- la'* [Noun --> Noun]
 game NZR
 'hunter'

[1b] ii *dzi- la'* [Verb --> Noun]
 bear a child NZR
 'parent'

[1b] iii *yi- a* [Adjective --> Noun]
 white NZR
 'the white one'

The 'terminal' *la'* particle has a wide distribution. It occurs at the end of preposed adverbial and nominal phrases as shown in [2a] and [2b] respectively.

[2a] *dzɔgbenyuitɔe la', wo' fɔ ga la'*
 fortunately TP 3PL find money DEF
 'Fortunately, the money was found.'

[2b] *ɬevi- a- wo' la,ŋutsu ma' φo wo'*
 child DEF PL TP man DEMbeat 3PL
 'The children, that man beat them.'

¹ The conditions of alternation between *la'* and *a'* are not clear. This applies to the three forms. In some contexts, they are in free variation, in others they seem to be morphologically conditioned. In plural NPs *a'* is always used to indicate definiteness. Similarly, adjectives are always nominalised by *a'*. It appears that *la'* is preferred at the end of embedded clauses. Apart from these contexts, the two forms seem to be in free variation. More work is needed to establish conclusively the conditioning factor of their alternation.

la' also occurs at the end of various kinds of initial dependent clauses, for example conditionals as in [2c], and at the end of embedded relative clauses as in [2d]:

[2c] ne'tsi dza nyuiela'nu'ɕuɕu a - bɔ'.
 if water fall well TP food FUT abound
 'If it rains well, there will be enough food.'

[2d] ga si ne[̀] ɕo' ɕe[̀] m la'
 money REL 2SG send to 1SG TP
 va' ka' asi[̀] nye.
 come touch hand 1SG
 'The money which you sent got to me.'

In addition, la' also marks off some connectors as shown in [2e].

[2e] e[̀]ne[̀]ge[̀] la'miá- ɕo nu le e[̀] ɲu'.
 afterwards TP 1PL beat mouth at 3SG side
 'Afterwards, we shall talk about it.'

The distribution of the utterance-medial ɕe' parallels that of la'. It thus occurs at the end of preposed nominal and adverbial phrases as in [3a] and [3b] respectively, and at the end of preposed dependent clauses and embedded relative clauses². (See examples [3c] and [3d] below).

[3a] nya ga[̀]ɕe' akple ga[̀] e' wo[̀] nye'
 word big TP dumpling big aFOC 3SG be
 ɕevi 'ka'na[̀] a?
 child cut HAB Q
 'An important case, is it a big dumpling that a child can handle?'
 (Dogoe 1964:18)

[3b] le ɲɔ me ɕe' nuka wɔ ge' ne[̀] le?
 at afternoon in TP whatdo INGR 2SG be
 'In the afternoon, what are you going to do?'

² This ɕe' particle should be distinguished from a mid tone form ɕe[̀] which occurs in some dialects and is isofunctional with la'. The description of ɕe[̀] falls outside the scope of this chapter.

- [3c] eʃi nè de lome ɖé, è kpɔ́ nu- sia- nu'
 when 2SG go Lome TP 2SG see thing every thing
 si nè dí' la-a?
 REL 2SG seek TP Q
 'When you went to Lome, did you get everything you wanted?'

- [3d] ɖevi' si ɸu'du va' yi ɖé,
 child REL run race come go TP
 ameka vi- e' wò nye?
 who child aFOC 3SG be
 'The child who ran past, whose child is it?'

The particle also occurs with some connectors as shown in [3e].

- [3e] ... gake' ɖé, wò nɔnɔme haɲyo- a`?
 but TP 2SG character too good Q
 '... But is your character good as well?'

When the final main clause is elided, the high tone of ɖe' becomes a falling tone at the end of the dependent clause as in [3f].

- [3f] ne'vu- a' va' yi xo'xo' ɖe`...?
 if vehicle DEF come go already TP
 'If the car has passed already ...?'

Another ɖe' form occurs at the end of utterances consisting of phrases, conjunctives or declaratives to mark them as questions as shown in [4] below:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|
| [4a] kofi' ɖe? | [4b] e'negbe' ɖe? |
| K. Q | afterwards Q |
| 'Where is/ How is/ What about Kofi?' | 'Afterwards, what?' |

- [4c] le ɲɔ me ɖe?
 at afternoon in Q
 'How about in the afternoon?'

- [4d] e- me kɔ ɖe?
 3SG in clear Q
 'Is it clear?' / 'It is clear, isn't it?'

ɔɛ' may also be used on imperatives or exclamatives to mitigate their illocutionary force. This use is exemplified in [5a] and [5b].

[5a] va' faã̃ ɔɛ!	[5b] ao ɔɛ!
come freely ADD	no ADD
'Feel free to come!'	'No!'

As noted earlier the focus of this chapter is on the la' and ɔɛ' terminal particles whose structural properties have been described quite extensively with various degrees of accuracy in the literature. (See also Ameka (1986:125-140; 197-200) for an analysis of the utterance-final ɔɛ' particle).

8.2.2 Previous analyses

Westermann (1930:66) considers each occurrence of la' as an instance of the definite article. This analysis may have some appeal from a historical perspective.³ At least, it attempts to relate the forms to one source. However, it does not seem to represent the facts of the synchronic grammar. For, if all the occurrences of la' are instances of the definite article, it is not clear why adverbials, conjunctions or dependent and embedded clauses should be terminally marked for definiteness. Furthermore, it would seem redundant for items that are inherently definite - proper names, pronouns and defining relative clauses which can be marked with la' - to be marked again for definiteness. It appears that in these cases we are dealing with a function other than definiteness.

Other descriptions lack any clear articulation of the function of the terminal particles.

Ansre (1966:242) is not sure of the exact function of la'. He however, distinguishes it from the definite article. His comment about the form is found in a footnote which reads:

³ Heine and Reh (1984:64-5, 109) were probably inspired by Westermann's analysis in their account of the evolution of la'. They suggest that "the definite marker la' underwent Expansion and developed into a marker of sentence theme [i.e. terminal particle F. A.]" They explain in a footnote that "[T]his development was probably due to the fact that since thematic constituents are likely to be definite, la' became an obligatory marker of the sentence theme" (ibid: 64 fn3). One problem with this viewpoint is that it assumes that thematic elements tend to be definite. There is a wealth of evidence now to show that definiteness is neither necessary nor sufficient for topicality. It appears that definiteness is a small part of identifiability or referentiality. Definiteness markers tend to develop from referential elements. I take the view that the definite marker in Ewe developed from the background information marking function of the terminal particle. The nominaliser then developed from the definite article.

The exact function of this terminal particle is still under investigation. It can however be said that it usually occurs at the end of bound clauses and of some nominal and adverbial groups ... The formal exponent of this part[icle] should not be confused with the homophonous item from the word class sp[ecifier] [i.e. definite article F.A.] (Ansre 1966:242)

Clements (1972:126) describes la' as a 'sentence medial pause marker'. Both authors are silent on de'.

Warburton et. al. (1968:97;100) comment that it is a general characteristic of Ewe for initial dependent clauses to end in these particles and thus they are subordinate clause markers. Similarly, Dzameshie (1983:77) observes that "the CFM (clause final marker, i.e. terminal particle F.A.) la [sic] functions as a clause-boundary marker signalling the end of a subordinate clause." These authors neglect to relate the 'clause final marker' to the 'phrase final marker'.

It is generally acknowledged (eg. Clements *ibid*; Dzameshie *ibid*) that there may or may not be a pause after the particle. It does not seem appropriate therefore to ascribe a pause marking function to it. Besides, it would appear that even if it marks a pause, this pause must be used to achieve a communicative effect and this has to be described.

Duthie (1988, *in press*) has attempted a functional explanation for the particles. He suggests that there are two sets of forms: phrase topic markers la' and de' as in examples [2a], [2b], and [3b] respectively, and clause terminal particles as in [2c] and [2d] and [3c] and [3d]. He also notes that the clause terminal particles mark the end of information units in discourse (Duthie 1984:72). Needless to say, such a role is implicit in the topic marking function assigned to the phrase particles. This analysis is incomplete, I think, in at least two respects. First, it does not account for the use of the forms with connectives. Second, it fails to relate the two sets of particles in terms of discourse functions because it is only the phrase particles which have been assigned a discourse function. The clause terminal particles have not been explicitly given any discourse function. It will be desirable if they were also assigned some discourse function. Above all, it will be desirable if a unitary function could be found for both the phrasal and clausal particles in accordance with the parsimony principle (i.e. Ockham's razor).

8.2.3 Towards a unified account of the terminal particles

It is apparent that earlier authors have not attempted to elucidate the unity that underlies the seemingly diverse structures that the particles la' and de' occur with. It is desirable to provide a unitary analysis for these markers. I believe that '[A] unitary analysis, whether or not it reflects the organization of

knowledge in the brains of individual language users, reveals a generalisation captured by the grammar of the language (and thus reflects a kind of group psychological reality)' (Gasser 1985:60). It is the contention in this chapter that (i) the terminal particles have a unitary function in Ewe discourse and (ii) that the structures that they occur with form a unified functional class: a set of items that set the scene or provide a frame for the interpretation of the rest of the sentence or clause.

The main claim of this chapter is that the terminal particles in Ewe -whether phrasal or clausal - mark a piece of discourse as forming the conceptual background to the rest, or part of the rest, of an utterance or discourse. Although the two particles have a similar function they carry it out with slightly different implications. The contrast between the two particles in terms of their orienting function in discourse can be stated as follows: *la'* marks a unit of discourse as the domain of referentiality within which the rest of the utterance should be understood or about which the rest of the utterance provides, or requests information or directs an addressee to act. *de'*, on the other hand, marks a piece of discourse as that part of the universe (of discourse) within which or about which a speaker requests some information. In the subsequent sections, this claim is elaborated upon through an examination of the semantics of the particles and the features of the constituents with which they occur.

8.3 The analysis

From the overview of the particles in §8.2.1 their distribution can be summarised as follows: firstly, they occur with dependent clauses, nominal and adverbial phrases as well as connectives which are preposed to main clauses, and secondly, they are tagged on to embedded relative clauses which are postposed to the nominal heads.

I want to claim that these constructions marked by *la'* and *de'* typically carry information that a speaker wants an addressee to assume in order for him/her to process the rest of the discourse more easily. Consequently, the particles function as guideposts and mark the relevant piece of information as the conceptual basis of the rest of the utterance. The fact that the elements in the first category occur preposed to the main clause to which they are related is instructive. Available psycholinguistic evidence suggests that the linear ordering of constituents in a sentence tends to be influenced by and follows the cognitive principle of presenting assumed or presupposed information before the main or focal information (see Townsend and Bever (1977) and Allan (1986:81ff), Siewierska 1987 among others).

The background status of relative clauses is even more evident. The principal function of a relative clause is to provide elaborative information that will enable the addressee to uniquely identify the nominal head. Thus in example [3d] ‘who ran past’ is extra information added to help the addressee identify the particular boy being talked about. Schachter (1973) has argued convincingly, in my view, that in a nominal head plus relative clause construction the nominal head is the foreground, i.e. the salient piece of information, while the relative clause is the background.

It may be concluded therefore that the invariant function of the terminal particles is to mark background information. This claim is supported below with different pieces of evidence. The key points which apply *mutatis mutandis* to both particles are first discussed with respect to *la'*. Then the two particles are compared in the section on *ɔe'*.

8.3.1 The background information marker *la'*

8.3.1.1 *la'* and initial constituents.

There are exceptions to the statement that the terminal particles mark initial nominal and adverbial phrases, dependent clauses and connectives. Content question phrases marked by *ka* ‘WH’ and *ne'ne* ‘how many/much’, preposed vocative nominals and assertive attitudinal adverbials never occur with these particles. The nature and communicative import of these constituents furnish excellent clues to an understanding of the function and meaning of the terminal particles and their relevance to the argument will be discussed at the appropriate places.

8.3.1.1.1 *la'* vs. the focus markers

Content question phrases usually denote unknown information from the speaker’s point of view. They constitute the most salient piece of information that the speaker wants the addressee to attend to. Because of this and because they are topical in the sense of what the utterance they occur in is about, they are usually clause initial. Not surprisingly, in Ewe clause initial constituent question phrases are obligatorily marked by the focus particle *-e'*. Consider the examples in [6]:

[6a] ame- ka- e' /**la'* va?
 person WH aFOC TP come
 ‘Who came?’

[6b] kofi- e' /**la'* (va).
 K. aFOC TP come
 ‘It was Kofi (who came).’

[6c] ?? kofi' la,de` wo` va'
 K TP pFOC 3SG come
 'Kofi, he did come.'

Observe that la' is ungrammatical when it occurs with the question words [6a] as well as in the answer [6b]. The answer represents the most important piece of information for both the speaker and the addressee. [6c] is infelicitous as a response to [6a]. It is acceptable as an answer to a question like 'What did Kofi do?' in [7a]. It should be noted that in such a question, the focus is on the event performed, and as should be expected the predicate is marked with the verbal focus marker de`. In this case 'Kofi' becomes a frame of reference for the answer required. It is noteworthy that in this context the 'Kofi NP' cannot be focus marked, and it can be omitted altogether in the answer. Thus [7b] is an appropriate answer to [7a] but [7c] is not.

[7a] nuka- e' kofi' wo?
 What aFOCK. do
 'What did Kofi do?'

[7b] kofi' la' de` wo` si'
 K.TP pFOC 3SG escape
 'Kofi, he escaped.'

[7c] ?? kofi' e, de` wo` si'
 K. aFOC pFOC 3SG escape

It can be deduced from the discussion so far that la' marks a constituent as the domain within which the rest of the predication should be interpreted. e' and de` by contrast mark the most salient piece of information in a predication.

There is a further difference between la' and -e' marked phrases which is instructive for their respective functions. A comparison of [6b] and [6c] reveals the following observation, (assuming for the present purposes that they are both acceptable in appropriate contexts): The e' marked phrase in [6b] bears a grammatical as well as a semantic relation to the nucleus of the predication, the verb. It is the subject and the agent of the predicate. The la' marked phrase in [6c], on the other hand, has no such semantic or grammatical relation with the verb. In [6c] the subject and the agent of the verb is represented by the pronoun wo`. Notice that si' 'escape' is a one place predicate, hence the acceptability of [7b]. The la' marked phrase is not a subcategorised argument of the verb. It is peripheral to it.

Although the *la'* phrase is semantically and grammatically unrelated to the main predication, it nevertheless bears a discourse-pragmatic relation to it. They are contextually bound. This is borne out by the anaphoric pronoun in the main predication which is coreferential with 'Kofi' in the *la'* marked phrase. Notice that there is no such explicit linguistic relation between the *la'* marked phrase and the main predication unless the former is coreferential with a core argument of the latter. Thus preposed temporal and locative NPs, and APs which occur with *la'* may not have any resumptive/anaphoric pronouns coreferential with them in the main predication (cf. example [2a])

The difference between *la'* and *e'* and for that matter between scene-setting topic structures and focus constructions can be further shown with equational sentences. Example [8a] is a sentence in which *xexéáme* 'the world' is equated with *agbeli* 'cassava'. In this sentence, a comparison is being made. The topic of the comparison is 'the world' and the standard against which it is being compared is 'cassava'. It is significant that [8b] is acceptable as another way of expressing [8a] while [8c] is not. Note that in [8b] the world (the topic of the comparison) is marked with *la'* while cassava (the standard of the comparison) is focus marked. When these particles are reversed for either constituent, the resulting sentence as in [8c] is infelicitous. Contrast this with the acceptability of the focus particle on 'cassava' in [8d].

[8a] *xexé- a' me nye' agbeli.*
 world DEF in becassava
 'The world is (like) cassava.'

[8b] *xexé- a' me la' agbeli- e' (wo` nye).*
 world DEF in TP cassava aFOC 3SG be
 'The world, it is cassava (that it is).'

[8c] **agbeli la',xexé- a' me- e' (wo` nye)*
 cassava TP world DEF in aFOC 3SG be

[8d] *agbeli- e' xexé- a' me nye.*
 cassava aFOC world DEF in be
 'Cassava is what the world is (like).'

These examples are suggestive and provide support for the contention that *la'* marks conceptual background information, that is information which an utterance is about and which has to be kept in mind in order to process the rest

of the information, while e' marks the focus - the most salient piece of information in the utterance.

Another point worthy of note is that a la' - marked constituent always precedes a focus - marked one if they both pertain to the same clause (see [7b] and [8b] above). In addition it should be observed that the la' - marked constituents are somehow external to but dependent on the clause. That is, if they are omitted one could still get a meaningful utterance .

In sum, la' marks initial constituents which are contextually bound to the following predication. I believe the significance of la' in this context is that it cues the addressee to observe that the preceding information should be kept in mind when processing the message. I propose the following semantic representation for the use of the particle in this context:

X la' Y (X = NP, AP or a dependent clause; and Y = main predication)

I am thinking about X

I want you to think about X

I want to say something about X

I want you to know that I say this about X

I think you now know this

I say: Y

The first person format used in the formula is meant to reflect the idea that it is the speaker who presents the information as background to what he is saying. It may not necessarily be judged as background from the addressee's point of view. The adequacy of this formula can be verified by substituting it for la' in [7b], for example:

I am thinking about Kofi

I want you to think about Kofi

I want to say something about Kofi

I want you to know that I say this about Kofi

I think you now know this

I say: he escaped

There are other pieces of evidence which support this analysis. These will be pointed out in the ensuing discussion of the features and properties of the preposed NPs, APs and dependent clauses.

8.3.1.1.2 la' and preposed NPs

Not every NP which is preposed to a clause and which could be analysed as being peripheral to the clause is marked by *la'*. Nominals preposed to the main predication which are used vocatively do not take the terminal particle, as illustrated in [9].

- [9] *vi' nye (*la'), xe'xe' a' me tro' fifia'.*
 child 1SG TP world DEF in change now
 'My child, the world has changed now.'

Vocatives are used by speakers to get the attention of their addressees. They are independent, in a sense, of the information that follows. Note that there is no need for an anaphoric pronoun to occur in the clause to relate the preposed vocative NP to the main clause. Vocatives cannot be said to constitute a setting for the rest of the utterance. Because of this, they are not marked by the terminal particles. This confirms the view that the terminal particles mark background information in a clause. It is instructive in this connection to note that Moutaouakil (1989) proposes a pragmatic function of 'Vocative' as distinct from Theme and Topic or Tail in Dik's Functional Grammar. He defines it as 'the function associated with a constituent referring to the entity addressed in a given discourse context' (Moutaouakil 1989:140). It should be noted that Themes are defined in FG as the constituent that specifies the universe of discourse with respect to which the subsequent predication is presented as relevant (Dik 1978:19). This definition fits the characterisation that has been offered so far for the terminal particles. Thus the Ewe facts about vocatives not being marked by *la'* would seem to provide evidence from another language for a distinction to be drawn between Theme and Vocative as separate pragmatic functions.

As suggested earlier, when NPs are preposed to the clause, they may be referred to in the clause with an anaphoric pronoun. Thus the preposed NP may be coreferential with an argument of the clause. There are two possibilities: First, the clause may contain an anaphoric pronoun which is bound by the preposed NP. This occurs if the preposed NP is coreferential with either the Subject, or Object1, or Object2, or an Oblique Object, e.g. an instrumental, a Possessor or a Possessee.

Thus in example [10] below, the first sentence [10a] is a simple sentence with the order of elements unmarked; while [10b] and [10c] are instances in which the preposed NP marked by *la'* is coreferential with the Subject. The difference between [10b] and [10c] is that in the former the Object is focus - marked while in the latter the predicate is the focus. Similarly, when the preposed NP is coreferential with the Object as in [11a] and [11b], the focus can be on the

Subject as in [11a] or the predicate as in [11b]. It should be stated however that in all these cases the focus could be unmarked. Observe also that the focussed constituent comes after the la'marked phrase.

- [10a] a'ama ϕ le ak α du' ma' wo'.
 A. buy banana DEMPL
 'Ama bought those bananas.'

PREPOSED NP coreferential with SUBJECT

- [10b] a'ama la',ak α du' ma' wo' (e) *(wo)- ϕ le.
 A. TP banana DEMPL aFOC 3SG buy
 'Ama, it was those bananas that she bought.'

- [10c] a'ama la', ϕ e' - *(wo)- ϕ le ak α du' ma' wo'.
 A. TP pFOC 3SG buy banana DEMPL
 'Ama, she did buy those bananas.'

PREPOSED NP is coreferential with OBJECT

- [11a] ak α du' ma' wo' la', a'ama - (e) ϕ le *(wo).
 banana DEMPL TP A. aFOC buy 3PL
 'Those, bananas, it was Ama who bought them.'

- [11b] ak α du' ma' wo' la', a'ama ϕ e wo' ϕ le *(wo).
 banana DEMPL TP A. pFOC 3SG buy 3PL
 'Those bananas, Ama did buy them.'

These examples are unacceptable if there is no anaphoric pronoun in the rest of the clause that is coreferential with the preposed NP. This is a piece of evidence to show that there is a relationship between the la'marked preposed NP and the remainder of the sentence.

In the following sets of examples the first one [12a] is a simple sentence without a preposed la'marked phrase. The other sentences illustrate how the preposed NP can be coreferential with arguments in the clause that have different grammatical relations and semantic roles. Thus in [12b] the preposed NP is coreferential with an Oblique instrumental NP Object. In [13b] and [13c] the preposed NP is coreferential with a POSSESSOR NP and a POSSESSED NP respectively:

- [12a] wo' dze- na nake kpli' fia'.
 3PL split HAB firewood with axe

'Firewood is split with an axe.'

PREPOSED NP coreferential with Oblique Instrumental Object

[12b] fia la' nake- (e) wo' dze- na kpli- *(i).
 axe TP firewood aFOC 3PL split HAB with 3SG
 'Axe, it is firewood that is split with it.'

[13a] a'na dzra'- a' kofi' fe' agble- me- nu ku'- wo'.
 A. sell HAB K. poss farm in seed PL
 'Ama sells Kofi's farm products.'

PREPOSED NP coreferential with POSSESSOR

[13b] kofi' la' a'na- e' dzra'- a'.
 K. TP A. aFOC sell HAB
 *(e) fe' agble-me-nu ku'- wo'.
 3SG poss farm-in-seed-PL
 'Kofi, it is Ama who sells his farm products.'

PREPOSED NP coreferential with POSSESSUM

[13c] agble-me-nu ku'- wo' la', kofi' to- e' a'na dzra'- na'.
 farm-in-seed-PL TP K. POSSPRO aFOC A sell HAB
 'Farm products, it is Kofi's that Ama sells.'

Preposed NPs marked with la' may also be coreferential with an argument of embedded relative and complement clauses. Thus the Subject of the relative clause in [14a] is coreferential with the preposed NP in [14b]. Similarly, preposed NPs in [15b] and [15c] are coreferential to the Subject and Object respectively of the complement clause.

[14a] ŋko' siá` ŋko' si eue- a' wo' tso' na' la',
 name every name REL Ewe DEF PL take HAB TP
 go me-se-se afe' no- a e'-si' ko-ko-ko.
 meaning INDEF be:NPRES HAB 3SG hand by all means
 'Every name that the Ewes take has some meaning by all means'

PREPOSED NP coreferential with Subject of relative clause

- [14b] eʋe- a' wo' la', ŋkɔ' siá` ŋkɔ' si *(wo)-tsɔ' na' la',
 Ewe DEF PL TP name every name REL 3PL take HAB TP
 ɔme - sese aɕe' nɔ- a e' si' ko-ko-ko
 meaning INDEF be:NPRES HAB 3SG handby all means
 'The Ewes, every name that they take has some meaning.'

- [15a] me- bu be' kofi' a- de a'na.
 1SG think COMP K.FUT marry A.
 'I think that Kofi will marry Ama.'

PREPOSED NP coreferential with Subject of complement clause

- [15b] kofi la', me- bu be' a'na- (e) *(wo)- a- de.
 K.TP 1SG think COMP A aFOC 3SG FUT marry
 'Kofi, I think it is Ama that he will marry.'

PREPOSED NP is coreferential with Object of complement clause

- [15c] ama la', me- bu be' kofi' e' a- de- *(e').
 A.TP 1SG think COMP K.aFOC FUT marry 3SG
 'Ama, I think it is Kofi who will marry her.'

In all these cases it can be claimed that the presence of an anaphoric pronoun in the rest of the clause to refer back to the preposed NP is functional in two respects, firstly, it facilitates processing and comprehension. Secondly, it signals or reinforces the relationship that exists between the preposed NP and the rest of the clause.

There are cases where the relationship is not so overtly marked. This is the second possibility. This occurs when temporal and locative phrases are preposed to the clause. In this case there may not be any pronoun in the rest of the clause anaphoric to the preposed NP which is marked by *la'*. It could be argued that there is no such pronoun because the locative and temporal NPs are not core or obligatory arguments of the predicate in the main clause. Furthermore, by their semantics, these NPs provide a spatio-temporal framework for the interpretation of the rest of the sentence and therefore are easier to process and their relationship to the rest of the clause is more transparent. Consider the following examples. In [16] there is no pronoun that refers back to the preposed NP, but the rest of the sentence is about it. In such instances it is usual for the thing talked about to have been mentioned previously in the discourse and its preposing in this context is meant to activate the thought of the speaker about it before something more is said about it.

But note also that it is a locative NP. The interpretation of the sentence is that there is a beautiful waterfall at *Uli*.

- [16] *uli la' tsi - tsa - tsa la' nya' kpɔ' na ŋutɔ'.*
uliTP water flow flow DEF INV see HAB much
 'Uli, the waterfall is beautiful to look at.'

Similarly, when a temporal NP is preposed as in [17] below, there is no anaphoric pronoun in the rest of the clause that refers back to it. In this feature these NPs are like preposed APs, discussed in the next section, which do not also require an anaphoric pronoun in the rest of the clause.

- [17] *e'ge la'tsi dza.*
today TP water fall
 'Today, it rained.'

I suggest that this relationship between the preposed NP and the rest of the clause is an important one and that *la'* is used to give a signal to the addressee to expect that there is such a relationship. It is thus a feature of the semantic content of the particle. In particular, a speaker uses *la'* to ensure that the addressee understands the relationship between what has been said first and what is to follow. Hence one of the components of the *la'* particle when it marks preposed initial constituents can be roughly formulated as 'I want you to know that I say this about X' (see the explication in §8.3.1.1).

It should be noted that although all the examples so far have involved lexical NPs, the preposed NP can also be a pronoun as in [18]. Therefore it is not consistent to analyse the *la'* particle on preposed constituents as a definiteness marker.

- [18] *nye la' e'ɔia -ta - e' wo' - dzi - m ɔɔ'.*
1SG TP this because aFOC 3PL bear 1SG at
 'As for me, this is why I was born.'

Similarly, although all the examples so far have involved NPs that can be interpreted as definite, the preposed *la'* marked NP can also be indefinite as in [19]. In this case, the NP is specific and is assumed to be identifiable by the addressee although it is marked for indefiniteness.

- [19] *agbledela' aɔe' ya la',te- e' *(wo)- dzra' na'áma.*
farmer INDEF INT TP yam aFOC 3SG buy to A.

'As for a certain farmer, it was yams that he sold to Ama.'

8.3.1.1.3 *la'* and preposed APs

la' has the same meaning and function when it marks preposed adverbial phrase as when it occurs at the end of initial NPs as discussed in the preceding section. Adverbials that denote time as in [20]; manner, as in [21]; and location as in [22] tend to be preposed and to occur very naturally with *la'*. This is quite predictable from the fact that the function of *la'* is to mark an item that sets the spatio-temporal framework within which an utterance is understood. In the following pairs of sentences, the first shows the adverbial occurring in its unmarked postverbal position in the clause, and in the second the adverbial phrase is preposed to the clause and marked with *la'*. For ease of identification the adverbials are underlined in the first member of each pair.

[20a] kofi' me-́ ɖu na'neke' le ɲdi' me o
 K.NEG eat nothing at morning in NEG
 'Kofi did not eat anything in the morning.'

[20b] le ɲdi' me la',kofi' me-́ ɖu na'neke' o
 at morning in TP K.NEG eat nothing NEG
 'In the morning, Kofi did not eat anything.'

[21a] nyɔ́nu la' wu da la' kalé tɛ.
 womanDEF kill snake DEF courage- AdvER
 'The woman killed the snake courageously.'

[21b] kalé tɛ la',nyɔ́nu la' wu da la'.
 courage- AdvER TP womanDEF kill snake DEF
 'Courageously, the woman killed the snake.'

[22a] ame ba-ba bo' ɲufo' le du sia me.
 person cheat aboundmuch at town DEMin
 'Cheating is very common in this town.'

[22b] le du sia me la',ame ba-ba bo' ɲufo'
 at town DEMin TP person cheat abound much
 'In this town, there is much cheating.'

It can be seen from the examples that the preposed APs are not coreferential with another element in the rest of the clause as is the case with some NPs. The

linguistic reflex of this is that there are no anaphoric elements in the rest of the clause for the preposed adverbial as is the case for some preposed nominals.

However, not every AP can be preposed to a clause and marked with *la'*. Those APs which do not semantically relate to orienting or setting the scene or the spatio-temporal framework of the clause do not normally occur preposed to the clause. This is consistent with the analysis of the function and meaning of *la'* when it occurs on initial constituents which has been presented. It has been argued that at the end of preposed APs and NPs *la'* has the function of marking them as representing the conceptual domain within which the rest of the utterance should be construed. Hence if the semantics of an AP is not compatible with this function it may not occur with *la'*. This would seem to explain the oddity of [23b] and [24b] below:

[23a] *kofi' yi de' kpando.*
 K. go to Kpando
 'Kofi has gone to Kpando.'

[23b] ?? *de' kpando la' kofi' yi.*
 to Kpando TP K. go
 'To Kpando Kofi went'

In a description of motion to a place, the most natural thing that can form a background is the object or entity that is moving. The goal of the motion is invariably the most salient part of the description. In other words the goal of a motion such as Kpando in [23] is the most inaccessible information to an addressee. It is less likely therefore to be identified as the thing which a speaker wants to talk about. I suggest that if this adverbial phrase is preposed to the clause, it distorts the natural flow of the information being conveyed and this explains the oddity of [23b]. A similar reason is responsible for the oddity of [24b].

[24a] *ɲɔʃsu ma' kɔ'abe' afɔ ade' ene'.*
 man DEM tall as foot six as
 'That man is about six feet tall.'

[24b] **abe' afɔ ade' ene' la' ɲɔʃsu ma' kɔ.*
 as foot six as TP man DEM tall
 'About six feet that man is tall.'

The adverbial phrase in [24b] is a measure one. It is a standard against which something else is being compared. It seems that it is more difficult to think about a measure first before thinking about what is being measured. The sentences in examples [25a] and [25b] below provide evidence that this unacceptability has nothing to do with the structural properties of the construction. It should be noted that the adverbials in [25a] and [25b] denote a manner in which something is done. It has already been argued that manner adverbials are felicitous as frames within which the rest of an utterance can be interpreted (see [21b] above). It is therefore apparent that [24b] is unacceptable for a semantic or discourse reason.

[25a] ɖe'vi' sia ɖu- a nu' abe' baba ene'.
 child DEMeat HAB thing as termite as
 'This child eats like a termite.'

[25b] abe' baba ene' la' ɖe'vi' sia ɖu- a nu'
 as termite as TP child DEMeat HAB thing
 'You know the way a termite eats, that's the way this child eats.'

Furthermore, assertive attitudinal adverbials such as va'va'~'really' and nyateɸe' 'truly' which may occur utterance-initially are never marked by these particles (see example [26]).

[26] va'va'~ (*la'), ηu'se-z to- la'e'
 indeed TP strength POR DEF aFOC
 tsi' a' agbe.
 remain HAB life
 'Indeed, it is the powerful ones that survive.'

Attitudinal adverbials represent a speaker's comment on a proposition. They do not create scenes for the interpretation of the proposition in the same way that temporal, locative and manner adverbials do. It appears that a speaker's comment of the kind denoted by assertive attitudinal adverbials is an important piece of information. It is not just added to facilitate the processing of the rest of the information, rather it is an assertion in itself that the speaker wants the addressee to pay attention to. One can paraphrase the illocutionary force of such adverbials roughly as follows: "I want you to know that I think of Y (= the proposition) like this: X (=attitudinal adverb). I want you to think of it". This meaning is not compatible with that of la'above. For this reason, I

suggest, the terminal particles do not collocate with assertive attitudinal adverbials.

Thus far, evidence has been adduced to support the definition proposed initially for the meaning of the terminal particle *la'* when it occurs with initial constituents mainly in the context of NPs and APs. It has been shown that the NPs and APs which cannot occur initially and be marked by *la'* are not orienting items. Similarly those that do occur initially but cannot be marked by *la'* such as vocatives and assertive attitudinal adverbials do not provide background information but rather constitute important pieces of information in themselves. In the next section, further evidence in relation to the behaviour of dependent clauses is presented to reinforce this argument.

8.3.1.1.4 *la'* and dependent clauses

Additional evidence for the background information marking function of the terminal particles is provided by the fact that counterfactual conditional clauses always precede their main clauses and are marked by these terminal particles. The ungrammaticality of [27b] is a restriction imposed by counterfactual conditionals. It does not hold for many other dependent clauses. Observe that hypothetical conditionals, for example, can occur pre- or post-posed to the main clause as exemplified in [28].

[27a] *ɖe tsi dza egbe-a' la',ne' xe'xe' a' me fa'*
 COND water fall today DEF TP then world DEF in cool
 'Had it rained today the weather would have been cool.'

[27b] **ne' xe'xe' a' me fa'ɖe tsi dza egbe.*
 then world DEF in cool COND water fall today

[28a] *ne'tsi me' dza o la' do a' to'*
 if water NEG fall NEG TP famine SBJV set in
 'If it does not rain, there will be famine.'

[28b] *do a- to', ne'tsi me' dza o (*la').*
 famine SBJV set in if water NEG fall NEG TP
 'There will be famine if it does not rain.'

When dependent clauses are postposed to the main clause they are not marked by the terminal particles, as illustrated in [28b]. This behaviour can be explained in terms of markedness. Ewe is an SVO language. In such a language, the unmarked order of clauses in a complex sentence is the main

clause followed by the dependent clause (Davison 1979). The reverse order is marked. One can correlate linguistic markedness with the clause order markedness: the unmarked order has zero linguistic marking while the marked order has a linguistic mark, *viz*: the terminal particles.

The non-occurrence of the terminal particles with sentence-final dependent clauses can be further accounted for in terms of the different roles that pre- and post-posed dependent clauses have in discourse. The preposed clauses set the scene for the interpretation of the main clause. The postposed clauses, by contrast, provide clarifications or comments on the preceding main clause (cf. Givón 1982, 1987, Chafe 1984, Thompson 1985, Geis 1986 and Halliday 1985 for similar views with respect to English).

Some support for this claim comes from the inability of clauses introduced by *eľabeńa* 'because' and *neębeđeko* 'except, unless' to occur sentence initially (see examples [29] and [30]). Observe that 'reason' may be expressed by *eđi ... ta* clauses which can occur before or after the main clause as demonstrated in [31].

[29a] *xoľoń wo' me' le e' si' o,*
 friend PL NEG be:PRES 3SG hand NEG
eľabeńa'ga me' le e' si' o.
 because money NEG be:PRES 3SG hand NEG
 'He has no friends because he is not rich.'

[29b] **eľabeńa'ga meľe eđi 'o la, xoľoń wo'meľe eđi 'o.*
 'Because he is not rich he has no friends.'

[30a] *nye ma' ko' nu le nya la'dzi' o.*
 1SG NEG:SBJV lift mouth at word DEF top NEG
neębeđekowo' a' wu- m hafi'.
 unless 3PL SBJV kill 1SG before
 'I will not say a word about this matter unless I am killed.'

[30b] **neębeđeko woawum la, nye mak'o nu le nya la'dzi' o.*
 'Unless I am killed, I will not say a word about this matter.'

[31a] *xoľoń wo' me' le e' si' o,*
 friend PL NEG be:PRES 3SG hand NEG
eđi ga me' le e' si' o ta.
 when money NEG be:PRES 3SG hand NEG since
 'He has no friends because he is not rich.'

[31b] eṣi ga meṣe eṣi ó ta la', xóṣwo' meṣe eṣi'ó.
 'Because he is not rich he has no friends.'

It would appear that the restriction on eṣabeña' clauses comes from the semantics of eṣabeña' itself. A detailed discussion of this matter cannot be pursued here. Suffice it to say that eṣabeña' clauses typically express reasons which are not assumed to be presupposed. Hence it is more appropriate that they occur in a position where they are presented as comments on main predications rather than in a slot where they are frames of interpretation for the main predication.

The unacceptability of [30b] can be explained in similar fashion. Indeed, exceptional clauses are semantically related to eṣabeña' ones in that the former specify the reason for the opposite of the situation in the main clause taking place. The exceptional clauses add the comment that the contrary of the main clause predication could obtain only because the situation they describe could hold. (Note that they usually contain unlikely or absurd conditions as in [30a].) It seems intuitively reasonable that a clause which provides a reason for the contradiction of some proposition should come after that proposition has been stated. For this reason, the main clause precedes the exceptional clause. Be that as it may, the behaviour of these clauses is consistent with the claim that the terminal particles do not occur with postposed dependent clauses because they do not function as background information in that context.

8.3.1.1.5 Summary of la' and initial constituents

To sum up so far, an explication has been proposed for the illocutionary meaning of la' when it occurs with initial nominal and adverbial phrases and dependent clauses. Explanations have been offered for the non-occurrence of the form in various environments to support the suggested discourse function of the particle. The properties of the various phrases and clauses that may be marked by la' when they occur preposed to the main clause have also been explored. In the subsequent sections, it will be shown that when la' occurs at the end of relative clauses and discourse connectives, it carries the same background-information marking function that it has with initial constituents. However, it has slightly different illocutionary meanings in both contexts.

8.3.1.2 la' and connectives.

Examine the instances of la' in the excerpt from a narrative in [15]:

[32a] gbe deka' la', gbe- me- la~ wo' bla' agba.

day one TP bush in animal PL tie load

[32b] wo- be' ame- si me- nyo' o la'
3PL say person REL NEG good NEG TP

[32c] e'ya- e' a- tsə' ye- wo- φe' agba sia,
3SG aFOC FUT carry LOG PL poss load DEM

[32d] tete lá,kese' wo' avi. ...
then TP monkey split cry

'One day, animals put together some baggage. They said that the one who is bad is the one who will carry the baggage, then the monkey burst into a cry straight away. ...'

The terminal particles occur with conjunctive as well as adverbial connectives as in [32d]. The main function of these connectives is to link the following information to the preceding text. Typically the terminal particles occur with connectives that indicate a spatio-temporal relation such as tete 'then' (as in [32d]), or a contrastive relation, for example, ke'boŋ 'rather', ku'ra 'even' and the conjunction gake 'but'. The additive and alternative conjunctions e'ye 'and' and alo' 'or' can also collocate with the particles. The forms for the relations of conclusion, causality and consequence may also occur with the terminal particles. Such forms are: e'labe'na 'because', e'yata 'therefore', e'siata 'hence', ta 'so, on account of' and e'kema 'then'.

It should be stressed that the terminal particles occur only with conjunctions which are true connectors, that is with forms that link one piece of information to another. Some support for this view comes from the fact that clause introducing conjunctions never occur with the terminal particles. Thus forms like de 'had', ne 'if' and esi 'when' which introduce counterfactual, conditional and temporal clauses respectively cannot be immediately followed by the terminal particles. Consider the forms in [33]:

[33a] mié- fɔ̃ e'si (*la) ŋu ke.
1PL wake up when TP day open
'We got up when it was day break.'

[33b] e'si (*la) ŋu ke la, mié- fɔ̃
when TP day open TP 1PL wake up
'At day break, we got up.'

Another common feature of the connectives with which *la'* can occur is that they provide a kind of setting - be it temporal, contrastive or causal - against which the subsequent piece of information should be understood. I maintain that in this context also *la'* is a signal to the addressee to keep the created scene in mind when processing the following discourse unit.

The force and significance of *la'* in this context could be paraphrased thus:

Z X *la'* Y (Z = preceding discourse unit, X = a connective, Y = predication)

I am thinking of the thing we said before now; Z

I think you can think of Z

I want to say something more about it; Y

I think Y is like Z in this way: X

I want you to think of it in the same way

I say : Y

8.3.1.3 *la'* and relative clauses

The point has already been made that relative clauses constitute background information to their nominal heads. Thus in [32b] the clause *si me'nyo o* 'who is not good' only serves to describe the nominal *ame* 'person'. The claim is that *la'* marks the clause to indicate that the information it contains is meant to help the addressee identify the head. The meaning conveyed by *la'* in this environment may be paraphrased as follows:

Z X *la'* (where Z is the head of a relative clause X)

I am speaking of Z

I want you to be able to think of it

I say X because of this

I think you can think of Z because of this

[I think you now know this Z]

The most striking difference between this formula and the previous ones for initial constituents and connectives in §8.3.1.1 and §8.3.1.2 is that this one does not have the component "I say: Y". This component indicates that a predication follows the *la'* construction. This is not a necessary nor invariant feature of the particle in this usage for two reasons: First structurally, relative clauses in Ewe follow their heads. Thus the element to which the relative clause is contextually bound precedes it. A second piece of evidence is that *la'* occurs on sentence-final relative clauses as exemplified in [34], (from Nyomi 1980:28).

- [34] nyametsola' la' bu' fɔ' nyɔ́nu ɲuvala'
 arbiter DEF judge guilt womanjealous one
 si trɔ' zu ŋkuǵbagbatɔ' la'.
 REL change become blind person TP
 'The arbiter declared the jealous woman, who had become blind,
 guilty.'

Recall that sentence-final dependent clauses are not marked with *la'*. This difference has to be captured. This particular property of *la'* with sentence-final relative clauses points to the inadequacy of the pause marking explanation usually given for the non-occurrence of *la'* with postposed dependent clauses (cf. Heine and Reh 1984:109). If *la'* does not mark sentence-final dependent clauses because a full pause follows and the pause marker is redundant in that context, the same argument should hold for sentence-final relative clauses. However the empirical evidence is not consistent with this contention.

In fact, the use of *la'* with relative clauses also argues against assigning a unitary topic function to the terminal particles. Topics have been variously defined in the linguistic literature. Structurally, they are the first elements in a clause; "the point of departure of the message" (Halliday 1985:39). As a frame, the topic specifies "the relevant universe of discourse (...) of its comment" (Barry 1975:3, cp. Chafe 1976:42 and Dik (1978:230). In terms of 'aboutness' one can follow Gundel (1985:86) and say that "[A]n entity E, is the pragmatic topic of a sentence S, if S is intended to increase the addressee's knowledge about, request information about or otherwise get the addressee to act with respect to E."

These definitions seem applicable to the use of *la'* with preposed phrases, clauses and connectives. It is rather hard to relate any of the definitions to its use with relative clauses. The topic in a relative clause is the relativised constituent i.e. the relative marker (van der Auwera 1987). But *la'* does not occur on *si* in the same way that it does not mark intraclausal conjunctions (see §8.3.1.2) Note that these conjunctions could be viewed, structurally at least, as topical elements. It can be concluded that *la'* occurs with some elements which satisfy the characterisations of topics. It does not occur with others which could also be topical, yet it occurs in other contexts which cannot strictly speaking be identified as topical. The unifying feature of the environments in which the terminal particles occur is that they contain background information. Hence the unitary function of the particles is that they mark background information.

8.3.1.4 Concluding remarks on *la'*

The analysis so far shows that the particle *la'* has a set of related meanings which have been described relative to the syntactic environments in which it occurs. Particles do indeed have meanings, but like other grammatical and morphological items they do not have meanings independent of the syntactic environments in which they occur. For this reason, their meanings have to be described in relation to specific types of contexts. Nevertheless, it is possible to extract a core meaning, partially at least, of the particle from the set of related meanings that a particular particle may have. Perhaps a part of the invariant of *la'* is the following:

I am thinking about something
I want you to (be able to) think of it

To conclude the discussion of the *la'* particle, one of the uses of *la'* marked phrases in connected discourse should be noted. Such phrases are used to maintain cohesion and to signal switch topic in discourse. The *la'* marked phrases are sometimes used in recapitulation as is the case in the following example:

[35a] e- me ne- kɔ be' le nye ɲuvava ɲu'
3SG in IMP clear COMP at 1SG:poss jealousy side
nuφoφo sia me la'
talk DEM in TP

[35b] nye- me- le e- tsri- m' na'ame aɖe'ke'
1SG NEG be:PRES 3SG hate PROG to person none be'
me- ga- vli o.
COMP 3SG:NEG REP strive NEG

[35c] vi'vli la' nu' nyui' wo- nye', ...
striving TP thing good 3SG be
'Let it be clear that in my talk about jealousy, I am not advising
people against striving in life. Striving, a good thing it is ,...'
(Nyomi 1980:29)

Note that the author in the first sentence [32a] and [32b] had said something about striving using a verb (see [32b]). This previous sentence is recapitulated by nominalising the verb and marking it with *la'* to show that this is what is being talked about. However it constitutes a kind of switched topic from the topic of the previous sentence (namely, the talk about jealousy) to a new topic (striving). But by making use of a lexical nominalisation of the verb of the previous clause, cohesion is also being maintained in the text.

8.3.2 The *ɔe'* particle.

The arguments advanced so far to support the discourse function of *la'* apply *tout court* to *ɔe'*. The essential difference between the two particles is that the predication which follows *ɔe'* must be a question. As for *la'*, it can be followed by any speech act. Thus *la'* has a wider applicability than *ɔe'*. Consider the examples in [36].

[36a] *ŋkɔ' sia la/(*ɔe'), vlo' do' ame- ŋkɔ' e'*
 name DEMTP TP shame put person name aFOC
 'This name, it is a shameful name.'

[36b] *ŋkɔ' sia la/ɔe' vlo' do' ame- ŋkɔ' e' a?*
 name DEMTPTP shame put person name aFOC Q
 'This name, is it a shameful name?'

Note that [36a] is unacceptable if *ɔe'* is used. Observe also that either *la'* or *ɔe'* can be used in [36b]. One could think of *ɔe'* as a marker which is used to achieve mood agreement between the background information unit and the following question. The parallelism in distribution between the particles should be reflected in their semantics.

8.3.2.1 *ɔe'* and initial constituents

ɔe' marks preposed phrases and clauses as the universe of discourse about which something is unknown. The specific thing which is not known is conveyed in the question which follows. Thus in [37], the temporal AP 'in the evening' specifies the domain with respect to which the ensuing question is valid. Similarly, preposed NPs (e.g. [38]) and preposed dependent clauses (e.g. [39]) are marked with the *ɔe'* particle to serve as background to the following question. The *ɔe'* particle guides the addressee to understand that the question is about the identified setting .

[37] *le fie~ me ɔe' nuka mia' du?*
 at evening in TP what 1PL eat
 'In the evening , what shall we eat?'

[38] *kofi' ɔe'afika wo' le fifia'*
 K.TP where 3SG be:PRES now
 'Kofi, where is he now?'

- [39] ne'ama yi de', gbe- ka- gbe wo` a- gbɔ?
 if A.go TP day WH day 3SG IRR return
 'When Ama goes, what day will she come back?'

It should be noted that there is an anaphoric pronoun in the rest of the clause in [38], for example to show there is coreferentiality between the preposed NP and the rest of the clause similar to what happens with the la'-marked preposed NPs.

With these considerations in mind, one can paraphrase the meaning of the particle in this context as follows:

- X de' Y (X = NP/ AP/ a dependent clause, Y = a question)
 I am thinking about X
 I do not know something about X
 I want to know it
 I think you know some things about X
 I want you to think about X
 I want to say the kind of thing about X that I don't know
 I say : Y

This formula reflects the interrogative as well as the scene-setting nature of the particle. Thus there are components which characterise its ignorative aspects: 'I do not know something about X', 'I want to know it'. and 'I think you know some things about X'. Other components account for its orienting function: 'I am thinking about X', 'I want you to think about X', and 'I want to say something about X'. Note that there is no interrogative dictum, 'I want you to say something that will cause me to know something about X if you can', in the formula. The reason for this is that the de' constituent by itself does not constitute a question.

8.3.2.2 de' and connectives.

The main point about the particle in this context is that the speaker uses it to signal that s/he wants to know something about the nature of the relationship between what was said before and something else to be specified. Consider example [40] and the explication proposed for the particle in this context below.

- [40] e'yata de', ame a'ḡe' m- a- kpeḡe'
 therefore TP person noneNEG SJBV add to
 ḡu' nye o- a?

side 1SG NEG Q

'So, is there nobody to help me?'

Z X de' Y (Z = a preceding discourse unit, X = a connector
and Y = a question)

I am thinking of what we said before now; Z

I do not know something about it

I want to know it

I think you might know

I want to say the thing about it that I don't know; Y

I think Y is like Z in this way: X

I want you to think of it in the same way

I think you can now think of it

I say: Y

8.3.2.3 de' and relative clauses

There is one difference between la' and de' in this environment; *viz.* de' does not occur at the end of sentence-final relative clauses as does la' . This is perhaps dictated by the need to specify what is not known about the nominal head and relative clause as a constituent. Thus in the formula there is a component which signals that a question is to follow. The reader is invited to substitute the formula for the particle in example [41].

- [41] xo' wo` si di tsa va' ghana de'
 friend 2SG REL pay visit come Ghana TP
 e' tró' va' do' mia gbo' a`?
 3SG turn come reach 2PL side Q
 'Your friend who visited Ghana has he returned to your end?'

Z X de' Y (Z is the head of a relative clause X. Y = a question)

I am speaking of Z

I want you to be able to think of it

I say X because of this

I think you can think of Z because of this

I do not know something about it

I want to know it

I think you might know

I want to say the thing about it that I don't know

I say: Y

8.3.2.4 Concluding remark on *de'*

The meanings of the *de'* particle have been described in the preceding sections relative to particular constructions. The common core of these meanings can be stated as follows:

I am thinking about something
 I do not know something about it
 I want to know it
 I think you might know some things about it
 I want to say the thing about it that I don't know
 I say: Y

8.4 Summary

In the foregoing an attempt has been made to show that the terminal particles in Ewe have a discourse function of marking background information units. In other words, the particles mark scene setting constituents in a clause or a sentence. In addition to this function the particles also have meanings. These meanings have also been fairly rigorously described. It is hoped that the definitions provided will serve as a reliable guide to the usage of the particles. To facilitate a comparison of the particles, the definitions are reproduced below and grouped according to the various syntactic environments in which they occur.

I. The terminal particles and preposed phrases and clauses.

[42] dzɔgbe- vɔɛ- tɔe la'wo' me' dzi- a vi vɔ'
 destiny bad ly TP 3PL NEG bear HAB child bad
 gbe' ne o
 refuse HAB&3SG NEG
 'Unfortunately, one does not reject a bad child.'

X la' Y (X = NP, AP or a dependent clause; and Y = main predication)

I am thinking about X
 I want you to think about X
 I want to say something about X
 I want you to know that I say this about X
 I think you now know this

I say: Y

- [43] fofó- wo` ðe', agble ka- e' wo` yi e'gbe?
 father 2SG TP farm WH aFOC 3SG go today
 'Your father, which farm did he go to today?'

X ðe' Y (X = NP/ AP/ a dependent clause, Y = a question)
 I am thinking about X
 I do not know something about X
 I want to know it
 I think you know some things about X
 I want you to think about X
 I want to say the kind of thing about X that I don't know
 I say : Y

II. The terminal particles and connectives:

- [44] a'na dze tugbe'ufó' ya
 A. appear beauty much though
 gake'la' e' ðe' nonome me' nyo' o.
 but TP 3SG poss behaviour NEG good NEG
 'Ama is very beautiful, but, her behaviour is not good.'

Z X la' Y (Z = preceding discourse unit, X = a connective,
 Y = predication)
 I am thinking of the thing we said before now; Z
 I think you can think of Z
 I want to say something more about it; Y
 I think Y is like Z in this way: X
 I want you to think of it in the same way
 I say : Y

- [45] ta ðe', tsi- a ga- klo' e'gbe ha'ã?
 so TP rain DEF again fade today also Q
 'So, the clouds have dispersed today as well?'

Z X ðe' Y (Z = a preceding discourse unit, X = a connector and
 Y = a question)
 I am thinking of what we said before now; Z

I do not know something about it
 I want to know it
 I think you might know
 I want to say the thing about it that I don't know; Y
 I think Y is like Z in this way: X
 I want you to think of it in the same way
 I say : Y

III. The terminal particles and relative clauses:

[46] ηκώ siá̀ ηκώ si eue- a- wo' tsɔ́ na' la,
 name every name REL Ewe DEF PL take HAB TP
 ɔ́me- se- se aɕe' nɔ- a e- si' kokoko.
 under hear hear INDEF beHAB 3SG handby all means
 'Every name that the Ewes take has some meaning by all means.'

Z X la' (where Z is the head of a relative clause X)
 I am speaking of Z
 I want you to be able to think of it
 I say X because of this
 I think you can think of Z because of this
 [I think you now know this Z]

[47] ga si fofo´ wo` na´ wo` de´ a´ de a? money
 REL father 2SG give 2SG TP 3SG:FUT reach Q
 'The money your father gave you, will it be sufficient?'

Z X de´ Y (Z is the head of a relative clause X. Y = a question)

I am speaking of Z

I want you to be able to think of it

I say X because of this

I think you can think of Z because of this

I do not know something about it

I want to know

I think you might know

I want to say the thing about it that I don't know

I say: Y

At this stage, it has not been possible to demonstrate and validate the analysis of the particles presented here from different discourse genres: narrative, expository, hortatory etc. The chaining of elements marked by these particles has also not been touched upon, nor has it been possible to discuss the issues of particle ellipsis and the dialect variants of la´. These problems, it is hoped, will be taken up in future investigations.

8.5 Conclusion - la´ and de´ in crosslinguistic perspective.

There appear to be particles with uses analogous to the Ewe terminal particles in various languages. It seems that na in Godie, a Kru language of Ivory Coast (Marchese 1977) and ka´ in Zulgo, a Chadic language of Cameroon (Haller and Watters 1984) function in the same way as la´ in Ewe.

In other languages, one can discern formal affinities between definiteness markers and what may loosely be called topic markers. This situation is similar to the formal identity between the definite article la´ and the terminal particle la´ in Ewe. Thus Akan, a Tano language of Ghana which is historically and areally related to Ewe, has the form no´. This item marks left dislocated elements and initial dependent clauses as well as definiteness. In addition it is a third person singular pronominal form (Christaller 1875, Osam, personal communication). The forms le and o in Ga and Dangme respectively also function as definiteness and topic markers (Kropp Dakubu, personal communication). Both languages are historically, areally and typologically related to Ewe. Similarly, in Baule, a Tano language, and in Klao, a Kru language, both of the Ivory Coast, there is formal equivalence between the markers of topicality and of definiteness. The forms are ni and na respectively (Timyan 1979; Marchese 1977)

Outside Africa, a similar phenomenon is found in Polish. According to Tabakowska (1987) *to* functions as a topic marker, a demonstrative and as a deictic personal pronoun. The Australian language Kungarrakany uses the form *ka* to mark established topics in discourse as well as definiteness. (Evans, personal communication).

The Thai particle *na* has functions similar to that of Ewe *la*. It optionally marks topical local or temporal adverbials as well as nominals. In addition, it marks the closure of topical relative clauses and conditional clauses. Another Thai particle *la* would appear to have functions similar to the Ewe *de* particle. (Tony Diller, personal communication)

In other languages, the same form tends to be employed in marking topics and in expressing other illocutionary functions in a manner similar to that of *de* in Ewe. In Japanese, a form *wa*, which is homonymous with the topic marker, occurs as a sentence-final particle. The topic marker is also used to mark truncated questions (Hinds 1984, Hinds et al. 1987). Smith (1987) has described a particle *ta* in Waama, a Gur language of Benin, which appears to be isofunctional with Ewe *de*.

In the light of the pervasive nature of the formal affinities described in the preceding paragraphs in the world's languages, there is an urgent need for an investigation of their underlying motivations. A prerequisite for such a research is the systematic documentation and analysis of the data in the individual languages. It is hoped that the present study will provoke some interest in this fascinating area.

Chapter 9

INVERSE CONSTRUCTIONS

9.1 Introduction

9.1.1 Preliminaries

The syntax, semantics and functions of the *nyá* modals and the constructions in which they occur have remained relatively unexplored in previous descriptions of Ewe. The aim of this chapter is to describe and elucidate the grammar and meaning of the constructions of the *nyá* modals. It will be argued that there are two *nyá* modals in Ewe: one for marking epistemic certainty and the other for the complex function of expressing dynamic modality, that is, 'ability and disposition' (cf. Palmer 1986: 12, 102 -103) and of signalling diathesis or valency alternations of verbs. This last function concerns an alternation in the expression of the arguments of a verb. This second form is thus a manifestation of the interaction between modality and voice or diathesis. Both modal forms have a formal affinity with the verb **nyá** 'to know'. The **nyá** forms provide crucial data for addressing questions pertaining to grammaticalisation, the interaction between voice and modality and, above all, the nature of grammatical meaning. The properties of these forms will be discussed in relation to these questions.

By way of introducing the data and providing the necessary background for the discussion that follows, it is useful to outline how previous authors on Ewe characterise the *nyá* forms. The next sub-section, therefore, summarises what various authors have said. At the end of this summary, the aims and organisation of the chapter are presented.

9.1.2 Previous analyses of the *nyá* forms

Westermann (1907, 1930) presents three different usages of the main verb *nyá* 'to know', 'be able' and 'be capable' which may be summarised as follows:

i) as the main verb 'to know' etc.; e.g.

kofi nya´ dɔ´ a

K.know work DEF

'Kofi knows the work, i.e. the trade'

ii) often, this main verb is followed immediately by a second verb, and in this usage it means 'to have opportunity, time', for example:

ne´me- nya´ kpe´ e´ ko la´

[if 1SG MOD meet3SG only TP F.A.]

'If only I have an opportunity of meeting him'

iii) " **nyá** is also combined with another verb to mean *to be becoming, to be agreeable*, e.g.:

lã meꞌ nyaꞌ koꞌ naꞌ naꞌame ɖekaꞌ o.
 animal NEG MOD dissect HAB to person one NEG
 'An animal is not agreeable to be skinned by one person,
 i.e. one person alone cannot skin an animal. '

tsi nyaꞌ fuꞌ naꞌ naꞌtome- lã
 water MOD swim HAB to river animal
 'the fish can swim well'" (Westermann 1930: 138)

[morphemic glosses added]

At first glance, usages (ii) and (iii) may appear to be the same but they are different as we shall see below. This difference is what Westermann was trying to capture by the different meanings he ascribes to them. These glosses are instructive, but as we shall see below, they are not entirely predictive of the range of functions that the forms serve. It will be shown that each of the three usages identified by Westermann constitutes a distinct element in Ewe: a main verb (usage i) and two modal auxiliaries (usages ii and iii). The main difference between the two sets being that the modals can no longer be inflected for aspectual categories. This suggests that some grammaticalization is in progress. The value of Westermann's account is that it provides us with a source for the emergence of the modals.

Other writers have described the modals in different ways. Clements (1972: 53) recognises only one modal form which he rightly notes is homophonous with the main verb *nyá* 'know'. He further observes: "As a preverb, it [*nyá* modal] emphasises the certainty of the statement being made: (... example supplied). However when selected with the future tense formative it expresses uncertainty." Clements thus accounts explicitly for only usage (ii) in Westermann's scheme.

Duthie (1988, in press) does not say anything about the relationship between the main verb *nyá* and the modals. He however recognises two *nyá* auxiliaries: one he describes as a certainty marker in a similar manner to that of Clements (ibid), i.e. Westermann's usage (ii). Regarding the other auxiliary, Duthie writes:

"The preverbal auxiliary (...) **nyá** has the effect of enabling a post - verbal NP to occur before the VP; it could be called a 'passiviser'. " (in press : 126)

It seems that this auxiliary corresponds to Westermann's usage (iii). Duthie is thus the first to explicitly recognise two *nyá* auxiliaries and to assign a passivising function to one of them¹. However he does not say anything about what constraints operate on the form, let alone describe the semantic-syntax of the various structures in which the "passive" *nyá*, for example, is used.

Duthie's description raises an important typological question because West African languages and especially the Kwa type languages are not generally classified as having passive constructions². It is often noted that passives, especially agentless passives, tend to be expressed by sentences with third person plural subjects in the normal SVO pattern. The following comment by Westermann (1930:138) about Ewe is quite typical:

"The passive is rendered by the third person plural:

wo' tso ta le e' nu.

[3PL cut head at 3SG mouth FA]

they cut his head off. i. e. his head was cut off"

But this is a normal 'active' sentence. It does not constitute a passive construction. Viewed against this background, one could be curious to know how the *nyá* passive constructions posited by Duthie behave in the language, both in terms of their language-specific peculiarities and their relationship to

¹ It should be mentioned here that Fabb 1990 describes a similar construction in Fon as a passive. For example

koklo' nyo' du
chicken eat
'Chicken is easy to eat'

The interesting thing is that the Fon form *nyo'* is cognate with the Ewe *nya'* and also functions as the verb 'know'. There seems to be one difference between Ewe and Fon in this area though. According to Fabb (1990) the sentence above can also mean 'Chicken knows how to eat' in Fon. This second interpretation is not available in Ewe. More work needs to be done on the comparative syntax of this construction in Gbe.

² In 1971, L. A. Boadi published a paper entitled: "Passive in Akan". Akan is a Tano language of the Kwa family. He observes that "Akan does not exhibit inflectional affixes which correspond to the active and passive in I[ndo] E[uropean] languages. Neither are the nouns functioning respectively as actor and goal strictly permutable in the usual sense of the term in the surface structures of sentences which I am going to call passives." He then discusses the relationships between pairs of sentences like 'The bread cuts easily.' vs 'He cuts the bread easily.' and 'His uncle drowned.' vs 'He drowned his uncle.' and then observes: "It is important to note, however, that the presence or absence of some morphological affix is irrelevant to the interpretation. A more relevant question (...) is whether there is a universal or near - universal notion expressed in most languages to which the label *passive* could be attached." It turns out that the Akan structures he was concerned with are parallel to English sentences such as 'I opened the door.' vs. 'The door opened.'; 'I melted the oil.' vs. 'The oil melted.' In fact these are not passive constructions but rather patient-subject structures which are sometimes referred to as anti-causatives (cf. Comrie 1977). One cannot conclude that Akan has a passive construction on the basis of these sentences. I should point out that Boadi (private communication) now thinks that the term *passive* is a misnomer for the structures he was dealing with.

the passive prototype in typological terms. This requires a detailed description of the syntactic and semantic properties of the *nyá* constructions, and relating them to typological findings on passives.

9.1.3 Aim and organisation of the chapter

This chapter, consequently, examines the morpho-syntax, semantics and functions of the Ewe *nyá* modals and the constructions in which they occur. From a typological perspective, it tries to determine whether the syntactic process associated with the second *nyá* modal should be characterised as a passive, as Duthie does, or something else, for example, inversion. An attempt will also be made to account for the semantic motivation of the grammatical meanings of the modals from the point of view of their development from the main verb 'to know'. Some cross-linguistic analogues of the Ewe phenomena are also noted.

The chapter is organised as follows: An overview of the general features of the *nyá* homonyms is provided in section 9.2. Section 9.3 contrasts the two *nyá* modals paying particular attention to the valency of the main verbs with which they co-occur. The syntax, semantics and functions of the constructions associated with each of the *nyá* modals are described in sections 9.4 and 9.5. Section 9.6 investigates the typology of the constructions of one of the *nyá* modals. It examines the question of whether this *nyá* form is a passiviser, as Duthie suggests, or an inversion marker in Relational Grammar terms, or something else. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the grammatical evolution of the *nyá* modals.

9.2. Overview

Three *nyá* homonyms may be distinguished in Ewe: a main verb and two modal auxiliaries.

9.2.1 *nyá* as main verb

The main verb means 'to know'. and differs from the others both in its inflectional possibilities for different verbal categories and in its distribution. Distributionally, the main verb always occurs as the nucleus of a verbal phrase:

[1] kofi' nya' ge~
K. know Accra
'Kofi knows Accra.'

[2] qevi' ma' me' le nu' nya' m' le suku o.
child DEMNEG bething know PROG at school NEG

lit.: 'That child is not knowing things at school'
 'That child is not picking up knowledge at school.'

Another difference between the main verb and the modals is in terms of the elements that the verb can govern. The object of the main verb can be a nominal phrase, as in the examples above, a nominalised clause as in [3] below or a *bé* 'that' complement clause as in [4] below. None of these can immediately follow any of the modals.

[3] me- nya' tsi- fu' fu.
 1SG know water swim swim
 'I know swimming' i.e. 'I know how to swim.'

[4] kofi' nya' be' ga me' le asi' nye o.
 K.know COMP money NEGbehind1SG NEG
 'Kofi knows that I don't have money.'

In certain contexts, some pragmatic inferences may be associated with sentences [3] and [4] above. An inference of the certainty of the speaker may be drawn from [4] while [3] may be interpreted as the subject having the ability to perform the activity denoted by the nominalised clause. It may even be argued that the ability reading is what is asserted in [3].

It should be observed that there is a distinct abilitative modal form *te'nu'* which may be used to express ability. Indeed, example [3] above may be paraphrased using this form. The difference between the two is this: *nyá* implies both knowledge of and, by deduction, ability to perform the action well. This message may be roughly paraphrased as follows:

X knows how to do Z
 X can do it well (if X wants to)

The essential meaning of the abilitative form is that the subject to whom the ability is ascribed has the potential to do it. There is no indication of the quality of the ability. Simply put, *te'nu'* carries the following message:

X can do Z if X wants to.

One could say that the abilitative form expresses mere ability while the ability reading that may be inferred from the verb *nyá* is a qualitative one. Some support for the analysis presented here comes from the fact that to paraphrase example [3] above using *te'nu'* one needs to modify the verb in order to get the different nuances of meaning that may be inferred from the verb *nyá* when it is used to express ability. Thus if one adds the subjunctive as in [5a] below we get

the potential reading. If the habitual is added then we get general ability reading based on previous performance [5b]. To get the quality of the ability we have to add some manner adverbials such as *ɲufɔ* ‘much’ or *nyuie* ‘well’:

[5a] m’- a- te’ɲu’a- fu’ tsi.
1SG SBJV ABILI SBJV swim water
‘I could swim.’

[5b] me- te’ɲu’fu- a’ tsi.
1SG ABILI swim HAB water
‘I can swim.’

The main verb can be used in the imperative as in this folk dirge:

[6a] gamɔɔɔ fie, anyiɣba-lã wo’ mi- nya’ zɔzɔ!³
trap take monkey land animal PL 2PL know walk
‘The monkey has been caught in a trap, animals, know how to walk!’

The main verb *nyá* may also be used in a negative conditional clause to indicate the possibility of the occurrence of the situation expressed in the main clause. The conditional clause could be considered an idiom:

[6b] ne’me- nya’ wɔwɔ o la’tsi a- dza ɲɔɔ sia.
if NEG know doing NEG TP water IRR fall afternoon this
‘If it doesn’t take care, it will rain today’

9.2.2 *nyá* modals

Both *nyá* modal auxiliaries differ from the main verb in not being able to occur as the nucleus of a verbal phrase. They cannot be inflected for aspectual categories like other main verbs. They are always used in combination with another verb. They are thus modifiers within a verbal phrase. The constructions in which they occur cannot be analysed as serial verbal constructions since there cannot be mood agreement between them and the other verb, as illustrated in example [7] below. The IRR marker on the verb *xɔ* should have been acceptable if the *nyá* form were functioning as a main verb in the construction since verbs in a serial structure have to agree in tense, mood and aspect (see Part I for overview grammar).

³ The monkey is regarded as a very difficult animal to catch in a trap, because it is cunning and because it moves in trees and not on the ground. The point of this dirge is that the monkey has been caught in a trap on the ground, so the other animals which are not as cunning as the monkey should be very careful and mind their steps.

- [7] kofi' a- nya' (*a) xɔ fe ewo'.
 K. IRR MOD IRR get year ten
 'Kofi could be ten years old.'

Both modal forms occur in the same structural slot with other modal auxiliaries in the verbal phrase (see Part I for overview grammar). Both forms have related but different functions.

One of them can occur as the modifier of the main verb *nyá* within a verbal phrase as in example [8]:

- [8] ɔevi ma' nya' nya' tsi- fu' fu'.
 child DEMMOD know water swim swim
 'That child does know how to swim.'

As should be evident from the translation, this particular *nyá* form marks a speaker's epistemic certainty towards the proposition in which it occurs. For example:

- [9] tsi- a nya' fa'ɲufo'.
 water DEF MOD cool much
 'The water is really very cold.'

- [10] kofi' nya' le dzo- dzo' ge'.
 K. MOD PRES leave leave INGR
 'Kofi is certainly going to leave.'

- [11] ama nya' bu- a ame ɲufo'.
 A MOD obeyHAB person much
 'Ama is very obedient.'

In combination with other categories, for example, irrealis ones such as the future or the subjunctive, as in example [7] above, or the conditional, this *nyá* modal can yield other interpretations, especially that of uncertainty on the part of the speaker towards the proposition or the probability of the realisation of the proposition. Consider the following examples:

- [12] kofi' a- nya' xɔ fe ewo'.
 K. IRR MOD get year ten
 'Kofi could be ten years old.'

- [13] ne'me- nya' kpɔ-ε' ko la,m'- a- gblɔ-ε ne.
 if 1SG MOD see 3SGonly TP 1SG IRR tell 3SG to:3SG

'If only I do see him/her, I'd tell him/her.'

Henceforth I will refer to this *nyá* modal for marking certainty as **nyá1** and the other modal as **nyá2**. I will also gloss them as CERT(ainty) and INV(erse) respectively.

nyá2 is more restricted than *nyá1* in the range of contexts in which it can occur. *nyá2* only occurs in clauses whose main verb is potentially multivalent. In addition there is a semantic restriction on the subject of the clause in which *nyá2* may appear: broadly speaking, it must be an Undergoer (à la Foley & Van Valin 1984) of the situation represented in the clause. The subject of a *nyá2* clause could not be viewed as the Actor of the activity described in the clause. Consider the following examples:

[14a] me- ðu akɔɔɔ' la.
 1SG eat banana DEF
 'I ate the banana.'

[14b] akɔɔɔ' la' *(nya) ðu (na' m)
 banana DEF MOD eat to 1SG
 'The banana did eat well to me' i.e. 'I enjoyed the banana'
 ['The banana is eatable to me']⁴

[14c] * me- (nya) ðu.
 1SG MOD eat
 'I ate'

It can be assumed that the sentences in [14] linguistically represent three different conceptualisations of the same real world event of eating bananas where the agent (Actor) is 'I' and the patient (Undergoer) is 'the banana'. Notice that in the first the Actor and the Undergoer are construed in the normal way as the subject and the object of the clause respectively. In the second, the Undergoer is the subject and the Actor is realised as an oblique dative object and could be omitted. It should be observed that *nyá2* is obligatory in such a sentence. Thus it can be said that *nyá2* signals a change in verb valency. Note also that the third sentence is ungrammatical, it is not a possible conceptual representation of the situation characterised in the first two. The ungrammaticality of [14c] can be ascribed to two factors: first, ðu 'eat' obligatorily requires two arguments and there is only one; second, when *nyá* is

⁴ I have used rather crude English translations for the sentences involving *nyá2* in order to keep the flavour of the Ewe expressions. Perhaps more polished English translations of these structures should be of the form: NP be Evaluative Adj to V (for NP). Thus [14b] could be rendered as: 'The banana is delicious to eat for me' (see Van Oosten 1986: 109ff for a description of such structures in English).

used to signal a change in valency then it requires a non - agentive subject. These two conditions are violated in [14c]; the subject is agentive and there is only one argument. It is furthermore not possible to interpret [14c] as involving a kind of non - referential object deletion because this strategy is not available in Ewe. That is Ewe is not an “object drop” language. The object must be stated, even if it is non - referential, as [14d] below illustrates:

[14d] me- (nya)ɖu nu´
 1SG MOD eat thing
 ‘I (certainly) ate’

The conclusion to be drawn from this is that one could describe *nyá2* as a “voice” or “diathesis” marker which may be used to signal how the subject NP of a clause should be viewed or how the clause organisation (in terms of semantic roles) should be interpreted. Furthermore, the structures in which *nyá2* occurs are associated with a grammatical process involving:

- i) the demotion of the Actor by reassignment to an oblique dative or deletion,
- ii) the subjectization of the Undergoer or non-Actor argument, and
- iii) a conversion of the valency of the verb

These features of *nyá2* make it look like a ‘passiviser’, but there are other aspects of it which call such a characterisation into question. These will be discussed in due course. For the moment, it should only be noted that the effect of the *nyá2* processes seems to be the creation of a complex predicate with adjectival and/or modal meanings.

nyá1, by contrast, does not trigger any of these processes. It can occur in clauses whose verbs are either monovalent as in [9] above or multivalent as in [11] above. The subject NP of a *nyá1* clause could be either an Actor or an Undergoer. For this reason, when the form *nyá* occurs in a clause whose subject NP is an Undergoer and whose verb could be semantically multivalent, ambiguity could arise. Thus example [15] below is ambiguous in two ways depending on whether *nyá* is interpreted as *nyá1* or *nyá2*. The interpretation which is applicable in a particular context is pragmatically determined (see §9.3 for clarification):

[15] ze- a´ nya´ gba.
 pot DEF MOD break
nyá1 interpretation: ‘The pot did break.’
nyá2 interpretation: ‘The pot broke easily.’

Above all, *nyá2* is multi-functional. It may be used to attribute a physical property or a propensity to the patient - subject of the event represented by the predicate. The property may be presented as an objective one or as being based on the subjective evaluation of the Actor viewed as an experiencer and coded as an oblique dative. In performing this and other functions, the form interacts with the semantics of the other members in the clause. Thus in [16a] below, that Ama is beautiful is presented as an objective fact; everybody would agree that she is beautiful. In [16b] however, Ama is presented as beautiful or nice from the speaker's point of view. The implication is that other people may or may not perceive her as such!

[16a] ama nya' kpɔ́-na'.

A. MOD see HAB

'Ama looks well' i.e. 'Ama is beautiful.'

[16b] ama nya' kpɔ́-na' na' m.

A. MOD see HAB to 1SG

'Ama looks well to me' i.e. 'I think Ama is beautiful.'

nyá2 may also be used to present the Actor as experiencer (temporarily or habitually) of the process denoted in the sentence:

[17] nu' nya' ɖu- na na' ɖevi ma'.

thing MOD eat HAB to child DEM

'Eating pleases that child'

Through the interaction of this form with the semantics of other elements in the clause, other interpretations may emerge viz: 'the Actor is capable of performing the activity expressed in the clause' or 'the situation represented in the clause is a customary activity representing a characteristic or a disposition of the Actor.' These nuances of meaning and the sub-constructions are described further below. For the moment, one could say that *nyá2* is a kind of dynamic modality marker since it encodes ability and disposition (cf. Palmer 1986:102 -3 on dynamic modality).

To summarise, three **nyá** homonyms have been identified: a main verb meaning 'know' and two modal auxiliaries; *nya1* a certainty marker and *nyá2* a dynamic modality and 'voice' marker. The differences between the modals may be tabulated as follows:

	nyá1	nyá2
Verb Valency	any	only two or more
Macro -Semantic role of subject NP	Actor/Undergoer	Undergoer only
Function	epistemic marker	certainty -‘voice’ marker -dynamic modality of Actor (as experiencer) marker -forms predicates with adjectival meanings (ascribed to the Undergoer)

Table 9.1: Comparison of *nyá1* and *nyá2*

9.3 Verb valency and the *nyá* modals

9.3.1 Preliminaries

The differences between *nyá1* and *nyá2* displayed in Table 9.1 hang crucially on the valency of the verb in the clause in which the form occurs. In this section, I want to support the following claims: (i) that *nyá2* is added periphrastically to verbs which have a primary valency of two or more to lower their valency by one, and thereby create a complex predicate, and (ii) that one of the arguments which is thereby removed from the valence frame by this process is broadly speaking an animate Actor.

For the purposes of this study, valency may be construed as a feature of verb lexemes and verb forms which characterises the number of semantically obligatory arguments and their semantic roles in relation to the verb (cf. Tesnière 1959, Lyons 1977:483 ff. and Mosel 1984:3 ff.). For example, the verb *du* ‘eat’ is primarily divalent, that is, it requires two arguments with the roles of agent and patient.⁵ However the primary (or basic or intrinsic) valency of a

⁵ In this study, the definitions assumed for various semantic roles are inspired by the works of Gruber 1965, Fillmore 1968, 1977, Chafe 1970, Foley & Van Valin 1984, Givón 1984, Andrews 1985 and Jackendoff 1987. An **agent** is defined as the participant which the meaning of the verb specifies as the conscious instigator of something. An **effector** is assumed to be a participant which causes something to happen without its own volition. This includes natural forces that autonomously cause things to happen. **Instruments** are used by agents to act on other things. A **patient** is the participant that has something happen to it and is affected by it. The **theme** is the participant whose location is at issue, i.e. it is characterised as being in a state or position, or changing its state or position. An **experiencer** is characterised as the participant who is aware of something psychologically, perceptually or emotionally. The macro roles of **Actor** and **Undergoer** are used in the sense of Foley & Van Valin (1984: 29) who define them as follows: “We may characterise the actor as the argument of a predicate which expresses the participant which performs, effects, instigates or controls the situation denoted by the predicate, and the undergoer as the argument which expresses the participant

verb can change: it may be augmented or it may be decreased through various morpho-syntactic processes. Such valency changing processes yield what may be called secondary valencies of verbs. Thus the valency of *ɔ̀* may be changed from two to one by the addition of *nyá* as illustrated in [14] above. The process, as it were, deletes the argument with the agent role from the core valence frame of the verb leaving the argument with the patient role as the remaining core argument. Thus it can be said that *ɔ̀* has a primary valency of two and a secondary valency of one. Alternatively, one could say that the complex predicate formed with *nyá* has a valency of one.

Some verbs have multiple primary valency frames. For example, ambitransitive verbs - verbs which can take one or two arguments without any overt morphological marking - could be said to have two primary valencies. Thus verbs such as *gba* 'break', *tu* 'close', *vu* 'tear' etc. have one frame for their transitive use: NP1 [agent], NP2 [patient], and another for their intransitive use: NP [patient]. Compare the following examples:

[18] *kofi' vu'awu la'.*
 K. tear dress DEF
 'Kofi tore the dress.'

[19] *awu la' vu'.*
 dress DEF tear
 'The dress tore.'

The morpho-syntactic coding of the arguments in a verb's valency frame are dictated by general principles of the language based on the grammar and its interaction with semantic and pragmatic factors (cf. Givón 1984, Foley and Van Valin 1984, Van Valin in press, Bresnan and Kanerva 1989). For instance, the single argument of primary monovalent verbs such as *dzo* 'leave' or *ko* 'tall' are automatically coded as subject. For verbs with more than one argument, which argument is coded as what grammatical relation depends on their respective semantic roles and how the roles rank with respect to subjecthood, or on another level with respect to their accessibility to Actor-hood or Undergoer-hood. For the purposes of this discussion, the following ranking of semantic roles is assumed for Ewe:⁶

which does not perform, initiate or control any situation but rather is affected by it in some way."

⁶ This hierarchy is based on Foley and Van Valin (1984: 59) but note that I have included more roles than they have e.g. instrument, experiencer, percept/stimulus etc. (cf Wilkins 1989 who includes experiencers in the hierarchy but not the others). These roles need to be separated from effector and locative for example. There is also a slight difference in the ordering of locative with respect to theme. These differences are fully motivated on the basis

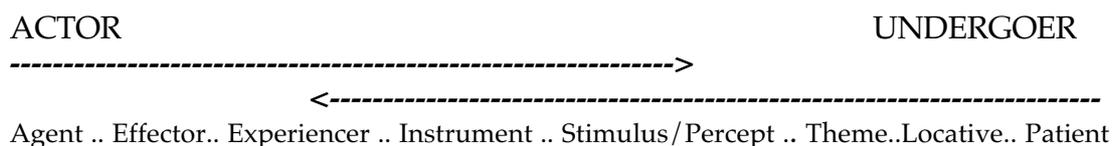


Fig 9.1: Semantic roles hierarchy for Ewe

Generally speaking, in an unmarked situation and given a verb and its arguments with their semantic roles, the argument with the role nearer to the agent pole relative to the other argument is coded as subject and is the Actor in R[ole] and R[eference] G[rammar] terms. The other arguments are coded as objects or obliques and are Undergoers. For example, for a verb like kpɔ́ 'see/experience' with experiencer and percept arguments, the experiencer which has an Actor role is coded as subject in the unmarked case and the percept argument as the object (see Chapter 10 on experiencer constructions). Sometimes, however, the choice to code a particular argument as subject or object may depend on a speaker's perspective of the particular situation. Thus the percept argument of the verb 'to see' may be coded as the subject, and this requires the use of *nyá2*.

9.3.2 Contrasting the *nyá* modals .

From the discussion so far, it could be observed that *nyá2* is only compatible with primary multi-valent verbs. It could be deduced from this that when a *nyá* form occurs with a primary monovalent verb, that form must be *nyá1*. In other words, *nyá1* can co-occur with any monovalent verb irrespective of the semantic role of that argument. For example, the single arguments of the verbs in sentences [20a], [20b] and [20c] have the roles of agent, theme and experiencer respectively. Their predicates are all monovalent. At a macro level, all the NPs have an Actor role. The *nyá* modal in all these sentences is *nyá1* and not *nyá2* :

[20a] kofí nya´ dzo.
 K. CERT leave
 'Kofi certainly left'

[20b] agbalẽ a nya´ bu.
 book DEF CERT lost
 'The book is certainly lost.'

[20c] ama nya´ vɔ̃ na.
 I DEF CERT see
 'I certainly see.'

of the facts of Ewe grammar but the arguments cannot be discussed here. This hierarchy is also different in some ways from that assumed in Bresnan and Kanerva (1989).

A.CERT fear HAB
 ‘Ama is certainly a coward.’

The valency of the verb is an important distinguishing feature for the modals. Two sentences containing *nyá* could look on the surface to be identical in structure, but the primary valency of the verbs with which they are used may be different. If this is the case, then the two sentences would have two different *nyá* forms. Compare the sentence in [21a] with the now familiar [21b]:

[21a] akɔɔɔ́ la' nya' víví' (na' m).
 banana DEF CERT sweet to 1SG
 ‘The banana is certainly sweet for me.’

[21b] akɔɔɔ́ la' nya' ɔu (na' m).
 banana DEF INV eat to 1SG
 ‘The banana is good to eat.’

On the surface, both sentences look alike and broadly speaking they could both be rendered idiomatically into English as “I enjoyed the banana.” The fundamental difference between them lies in the valency of the verbs: in [21a] the predicator *víví'* is primarily monovalent; this rules out *nyá2* and the *nyá* form in this sentence can only be interpreted as *nyá1*. In [21b], however, the verb *ɔu* ‘eat’ has a secondary valence of one and so *nyá* should be interpreted as a valency changing signal viz: *nyá2*.

The examples discussed so far show that *nyá2* does not occur with basic monovalent verbs. This is understandable and provides support for some of the claims being made in this chapter, namely: (i) that there are two **nyá** homonymous modals, and (ii) that *nyá2* is a device for showing a change in the valency of a verb. Because of this, those verbs that have just one argument cannot co-occur with *nyá2*, otherwise such predicates would be without arguments.

Verbs with a valency of two or more arguments can co-occur with both modals but under different conditions. The discussion will focus here mainly on bivalent forms but whatever is said applies *tout court* to multi-valent verbs (which are described later). The main point to note is that *nyá2* only applies to multi-valent verbs whose Actor macrorole may be filled by an animate referent or entity. Furthermore, this animate Actor should be capable of performing the action or process denoted by the verb. This means that one should be able to interpret an Actor which is not strictly an Agent in an agentive way. These two factors rule out multi-valent verbs whose Actors are effectors and effector

themes as discussed below. It can thus be said that *nyá2* imposes semantic restrictions on its subject while *nyá1* does not.⁷

These facts about *nyá2* can be presented as a kind of lexical process on multivalent verbs. The product of such a process is a complex predicate made up of *nyá* and the verb but with a change in valency and a change in the grammatical relations of the arguments. For bivalent verbs the generalisation may be represented in an old-fashioned LFG lexical rule format as follows:⁸

VERB < SUBJ	OBJ >	====>	<i>nyá</i> VERB	$\left\langle \begin{array}{c} \emptyset \\ \textit{ná} \textit{OBJ} \end{array} \right\rangle$	SUBJ >
AGENT	PATIENT			AGENT	PATIENT
EXPERIENCER	PERCEPT			EXP.	PERCEPT
THEME	LOCATIVE			THEME	LOCATIVE
[+ ANIMATE]					

The interpretation of this generalisation is that if there is a bivalent verb whose arguments have the semantic roles of <Agent, Patient>; <Experiencer, Percept> and <Theme, Locative> the argument with the semantic role which is higher on the semantic role hierarchy is coded as Subject in an unmarked case. This means that it is the Agent, the Experiencer or the Theme that is the Subject. The other argument is the Object. If the Subject argument of such a verb is animate then it can undergo the lexical derivation rule to form a *nyá* complex predicate. The outcome of the rule is that the animate subject argument is either deleted (\emptyset) or is coded as an oblique object introduced by the dative preposition *na*. The other argument is coded as the subject of the *nyá* complex predicate. In discussing the ramifications of this generalisation, examples will be presented as follows: [a] provides a clause with the bivalent form of the verb in its unmarked usage; [b] gives an example of the same verb with *nyá1*, and [c] illustrates the use of the same verb with *nyá2*.

Thus *nyá2* may be applied to multivalent activity verbs which have an agent role in their frame. Examples of these verbs are:

ɖe [nu] ‘remove [something]’	ble [ame] ‘deceive [someone]’
fi [nu] ‘steal [something]’	he [ame] ‘train [someone]’

⁷ In other words and in RRG terms *nyá1* subjects are 'pragmatic' or 'grammatical' (Wilkins 1989:69 fn53) while *nyá2* subjects could be said to be "semantic" pivots since there is a restriction on the semantic macro-role that such an NP must have. This difference between the two forms may have implications in some theories of syntax for the label modal that I have assigned to them on distributional grounds. In GB for instance, it is assumed that modals do not impose semantic restrictions on their subjects. From this perspective, *nyá1* is a modal and *nyá2* is not. Nevertheless the modal label for *nyá2* as well as *nyá1* is justified on distributional grounds.

⁸ I have adopted this old-fashioned way of representing these facts in order to make the issues more accessible. These statements are easily translatable into the current Lexical Mapping Theory format of LFG (see e.g. Bresnan and Kanerva 1989).

nya~ [nu] 'wash [something]' dzu [ame] 'insult [someone]'
do[nya] 'say [something]' bu [ame] 'show [someone] respect'

When *nyá* is used with these verbs in situations where all the core arguments are present, it expresses the speaker's certainty that the Actor performed the activity. When these verbs occur in contexts where they have a reduced valency in the core frame then *nyá2* is used to signal this change in valency. Consider the following examples:

[22a] me- di' a' ge.
1SG seek HAB quarrel
'I provoke fights'

[22b] me- nya' di' a' ge.
1SG CERT seek HAB quarrel
'I do provoke fights'

[22c] ge *(nya) di' [n]a' na' m.
quarrel INV seek HAB to 1SG
'Provoking (people) pleases me.'

Similarly, stance and motion verbs which are typically two place predicates in Ewe can occur with either *nyá1* or *nyá2*. Note that these verbs could be said to have 'agentive' Themes and locative roles mapping on to Actor and Undergoer (or Subject and Object) respectively. Examples of such verbs are:

dze [anyi] 'fall down' zo 'walk', 'travel'
mló [anyi] 'lie down' de 'to have been'
no [anyi] 'sit down' yi 'go'

[23a] no- nye de- a agble (gbe- sia- gbe).
mother 1SG go HAB farm day every day
'My mother goes to the farm everyday.'

[23b] no- nye nya' de- a agble (gbe- sia- gbe)
mother 1SG CERT go HAB farm day every day
'My mother does go to the farm everyday.'

[23c] agble *(nya) de- (n)a na'no- nye.
farm INV go HAB to mother 1SG
'The farm visits well for my mother.'
['My mother likes going to the farm.']

Notice again the differences in the messages conveyed by [23b] and [23c] and the structures associated with them.

nyá2 may occur with multi-valent affective verbs - verbs of mental, physical or psychological states and actions - whose experiencers are Actors and cause a change in their valency. *nyá1* may also be used with such verbs. A few examples of these predicates are:

kpɔ́ [nu]	‘see/experience [something]’	lɔ̃	‘love’
se [nu]	‘hear/perceive [something]’	tsri	‘hate’
bí dzi	[lit.: ‘bend heart’] ‘be angry’	suśu	‘imagine’
va ŋu	[lit.: ‘move skin’] ‘jealous’	bu	‘think’

[24a] kofí srɔ̃ va- a ŋu (ŋufɔ̃).
 K. spouse move HAB skin much
 ‘Kofi’s spouse is (very) jealous.’

[24b] kofí srɔ̃ nya’ va- a ŋu (ŋufɔ̃).
 K. spouse MOD move HAB skin much
 ‘Kofi’s spouse is indeed (very) jealous.’

[24c] ŋu *(nya) va- a na kofí srɔ̃ (ŋufɔ̃).
 skin MOD move HAB to K. spouse much
 lit.: ‘Being jealous pleases Kofi’s spouse (very much).’
 ‘Kofi’s spouse indulges in jealous behavior very much.’

When process verbs have effectors as Actors only *nyá1* is applicable, *nyá2* is blocked. Indeed the difference between agents and effectors in general is in animacy: the former are animate and the latter are typically inanimate (cf. Cruse 1973; Foley & Van Valin 1984). This is the reason why there is the need to constrain *nyá2* to be applicable only to verbs that have animate Actors in their primary valence frame. Consider the following examples:

[25a] ŋdɔ̃ du awu- a.
 sun eat dress DEF
 ‘The sun scorched the dress.’

[25b] ŋdɔ̃ nya’ du awu- a.
 sun CERT eat dress DEF
 ‘The sun did scorch the dress.’

[25c] * awu- a nya' ɖu na'ɲɔ
 dress DEF INV eat to sun

Here we have the same verb *ɖu* being used in its general sense of *consume*, but because the Actor is inanimate, valency conversion by the use of *nyá2* is impossible. Also contrast the following pairs of sentences:

[26a] kofi' (nya)ɖe- a fu na'ame
 K. MOD issue HAB trouble to person
 'Kofi (certainly) troubles people.'

[26b] fu *(nya) ɖe- a na'ame na kofi'
 trouble MOD issue HAB to person to K.
 'Troubling people pleases Kofi.'

[27a] agbe (nya)ɖe- a fu na'ame
 life CERT issue HAB trouble to person
 'Life (certainly) troubles people'

[27b]*fu nya' ɖe- a na'ame na'agbe
 trouble INV issue HAB to person to life
 'Troubling people pleases Kofi'

The only difference between [26b] and [27b] is that in [26b] the Actor is animate - an agent - while in [27b] the Actor is inanimate - an effector or a stimulus. *nyá2* is acceptable with [26b] but not with [27b].

A corollary of the animate Actor constraint is that the referent of the Actor role which is removed from the core frame of multivalent verbs must be capable of being viewed as an experiencer of the event. This is consistent with the fact that when the Actor is expressed in *nyá2* clauses it is marked by the dative preposition *ná* which tends to be used to mark experiencers in the language (see the discussion below in §9.5).

It is quite evident from the examples containing *nyá2* (the [c] examples) that the verb has a secondary valency which is quantitatively one less than its primary core valency. It is also obvious that the Undergoer occupies the initial position in such sentences and has the grammatical relation of subject. It seems that valency conversion and the subjectization of the Undergoer jointly describe *nyá2* constructions. These two conditions would have to be present for a **nyá** form to be interpreted as *nyá2*.

Consider the following sentences in which the only interpretation possible for the **nyá** form is that of *nyá1* even though the Undergoer is sentence initial:

[28a] avi nya' fa- m' ama nɔ
 cry CERT weep PROG A.NPRES
 'It was a real cry Ama was engaged in.'

[28b] papa' nya' di' m' ɖevi- a' wo' le
 father CERT seek PROG child DEF PL PRES
 'It is Papa that the children are certainly looking for.'

The **nyá** forms in these sentences cannot be *nyá2* for two reasons: firstly, there is no change in the primary valency of the verbs; and secondly, the Undergoer still has its Object grammatical relation in spite of the fact that it is sentence initial. These sentences have a marked Object - Verb - Subject order. The pragmatic effect of this order is to highlight the Object, that is, the Object is fronted for focusing. In this case, it seems that *nyá1* has the function of a focus marker.

To summarise thus far, *nyá1* and *nyá2* are two distinct elements in the modal system of Ewe: *nyá1* occurs freely with verbs used in their primary valency frames irrespective of the number of arguments and the semantic nature of the Actor. *nyá2*, by contrast, occurs with verbs that are primarily multivalent and causes a change in their valency. In addition, the Actors in the primary valence frame of such verbs must be animate.

In some contexts, it may be hard to distinguish between *nyá1* and *nyá2*. This is the situation that arises with anti-causative verbs such as:

vu 'open' tu' 'close' ho 'uproot' vu' 'tear' fia' 'burn'.

These verbs have alternative primary valencies: one is of two arguments, an agent and a patient; the other is of one argument, a patient. For the second frame, the patient is coded as the subject. In such a case, because the subject is an Undergoer, if **nyá** should occur it could be either *nyá1* or *nyá2* because both forms can occur with Undergoer Subjects. Besides *nyá2* is possible here because an agent is implied in such sentences even if it is not expressed. Consider the following:

[29] awu- a nya' vu'na' m.
 dress DEF MOD tear to 1SG
 nyá1: 'The dress certainly tore on me.' (maleficiary reading)
 nyá2: 'Tearing the dress pleased me.' (experiential reading)

Notice that the presence of the oblique dative phrase does not help to disambiguate this sentence because it is consistent with a *nyá1* interpretation as well as *nyá2*. Luckily however, for a few of these verbs, the oblique phrase may help to disambiguate them because in their primary monovalent reading a different preposition is needed to introduce the recipient of the action. Compare:

[30a] ʋɔ- a nya' tu' ɖe' m.
 door DEF CERT close on 1SG
 'The door did close on me.'

[30b] ʋɔ- a nya' tu' na' m.
 door DEF INV close to 1SG
 'Closing the door pleased me.'

These pieces of evidence support the view that there are two distinct **nyá** modals, even though in some contexts this distinction could be hard to discern. In conclusion, it could be said that *nyá1* is an optional epistemic attitudinal marker. If it is left out of a sentence, the sentence is still grammatical. It is thus pragmatically and grammatically optional. *nyá2*, however, indexes valence changes in the verb and is obligatory. It is semantically and grammatically required.

9.4 *nyá1* constructions

Having established that there are two **nyá** modals, an attempt is made in this section to characterise the semantics of *nyá1* and explore some of its context sensitive interpretations. It has already been stated that the modal function of *nyá1* is to mark a speaker's epistemic certainty about a statement or a proposition. The speaker's certainty may be based on some direct evidence such as may be obtained from witnessing the event being described. Thus if a speaker saw Kofi leave and someone expresses a view to the contrary s/he could assert thus:

[31] kofi' nya' dzo.
 K. CERT leave
 'Kofi certainly left.'

The source of the speaker's certainty may be their personal knowledge of something or some common knowledge about something. In such usage, the speaker emphasises the validity of the statement and his/her attitude towards

it by using *nyá1*. The speaker of the utterance in [32] only affirms what can be assumed to be general truth and knowledge:

[32] e' nya' le e' me be' me' nye' aṅgba
 3SG CERT be3SG in COMP NEG:3SG beleaf

fufu'wo' ko- e' ge' na'ó,
 dry PL only FOC drop HAB NEG

mumu- a- wo' haṅge' na'
 green DEF PL also drop HAB

'It is certainly true that it is not only dry leaves that fall, fresh green ones also do.'
 (Dogoe 1964:41)

The certainty associated with *nyá1* may also come from a conclusion that a speaker may have arrived at based on facts or information available to him/her. For example, there may be some argument between two people in a room about whether it rained the previous night. One of the interlocutors steps outside and observes that the ground is wet; s/he concludes that it must have rained. Consequently s/he asserts:

[33] tsi nya' dza le za~ a' me
 water CERT fall at night DEF in
 'It did rain at night.'

It should be noted that there is no information carried by the form with respect to the source or the nature of the evidence upon which the speaker's certainty about the proposition is based. From this point of view, *nyá1* is not an evidential marker (cf. Chung and Timberlake 1985, Chafe and Nichols 1986, Palmer 1986). It does not necessarily carry information about the validity or otherwise of the proposition either. The common thread of all the uses of *nyá1* seems to be that it expresses a positive conviction of the speaker towards the truth of the proposition. This conviction or attitude is based on the state of the knowledge of the speaker at the time of the utterance. Its force seems to be simply: 'I can say I know this'.

Thus *nyá1* could be described as a modal operator which has scope over the whole clause in which it occurs. This will be assumed in describing the meaning of the construction. The proposition over which the form has scope will be paraphrased simply as: I say: Y, where Y represents everything else in the clause except the *nyá* modal operator.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following semantic explication for *nyá1* constructions:

S *nyá* V (O) X (see examples 31 - 33)

I say: Y

I can say I know this

I maintain that this core meaning is applicable in all contexts and some interpretations that may emerge result from the interaction of this meaning with the semantics of the categories in those contexts.

Thus when *nyá* occurs in a declarative statement in the realis mode with aorist or progressive tense aspect, its meaning is the same. Thus the communicative message of the sentence in [33] above could be paraphrased roughly as:

I say: it rained last night

I can say I know this

I want you to know it

A clause in the irrealis mode, the future or the subjunctive, and containing this epistemic marker may be interpreted as conveying a speaker's uncertainty towards the proposition (see the observation by Clements quoted earlier in §9.1.2). But 'uncertainty' is too broad. I suggest that the kind of uncertainty reading obtained here is one of inference. That is the speaker is perceived to be expressing the following attitude: I think it could happen. It seems that this is only the result of the predictive nature of the future marker, and at the time of speech the speaker couldn't know whether or not the situation represented in the proposition will happen. Nevertheless, the speaker indicates his/her positive conviction that it could become true at a time in the future. In this configuration the sentence meaning could be paraphrased roughly as:

I say: something will happen

I don't want to say I know this because one cannot know this at this time

I want to say I know one could know this at some time after this time

Similarly, a conditional clause with *nyá1* form could be interpreted as conveying a speaker's uncertainty. The 'uncertainty' here seems to be different from the reading one gets with the future. In the context of the conditional, the uncertainty originates from the hypothetical nature of the conditional. Presumably, *nyá1* still conveys its modal operator meaning and the conditional statement is its complement: *I can say I know this* that if this happens then this

will happen. In other words, the speaker is certain that the condition could be fulfilled. Consider these examples:

- [34] ne'wò nya' va' ko la,ma- gblɔ- ɛ nɛ.
 if 3SG CERT come only TP1SG:IRR say 3SG to:3SG
 'If only he does come, I will tell it to him.'

It is perhaps significant that *nyá* tends to occur in 'if only' conditionals. Furthermore, it is possible to add an irrealis to the conditional:

- [35] ne'wò a- nya' va' ko la,
 if 3SG IRR CERT come only TP
 'If only he would come ...'

This suggests that the type of uncertainty read off or felt to be expressed by ... IRR *nyá* and COND *nyá* ..., though compatible and perhaps similar are different. The latter seems to be more tentative than the former.

Some support for the view that the inherent meaning of *nyá* does not necessarily change or rather that it does not have different meanings depending on its context is provided by the fact that when it is used in a formal conditional clause which has a temporal interpretation and therefore could be rendered as 'when/whenever' in English, there is no reading of uncertainty but rather of certainty, as in:

- [36] ne'ɲu ke eye wò nya' kpɔ' e' fe'aha no ko la'
 if day split and 3SG CERT see 3SG poss alcohol drinkonly TP
 e' dji' fo nɛ.
 3SG bury stomach to:3SG
 'When day breaks and he gets his alcohol to drink, he is satisfied'
 (Gadzekpo 1982 :17 - 18)

In fact when *nyá* is employed in a temporal clause explicitly introduced by a temporal connective, the same certainty reading is obtained. Consider this example:

- [37] eʃi wò nya' kpɔ' be' ye- dɔ dome ko la,
 when 3SG CERT see COMP LOG eat inheritance only TP
 e-'fe' agbenɔɔ trɔ.
 3SG poss behaviourchange
 'Once he saw that he had an inheritance, his life (style) changed.'
 (Gadzekpo 1982:17)

The conclusion to be drawn from all this is that *nyá* is a marker of epistemic certainty. In some of its contextual readings, uncertainty may be inferred but

subjecthood could be retained as the Object of the sentence. It should be noted that if the primary Object1 is chosen as subject, Object2 may be optionally retained as illustrated in [39d] below. However if Object2 is subjectized, Object1 seems to be obligatorily retained. This may be due to the fact that Object1 tends to be an inherent complement of the predicators (a factitive case argument, so to speak cf. Fillmore 1968 Kibrik 1979): Consider the examples below. Note that [39a] is the unmarked form. It should also be observed that [39b] and [39d] are marginal and would not be accepted as grammatical by some speakers. [39b] is perhaps unacceptable to some because the recipient argument surfaces as object1:

[39a] kofi' fia' a' akónta ðevi' wo'.

K. teach HAB arithmetic child PL

'Kofi teaches arithmetic to children.'

[39b] ? kofi' fia' a' ðevi' wo' akónta.

K. teach HAB child PL arithmetic

'Kofi teaches children arithmetic.'

[39c] akónta me' *(nya) fia' a' (ðevi' wo) na' m o.

arithmetic NEG INV teach HAB child PL to 1SG NEG

'Teaching (children) arithmetic does not please me.'

[39d] ? ðevi' wo' me' *(nya) fia' a' akónta na' m o.

child PL NEG INV teach HAB arithmetic to 1SG NEG

'Teaching children arithmetic does not please me.'

A patient Undergoer is also retained as object when a peripheral effector - instrument is selected for subjecthood in a *nyá2* construction as in:

[40a] fia' sia *(nya) si-a de' na kofi.'

axe DEM INV cut HAB palm nut to Kofi

'This axe is good for harvesting palm fruit for Kofi.'

[40b] de *(nya) si-na na kofi' (kple'fia'ia).

palm nut INV cut HAB to Kofi with axe DEM

'Palm fruit harvests well for Kofi with this axe'

'Kofi likes harvesting palm fruit (with this axe).'

Perhaps it should be noted that *nyá2* constructions seem to involve two levels of speaker perspective in the choice of an argument for subjecthood. Since this is a marked construction the first choice is that of making an Undergoer (rather than the Actor, all things being equal) a subject. The second

choice pertains to verbs or clauses which can potentially have more than one Undergoer. Here one of the Undergoers is chosen according to the perspective adopted by the speaker. That is, the speaker chooses for example between, a theme or a beneficiary of transfer verbs; or between a patient and an effector instrument for other verbs for subjecthood.

Thus it can be said that in a *nyá2* construction a non-Actor argument construed as having salient involvement in the situation is subjectized. There is always an implied Actor who performs as it were the action or process that the subject is involved in. In addition the speaker seems to be asserting that a non-prototypical argument is presented as subject because of the knowledge s/he has about its involvement in the situation. The speaker presents the Undergoer subject as the participant (or an attribute of it) which makes it possible for the Actor to perform the event and experience the situation. These aspects of the semantic structure of the construction may be represented as:

I can say I know something about U(ndergoer)
because of this, I want to say something about it
something happened to U because someone (A) did something

It appears that there is the need for a further component which would capture the intuitive idea that the Actor, whether expressed or implied, is seen as an experiencer of the event. An instructive, yet not necessarily conclusive, piece of evidence is that native speakers of Ewe tend to translate *nyá2* sentences with affective predicates such as *enjoy, like, please, fond of* (in fact the present writer has done the same rather arbitrarily). This component could perhaps be formulated as:

(One can think this): A(ctor) felt something good because of this

Putting all these components together, I propose that the overall semantic core of *nyá2* constructions be represented as follows:

U *nyá* V (Z) (ná A) [U = Subject; Z = retained Object/oblique
V = verb; A = Actor]

I can say I know something about U
because of this, I want to say something about it
something happened to U because someone (A) did something/
WHEN ONE (A) THINKS OF U, SOMETHING CAN HAPPEN IN A
(One can think this): A(ctor) felt something good because of this

(The section of the formula in capitals is meant to replace the component immediately preceding it if the situation involved is not one where A is doing something to U, but rather A perceiving something about U. This applies to all the explications in this section.)

This formula would apply in general to all *nyá2* constructions, but it does not say anything about some specific constraints that operate within the construction among its constituents - the way the elements in the construction produce various semantic effects. To understand the grammar of *nyá* constructions we need to look at these in some detail. Compare the following sentences:

[41a] akɔɔɔ́ la' nya' ɔ́.
 banana DEF INV eat
 'The banana was eatable/ was good to eat.'

[41b] ? akɔɔɔ́ la' nya' ɔ́- na.
 banana DEF INV eat HAB
 'The type of banana is good to eat.'

[41c] * akɔɔɔ́ nya' ɔ́.
 banana INV eat

[41d] akɔɔɔ́ nya' ɔ́- na.
 banana INV eat HAB
 'Bananas are good to eat.'

Notice that where the subject NP is generic, the verb has to be generic too, that is the habitual (compare [41c.] and [41d]). One could assert that there is no *nyá2* construction with generic subject where the verb is non-habitual. This in itself is instructive but it is also understandable that a generic NP should be used in a clause that has a verb with the same feature. It should also be observed that [41b] is marked with a question mark because of the semantics of the subject NP. The habitual implies that the activity is a customary one and one cannot eat a particular banana over and over again. The sentence is marginally interpretable as a specific species of bananas is good/delicious to eat. The details of the internal co-occurrence restrictions on elements in the construction constitute empirical facts about Ewe that should be accounted for.

For this reason, different subtypes of the *nyá2* construction have to be identified on the basis of the nature of the (Undergoer) Subject NP and the verb. That is, whether the subject NP is generic or non-referential or specific, and definite or indefinite, and whether the verb is marked as habitual or not. Using these formal criteria, one can identify three broad types:

- I generic NP subject and verb has habitual aspect marking
- II specific NP subject and verb has habitual aspect marking
- III specific NP subject and verb not marked for habitual aspect

For each of these subtypes, it would also be necessary to separate those in which the Actor is expressed as an oblique dative from those in which it is not expressed. There are nuances of meaning associated with each of them. One could say that these nuances of meaning correlate with the formal differences manifested in the various constructions. In the remainder of this section, the form and meaning of each of these subtypes will be described.

9.5.2 The generic subject and habitual verb type.

The syntactic formulae for the two sub-constructions of this type are:

- Ia: U [GENERIC] *nyá* V + HAB (Z)
- Ib: U [GENERIC] *nyá* V + HAB (Z) *ná* A

The sub-construction without an Actor phrase will be discussed first. By generic subject is meant that the NP is non-referential which could be interpreted in two ways: in universal terms as in [42] or in terms of types or groups as in [43]:

- [42] nu' nya' du- na, do me' nya' wo- na o.⁹
 thing INV eat HAB work NEG INV do HAB NEG
 'Eating is pleasurable, working is not.'

- [43] ame nɔɔɔ me' nya' nyɔ̃ na o.
 person awake NEG INV wake up HAB NEG
 'It is not easy to wake up someone who is awake.' (Gadzekpo p. 23)

Such utterances tend to make assertions about how things are in general. Consequently, they tend to convey generalisations or information that the

⁹One informant gave me the following sentence which he described as the mirror image of [42]:

ava nya' mo- na, vi me' nya' dzi- na o.
 penis MOD swive HAB child NEG MOD bear HAB NEG
 'Sex is fun, child bearing is not easy.'

speaker assumes is shared by other people, or at least other people in the community would not dispute its validity. This last aspect is reinforced by the deletion of the Actor phrase. This process presents the information contained in such constructions as general knowledge: everybody knows this. Furthermore, the speaker seems certain that it is a general fact that people in the community share.

I propose the following explication, tentatively, for this subconstruction:

U [GENERIC] *nyá* V + HAB (Z)

I can say I know something about U

because of this, I want to say something about it

something can happen to U, because one does something to it/

WHEN ONE (A) THINKS OF U, SOMETHING CAN HAPPEN IN A

one can think that any time one does this

one can feel something good

I know other people know the same thing

The essential difference between pattern Ia and pattern Ib is that the latter tends to convey information that the process or activity is an established habit of the Actor. That is the process is a customary activity that the Actor indulges in. Therefore it could be described as a propensity of the Actor. Thus an Actor phrase could be added to the first part of [42] to express the idea that the referent of the Actor is a glutton:

[44] nu' nya' ɔ- na nakofi'
 thing INV eat HAB to K.
 'Eating pleases Kofi.'

Similarly, an Actor phrase could be added to the second part of the same example [42] and the resulting sentence could be used to communicate the idea that the Actor is lazy. Thus the author of the following sentence uses it to describe one of the lazy characters in a story:

[45] e' nye' ame ɔ, ɔ adeke', deke' deke'
 3SG beperson dull work nonenonenone

me' nya' wɔ- na nɛ o.
 NEG INV do HAB to:3SG NEG
 'S/he is a dull person, no work, none at all can be done by him/her.'
 (Gadzekpo 1982:23)

Note the use of the generic nominal negator, *adeke'* which imposes a universal rather than a typical interpretation on the noun *do* 'work'. The author repeats it here to emphasise that this person doesn't like working or cannot do anything at all.

I propose the following explication for this sub-construction:

U [GENERIC] *nyá* V + HAB(Z) *ná* A
 I can say I know something about U
 because of this, I want to say something about it
 something can happen to U
 because someone (A) does something to it/
 WHEN ONE (A) THINKS OF U, SOMETHING CAN HAPPEN IN A
 One can think that A feels something good because of this
 One can say something else about A because of this
 A can do a lot of this / [A can do this very much]

This formula would appear to account for the intuitive ideas that Westermann was trying to capture in his glosses of his usage (iii) sentences which I take to belong to the subtype being described. Consider again Westermann's examples cited earlier on in § 9.1:

[46] *lã* *me'* *nya'* *ko'* *na'* *na'ame* *deka'* *o.*
 animal NEG INV dissect HAB to person one NEG
 'An animal is not agreeable to be skinned by one person,
 i.e. one person alone cannot skin an animal.'

[47] *tsi* *nya'* *fu'* *na'* *na'tome-* *lã*
 water INV swim HAB to river animal
 'the fish can swim well' (Westermann 1930:138)

It is interesting to compare the glosses Westermann offers for the two sentences which have identical structure in Ewe. It should be observed that the preferred reading for [46] is presented as a predication about the subject 'animal'. For [47], by contrast, the statement is treated as a predication about the ability of the Actor. These glosses are intuitively correct. The translation of [46] in particular would suggest that one may need another component: 'one can say something else about U'. Such a component would account for the predication being thought of as a property of the Undergoer subject. I would argue however that in this subtype this component is an inference that may be drawn for specific examples and not necessarily part of the core meaning of the

structure under discussion. It is not any different from the general idea that there is something about the Undergoer subject which is responsible, so to speak for its critical involvement in the situation. It will be shown below however that this component of meaning, 'one can say something else about U', is part of the semantics of the subtype that has a definite Undergoer subject and a verb marked for habitual aspect.

9.5.3 The specific subject and habitual verb type

The syntactic formulae for the sub-constructions of this type are:

- IIa U [SPECIFIC] *nyá* V + HAB (Z)
 IIb U [SPECIFIC] *nyá* V + HAB (Z) náA

The essential thing about this pattern is that the subject in the construction must be specific. For pattern IIa one can say that the predication denotes a property, quality or propensity ascribed to the Undergoer subject. Often this is a permanent characteristic of the entity referred to by the subject NP. In addition this property is presented as something that everybody will agree with or something that everybody knows about. Consider the following examples:

[48] ha ma' me' nya' se- (n)a o.
 song DEMNEG INV hear HAB NEG
 'That song doesn't sound nice.'

[49] ama nya' kpɔ' na.
 A. INV see HAB
 'Ama is nice/beautiful'

The semantics of these constructions could be explicated tentatively as:

U [SPECIFIC] *nyá* V + HAB (Z)
 I can say I know something about U
 because of this, I want to say something about it
 something can happen to U, because one can do something to it/
 WHEN ONE (A) THINKS OF U, SOMETHING CAN HAPPEN IN A
 one can know something about U because of this
 one can say something about U because of this: U is Y (=predication)
 I know other people know the same thing

One piece of evidence in support of the analysis presented here is that it is possible to paraphrase sentences of this kind in an NP where the subject is the head noun and an adjective qualifying it is made up of a compound of *nyá2* and the verb plus a high tone suffix. Thus example [48] could be paraphrased as:

[50] ha [ma- nya- se] adj ma'
 song NEG INV hear DEM
 'That unpleasant song'

The predication is now used, as it were, attributively in a nominal phrase.

In pattern IIb a further nuance of meaning is added to the one expressed in pattern IIa. It presents the property ascribed to the subject NP as a subjective judgement of the Actor expressed in the oblique dative. For instance, the message of [51] is roughly that Kofi thinks the book is readable. There is no claim as to whether everybody will think the same about the book. However the speaker is certain of the truth of the statement as a whole. Consider the following examples:

[51] agbale~ ma' nya' xle~ na na kofi'
 book DEM INV read HAB to K.
 'That book reads well to Kofi.'

[52] ama nya' kpɔ- na' na- m.
 A. INV see HAB to 1SG
 'Ama is nice/beautiful, I think.'

The semantics of this subconstruction may be explicated as:

U [SPECIFIC] *nyá* V + HAB (Z) náA
 I can say I know something about U
 because of this, I want to say something about it
 something can happen to U
 because someone (A) does something to it/
 WHEN ONE (A) THINKS OF U, SOMETHING CAN HAPPEN IN A
 A can know something about U because of this
 one can say something about A because of this
 A thinks : U is Y (= predication)
 because of what A knows about U

9.5.4 Specific NP subject and non-habitual verb.

The main difference between this subtype and the others discussed so far is the non-habitual nature of the verb. It should be recalled that the other structures have to do with general truths, established habits and permanent properties of one participant or the other. Unlike these constructions, the non-habitual verb subtype pertains to specific events whose occurrence is presupposed and the experience of the Actor is emphasised. The patterns for this subtype of *nyá2* constructions are:

- IIIa U [SPECIFIC] nyá V (Z)
 IIIb U [SPECIFIC] nyá V (Z) náA

One feature of pattern IIIa is that the speaker is the Actor or at least is involved in the situation. If a third person could be construed as the deleted Actor then it usually indicates free indirect style. Consider the following examples:

- [53] ha la'nya' se.
 song DEF INV hear
 'The song sounded well.'

Typically the processes involved should be durative. The experience felt can be attributed to a property of the subject NP, and is not necessarily a permanent one. This component of the structure may be stated roughly as: A felt something because of what can be said about U at that time.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication:

- U [SPECIFIC] nyá V (Z)
 I can say I know something about U
 because of this, I want to say something about it
 something happened to U because I did something /
 WHEN I THOUGHT OF U, SOMETHING HAPPENED IN ME
 I can say something else about myself because of this
 I felt something good at that time
 I think I felt this way
 because of something that one can say about U at that time
 I think other people would feel the same if they do this /
 if this happens

For pattern IIIb, however, the participant in the Actor phrase is the experiencer and the speaker, as it were, is reporting the Actor's experience or judgement of the situation. There is no implication that the judgement has

general validity. Nevertheless, the speaker is sure about the fact of the proposition. Consider the following examples:

[54] gbɔ̃ la' nya' wu nakofi'
goat DEF INV kill to K.
'The goat killed easily for Kofi'

[55] amatsi la' me' nya' no na'devi' a' o.
medicine DEF NEG INV drink to child DEF NEG
'The medicine was not drinkable to the child'
[The child could not drink the medicine.]

This subconstruction can be explicated as follows:

U [SPECIFIC] *nyá* V (Z) *ná* A
I can say I know something about U
because of this, I want to say something about it
something happened to U, because someone (A) did something
WHEN ONE (A) THOUGHT OF U SOMETHING HAPPENED IN A
one can say something about A because of this
A felt something good at the time he did it
one can say A felt this
because of something that one can say about U at that time

Because this subtype deals with specific events, it seems intuitively correct to have a temporal reference in the formula. Indeed the progressive aspect may be used with this structure as in the following statement used to describe the splendour of a public performance:

[56] e' nya' le kpɔ-kpɔ' m',
3SG INV PRES see see PROG
me' nya' le wɔ- wɔ- m' o.
NEG INV PRES do do PROG NEG
'It is pleasing to see, it is not easy to do.'
i.e. 'Seeing is easier than doing.'

Also, one can have an irrealis mode for this construction. Thus one could predict that something could be good to do because of his/her current knowledge. Here, as in the case of *nyá1* constructions in the irrealis mode, we get an inference reading as the following examples illustrate:

[57] akɔɔqu' sia a- nya' ɔu.
 banana DEMIRR INV eat
 'This banana will be good to eat.'

[58] dɔ ma' me- nya' le wɔ- wɔ ge' o.
 work DEMNEG INV PRES do do INGR NEG
 'That work will not be able to be done'
 ['One will not be able to do that work.']

The message of these sentences is that at the moment of speech one could not know whether or not the realisation of the event will become a fact, although the speaker has a positive conviction towards it. These sentences indirectly support the view reflected in the semantic formulae that *nyá2* constructions have a component of 'I can say I know ...' This (partial) component also seems to be the unifying feature between *nyá1* and *nyá2*. It is the similarity in meaning that is reflected in the identity of form that they exhibit. Ultimately, it is the same component of meaning that the two modals share with the verb *nyá* 'know' from whence they came.

One can say the following by way of conclusion about *nyá2* constructions: They involve multivalent verbs whose Actor role is filled by an animate referent. They also involve the choice of a participant construed by the speaker as the most critically involved in the event as subject. Finally, they have a subjective dimension: the Actor participant which is either deleted or demoted to an oblique dative is viewed as an experiencer.

9.6 Implications for syntactic typology and description

Having described the syntax and semantics of *nyá2* constructions, the question of how to label them in terms of typologically relevant construction types can now be profitably considered. In § 9.6.1 the validity of Duthie's claim that *nyá2* could be called a passiviser is evaluated. This will be done by comparing the formal and functional features of *nyá2* constructions with the prototype of passive constructions. I will argue that even though most of the structural properties of *nyá2* constructions fit a passive prototype, it should not be considered a passive on semantic grounds. An alternative of describing *nyá2* constructions as inversion structures in Relational Grammar terms is examined in §9.6.2. It is noted that *nyá2* does have the features of inversion structures. It seems that if one has to describe these structures as either passives or inversions then the latter is more preferable. Nevertheless it is not entirely clear if *nyá2* should be described as an inversion marker. It is concluded that *nyá2*

constructions constitute a distinct syntactic structure which is characteristically part of the semantic style of Ewe. Above all, they are devices for coding different types of experiencers (cf. Chapter 10 for other means of coding experiencers).

9.6.1 Are *nyá2* constructions passives?

There are several studies of passives from a cross-linguistic perspective (eg. Givón 1981, Comrie 1981, Siewerska 1984 Keenan 1985, Foley and Van Valin 1984, 1985). Each of these authors offers a description of a typical passive and I assume that Shibatani's (1985) characterisation of the passive prototype is representative of what many people understand the passive to be. Shibatani (1985:837) defines the passive prototype as follows:

- a. Primary pragmatic function: Defocusing of agent
- b. Semantic properties:
 - (i) Semantic valence: Predicate (agent, patient)
 - (ii) Subject is affected
- c. Syntactic properties:
 - (i) Syntactic encoding: agent --> \emptyset (not encoded)
patient --> subject
 - (ii) Valence of P[redicate]: Active = P/n
Passive = P/n - 1
- d. Morphological property: Active = P
Passive = P [passive]

[Note that P = predicate and n= number (of arguments)]

As far as *nyá2* constructions are concerned, it is fair to say that an animate Actor is defocused, i.e. does not occur as subject. Thus the construction has a pragmatic function similar to the passive. In terms of valence and syntactic properties *nyá2* constructions behave just like passives. One could even argue that *nyá2* is the morphological or auxiliary marker which indicates passive. Thus the structures could be considered passives to the extent that they entail subjectization of patients or, more broadly, Undergoers, as well as bearing some kind of morphological marking on the verb to indicate this.

In terms of its semantics, however, I think the Ewe construction is far from a passive structure. First of all, Shibatani claims that one of the semantic properties of passive subjects is that they are affected. It is not very clear what he means by this. But if we follow Klaiman (1988:28) and assume that "an affected entity is (...) the participant perceived as affected or most affected in consequence of the sententially denoted action", then it could be asserted that the subject of a *nyá2* construction is not as affected as the demoted Actor. It is

the demoted Actor who is perceived as most affected in the situation, i.e. as an experiencer. On this count then *nyá2* constructions are at variance with passives.

Indeed some of the meanings associated with the Ewe construction are also conveyed by passives and similar constructions in some languages (see eg. Munro and Langacker 1975, Davison 1980). Thus for example, in Greek, the middle voice is used for expressing disposition. But it is the disposition of the subject which is thus expressed. Recall that in Ewe it is the disposition of the oblique Actor which is conveyed using this structure. Similarly, in Hindi the passive *jaa* is used to express ability. Here again it is the ability of the subject of the passive which is conveyed in this way, not of the oblique Actor as is the case in Ewe.

It seems therefore that even though *nyá2* constructions share some formal features with syntactic passives, they do not necessarily share the same or similar functions. Furthermore, they are not passives, from a semantic point of view. In Ewe the *nyá* construction seems to be a device for coding implicitly or explicitly an Actor viewed as an experiencer.

9.6.2 Are *nyá2* constructions inversions?

Could the *nyá* constructions be inversions? Inversion is described in Relational Grammar as a process which demotes underlying experiencer subjects to indirect objecthood (i.e. dative obliques) in surface structure. If one assumes a derivational view of *nyá* constructions, then obviously they are inversions in RG terms. The same conclusion is arrived at when one compares the features of the syntactic process of inversion with those of the *nyá* constructions. Harris (1984:281 ff.), among others, has proposed that inversion is a rule of universal grammar with the following features:

- a. Inversion is a clause-internal phenomenon.
- b. Inversion is stated on grammatical relations.
- c. Inversion is governed.

There is no doubt that the processes associated with *nyá2* are clause internal. The demoted Actor may be coreferential with a reflexive in the subject NP. That is, the oblique Actor argument is the logical antecedent of the reflexive form in the subject phrase. This shows that both the Actor and the Undergoer subject belong to the same clause. Consider the following example:

- [59] *ɲufínya-wo' tso' e'ya ɲuto' dɔkuiɲu*
 story PL from3SG INT REFL side
me' nya' se- na ne o.
 NEG INV hear HAB to:3SG NEG
 'Stories about himself_j are not pleasing to hear for him_j.'

By feature b, Harris means that one cannot capture generalisations about inversion in terms of semantic roles but rather in terms of grammatical roles such as subject and indirect object. It should be noted however that I have stated the features of *nyá2* constructions in terms of macro semantic roles and semantic features. It seems to me that the generalisation would not be constrained enough if it were only stated in terms of grammatical relations. Nevertheless, the structural features of *nyá2* constructions can be stated in terms of grammatical relations (see the generalisations for the processes in §9.3.2 and §9.5.1). Finally, inversion is said to be governed in the sense that it is triggered by certain types of predicates (see Merlan (1982) for arguments against such a position). The first group of these are the so-called affective predicates. These predicates are not necessarily the triggers for *nyá* constructions in Ewe. Some affective predicates do not occur in *nyá2* constructions. It should be pointed out that there is not a lexical class of verbs which may be described as a class of inverse verbs as there are in languages like Russian (cf. Nichols 1985), or Caucasian languages such as Georgian (cf. Harris *ibid*).

The *nyá* construction would appear to fit the second category of triggers better. In this case the language has a derivational process which creates complex predicates with modal value such as potential and desiderative. The description of the *nyá* forms and the syntactic formulation of the processes fit this condition on inversion. It should also be observed that the predicate formed by *nyá2* has a dynamic modal meaning which includes the potential. Thus from a formal and semantic point of view the *nyá2* constructions are like inversions. Furthermore, elements of the third type of trigger of inversion are also discernible in the *nyá* constructions. This third type of trigger is evidential predicates. Note that inversions occur in the evidential mode in Georgian, for instance. It should be recalled that *nyá* has an epistemological function associated with it.

Thus although *nyá2* constructions are not necessarily triggered by affective predicates, the other types of trigger are involved in the Ewe structures. The *nyá2* constructions seem therefore to fit one way or another the 'universal' features of inversions. They are however not prototypical inverse constructions because in such structures the dative argument is usually not optional as is the case in Ewe.

9.6.3 Cross-linguistic analogues of *nyá*2 constructions

From a cross-linguistic point of view, *nyá*2 constructions seem to be similar morphologically and syntactically to passives and to inversions. They are more similar functionally and semantically to inversion phenomena in other languages. They seem to be closely related to several other structures in diverse languages: to ‘tough’ constructions in Japanese (Inoue 1978); to potential constructions in Caucasian languages (see eg. Nichols 1982); to dative of the ‘agent viewed as experiencer’ constructions in Slavic languages (see e.g. Wierzbicka 1988, Janda 1988); to inflectional inverse structures in Russian - the *sja* construction (see e.g. Nichols 1985), to the so-called ‘middle’ and related constructions in English such as *The jug pours well* etc. (see eg O’Grady 1980, Keyser and Roper 1984, Fagan 1988, Hendrikse 1989 and Dixon 1991) and to patient subject constructions of the form: *The cake is delicious to eat*. (see Van Oosten 1986).

Whichever way one wants to look at it, one thing is certain: the *nyá*2 construction has its distinct semantics and is part of the idiom or semantic style of Ewe. Although it is parallel to constructions in other languages, there are still nuances of meaning between it and the analogous structures in the other languages. For instance, in Russian, intransitive verbs can participate in the inverse construction, but this is not the case in Ewe.

9.7 The grammaticization of the *nyá* modals

An attempt has been made in the preceding sections to describe the motivation of the synchronic grammar of *nyá* modal constructions in Ewe. Further insight into the behaviour of the *nyá* forms may be obtained from an examination of their evolution. This will in part explain the *nyá* homonyms found in the synchronic grammar. As Bybee (1987:17) observes: “... to understand grammar, grammatical morphemes and grammatical meaning we should understand how they evolve, both how they come into existence and how they continue to develop.” Two possible paths of the development of these forms suggest themselves. The first is where both *nyá* modals evolved along separate paths from the main verb ‘to know’, perhaps by narrowing. This scenario may be represented as follows:

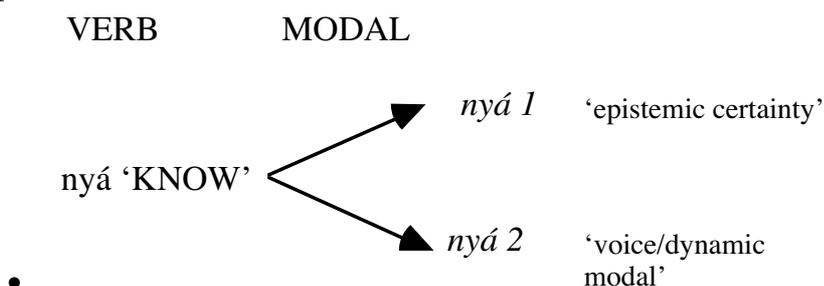


Fig 9.2 The grammaticization of *nyá* forms: Scene I

Plausible as this development may seem, it does not articulate the link that is felt to exist between *nyá 1* and *nyá 2*. This link seems to be captured better by the second path of development, namely that *nyá1* developed from the verb **nyá** by narrowing and then *nyá2* developed out of that. This scenario may be diagrammed as follows:

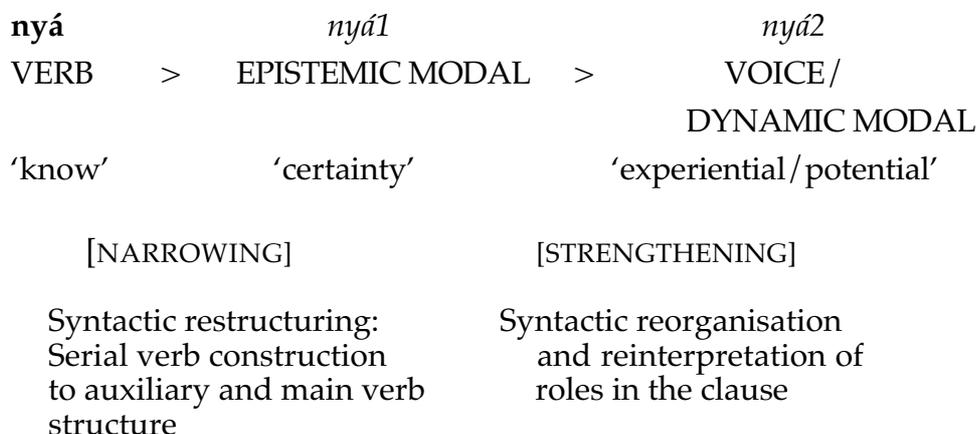


Fig 9.3 The grammaticization of *nyá* forms: Scene II

As indicated in §9.2 the verb **nyá** ‘know’ is associated with a number of inferences and uses such as ‘certainty’, ‘capability’, ‘potential’, ‘probability’ etc. It would appear that as the verb became grammaticalised as a modal, its semantics became narrowed and a specific inference of certainty became grammaticised with it (cf. Faltz 1989). This modal developed further leading to what may be called (pragmatic) strengthening (Traugott 1988) and the form acquired more meanings and a syntactic function. It should be observed that the more grammaticalised the form, the more grammatically obligatory it is. Notice that *nyá1* could be said to be pragmatically and grammatically optional while *nyá2* is grammatically obligatory.

What is perhaps interesting is that the modal functions of *nyá2* especially the potential/ability, are known to be expressed cross-linguistically by the verb ‘to know’ or its grammaticalised form. It is well known that some languages tend to use the verb for ‘know’ extensively for ability, for example, French *savoir* and Polish *umiec*. Hungarian is one language in which an abilitative modal has developed from the verb ‘to know’. Kiefer (1988) provides a description of the form *tud* which is the main verb ‘to know’ and an auxiliary which is used to express qualitative ability, capability as well as ‘to have opportunity’ to do something. These meanings are associated with the Ewe *nyá* modals too, but they are divided between two forms. Recall that one of Westermann’s glosses for the *nyá* modals is ‘to have opportunity or time’ to V.

What is less documented is the development of epistemic and valence change markers from the verb ‘to know’, as is the case in Ewe. Korean seems to have

an epistemic modal which seems to be a grammaticalised form of the verb 'to know' (Gi-Hyun Shin, personal communication). I have not come across any evidence in the literature on the evolution of 'voice' markers from 'know' in other languages. More research is urgently needed in this area.

To recapitulate, it is suggested that in Ewe an epistemic certainty modal and a diathesis marker with the function of a dynamic modal and expressing experiential and potential meanings have evolved from the verb to know. The meanings of the grammaticalised forms are linked to the inferences and uses associated with the main verb. It may be suggested that the meanings of the *nyá* modals, especially those of the 'voice' marker, are the result of their grammaticalisation from the verb 'to know'.

Chapter 10

EXPERIENCER CONSTRUCTIONS

the grammatical packaging of experiencers in the clause

10.1 Introduction

It is now commonplace that languages have different means of representing the same extra-linguistic or real world situation. It is furthermore assumed that these different means of representation reflect different conceptualisations of real-world situations. The purpose of this chapter is to describe the different morpho-syntactic devices that are available in Ewe for the presentation of the conceptualisations of an experiencer of an emotion or sensation in a clause.

I assume that an 'experiencer' is the participant in a situation who is psychologically, perceptually or emotionally aware of something (cf Andrews 1985). This characterisation of the term 'experiencer' has at least two implications: (i) it reflects the view that the category of experiencer is a heterogeneous role (cf. Wierzbicka 1980, Inoue 1974) and (ii) following from (i) above, that one could use the 'experiencer' as a primary thematic relation notion. Thus predicates of perception e.g. 'see', 'smell', 'perceive' etc., psychological or mental or emotional predicates e.g. 'love', 'hate', 'anger', 'fear' etc., and sensation predicates such as 'hunger', 'thirst', 'itch', 'pain' etc. all require an experiencer argument (cf. Postal 1971; VanValin to appear). But an argument of an activity, especially the agent of, for example 'eat', 'work' etc., could also be viewed as an 'experiencer' (see the discussion of the 'Actor as Experiencer' in Chapter 9). In that case we could talk of a macro-role of Experiencer (on a par with the macro-roles of Actor and Undergoer in Role and Reference Grammar (Foley and Van Valin 1984, Van Valin to appear; and cf. Evans 1989; Neumann 1987)). Both readings are assumed in the present study.

The present study can be viewed as an investigation of the relationship between meaning and syntactic form, specifically word order and grammatical functions. It is assumed, in principle, that a systematic difference in grammatical packaging including word order and grammatical relations corresponds to a systematic difference in meaning (cf. e.g. Bolinger 1977, Wierzbicka 1988, Haiman 1985). As Sangster and Waugh (1978: 230) comment:

There is no a priori reason to consider such a syntactic phenomenon as word order, for example, as "merely grammatical" and therefore devoid of meaning, ... word order, just as any other linguistic phenomenon, should be studied with respect to its semantic function.

In the context of this chapter, it will be demonstrated that different conceptualisations of an experiencer are coded by the grammatical functions which may be assigned to the particular argument in a specific context. Since grammatical relations are defined in Ewe with respect to word order, the different word order configurations in which an experiencer is found furnish excellent clues to the different perspectives from which an experiencer may be presented in Ewe. Thus grammatical word order can also be exploited for information packaging within a clause. Roughly speaking, the real world situation of 'X was happy' may be represented in one of the ways indicated in [1]. The items that encode the affective predicate are underlined.¹

[1a] me kpɔ́ dzidzɔ
 1SG see happiness
 'I was happy'

[1b] dzi dzɔ - m
 heart straight 1SG
 'I was happy'

[1c] e' dzɔ dzi na' m
 3SG straightheart to 1SG
 'It pleased me'

[1d] e' do' dzidzɔ na' m
 3SG cause happiness to 1SG
 'It made me happy'

In [1a] and [1b] the experiencer is coded as subject and as object1 respectively. In [1c] and [1d], however, the experiencer is coded as a dative prepositional object. A further point to note is that in [1a] and [1b] there is no overt linguistic expression of the stimulus of the affective state. However, in [1c], the stimulus, and in [1d], the causer, are encoded as subject in each case.

Various studies suggest that emotions or experiential situations in general may be presented as either 'volitional' or 'non-volitional' or 'active' or 'passive' (or even as a neutral state with respect to these categories (see below)). The linguistic manifestation of this distinction varies from language to language. In some languages, it is lexically governed. That is, affective predicates could be

¹ For simplicity the sentences in [1] are in the aorist. To express current or present state/emotion the progressive would have to be used which introduces other complications.

divided into those that are 'active' and those that are 'passive' on the basis of their inherent semantics. The former tend to code sensations and physiological experiences and the latter emotional experiences (cf. Bugenhagen 1989 on Mangap Mbula).

In many other languages, the 'active'/'passive' or 'voluntary'/'involuntary' nature of experiences is coded not in the affective predicate per se, but is signalled by the kind of syntactic construction in which it occurs or the syntactic category to which the predicate belongs, as well as the morpho-syntactic properties of the experiencer NP. For example, Wierzbicka (in press e: 6) argues that:

"Russian has a syntactic contrast between 'voluntary emotions' (designated by verbs with experiencers in the nominative), 'involuntary emotions' (designated by an adverb-like category, the so-called *kategorija sostojanija*, 'category of state', with the experiencer in the dative case), and ... volitionally neutral stative emotions (designated by an adjective with the experiencer in nominative)."

(See also Wierzbicka 1980, and to appear. for exemplification.)

In Russian then one can say that different conceptualisations of experiencers are coded by the interaction of the category of the affective predicate and the case of the experiencer NP.

Similarly, in English the different distinctions made among experiential situations are coded in one of two closely related ways. First, they may be signalled by the grammatical relation assumed by the experiencer in an affective predication. Compare the following sentences which roughly speaking refer to the same experiential situation. Note in particular the different roles of the experiencer (cf. Talmy 1985:99):

John frightens me [Experiencer as object]
I fear John [Experiencer as subject]

Typically, when the experiencer is coded, as subject of a verb, it is perceived to be 'active' and when it is coded as object, it is conceptualised as a 'passive' participant in the situation. Second, the different conceptualisations of the experiencer may be signalled by the lexical category of the affective predicate. Generally, when the affective predicate is a verb, then the situation is construed as a 'voluntary' one, but when it is an adjective, it may be viewed as an 'involuntary' experience (cf. Wierzbicka in press a and to appear). Compare:

Mary is rejoicing (V)

Mary is happy (Adj)

In the rest of this chapter, I want to explore the various ways of conceptualising experiencers (and emotional experiences in general) that are encoded in grammatical constructions in Ewe. I will demonstrate that the following factors ‘conspire’ to represent different shades of affective experiences as well as different conceptualisations of experiencers:

- the nature, i.e. structure and semantic type of the affective predicate, i.e. are there alternative ways of designating the same affective situation?
- the grammatical relations of the experiencer argument; whether it is subject or object or prepositional object, and what specific preposition heads the prepositional phrase.

These interacting factors indicate that it is the lexico-grammatical packaging of experiential situations which signals the way in which a particular situation and the participants involved are conceptualised.

The rest of the chapter is organised as follows. In §10.2 the structural types of affective predicates in Ewe are outlined. These will be constantly referred to in the discussion of the coding of experiencer as SUBJECT, OBJECT, dative Prepositional OBJECT, causee and as possessor in the subsections of §10.3. The chapter concludes with a summary of the main points of the discussion.

10.2 The structure of affective predicates

Like other predicative meanings in Ewe which are expressed by various structures, affective meanings are also coded in various constructs involving verbs and nominals. The various structures of these affective predicate constructions are outlined in this section.

10.2.1 Simple verb stem:

Some affective predicates consist of only a single verb stem. This verbal element may be monomorphemic as in:

di' 'want, seek'² hia' 'want, need'

²The verb *di'* has an interesting range of uses each of which has its associated semantics. When it is used in the sense of 'want', it has an animate NP subject and an object complement clause introduced by *be`that'*

kofi di'be' ye- a- kpɔ' wo`
K. want COMP LOG IRR see 2SG
'Kofi wants to see you'

When its object is an NP, then it may be translated as 'seek' or 'look for'. In this case its subject is more of an agent.

nya me' di'a' ame o
word NEG want HAB person NEG

dj 'surprised' vɔ̃ 'fear, be afraid'
 vẽ 'smell, emit odour' ve 'sour, be painful'

Or they may be multi-morphemic; for instance,

sẽsẽ 'hard, strong' vívi 'sweet'

The essential thing about these items is that they are single words which express an affective predicate.

10.2.2 Complex verbals

Affective predicates may be expressed by two separate verbs which together colexicalise an affective meaning. For example,

vẽ	se;	ɔ̃	kpɔ̃
smell	hear	put on	see
'to smell (something)'		'to taste (something)'	

It is interesting that the second verb in these complexes is usually a verb of perception signalling, perhaps, that they have to do with affect. It must be emphasised that the meaning of the individual verbs by themselves is (slightly) different from the meaning conveyed by the complex predicate. Compare the following:

[2a] kofi' vẽ na'
 K. smell HAB
 'Kofi emits odours'

ame- e' di'-a' nya
 person aFOC want HAB word
 'Trouble does not seek people it is people who look for trouble!'

This behaviour of the verb is instructive in the sense that it supports the view that the experiencer coded as subject is 'active'.

There is a further use of the verb with inanimate NPs and be' complements. In this context it expresses prospective aspect, that is 'to be about to V.' e.g.

tsi di' be' ye- a dza
 water want COMP LOG IRR fall
 'Rain wants to fall' i.e. it is about to rain.

dɔ di' be' ye- a le'- m'
 sickness want COMP LOG IRR catch 1SG
 Sickness wants to catch me
 'I am about to become sick'

What is even more interesting is that in these cases the verb dí can be elided that is, it is optional. It is not unexpected that the verb 'want' may be grammaticalised to express a 'future' kind of meaning (cf Ultan 1978: 113).

[2b] kofi' se nya aɔɛ
 K.hear word INDEF
 'Kofi has heard something'

[2c] kofi' ve ami- a se
 K.smell oilDEF hear
 'Kofi smelled the pomade'

Note that in [2a] Kofi is not an experiencer but the percept or stimulus or source. In [2b] and [2c], however, Kofi is the experiencer.

10.2.3 Phrasal predicates

A phrasal predicate in general is made up of a verb root and an inherent nominal complement which together express a predicate meaning. The main thing is that the nominal behaves syntactically like an independent nominal and the structure should not therefore be thought of as incorporation (although it feels like it). There are structures of the form [VN] PRED which denote emotions and sensations. For example,

GROUP A

kpe ŋu
 weigh side
 'be ashamed, shame'

dzo dzi
 straighten heart
 'be happy, glad'

ku' dzi
 die heart
 'be angry'

GROUP B

va ŋu
 move side/body/eye
 '(be) jealous'

xa nu'
 suffer thing
 'to worry'

bi' dzi
 bend heart
 'get angry'

There are some differences in morpho-syntactic behaviour between the forms in Group A and those in Group B which are suggestive of some semantic differences as well. First, there is a difference in their nominalisation patterns. Those in group A are nominalised by permuting the [V - N]_{VP} order to [N - V]_N. In addition to reversing the verb-noun order, those in group B have a reduplicated verbal element in their nominalised form. Compare the following:

GROUP A

GROUP B

[V N]_{VP} → [N -V]_N

ɲukpe 'shame'
dzidzo 'happiness'
dziku 'anger'

[V N]_{VP} → [N-V+RED]_N

ɲuvava 'jealousy'
nuɣaxa 'worry'
dzibiɓi 'anger'

This difference in nominalisation processes between the two groups suggests a difference in their conceptualisation. The group A elements represent non-processes (stative) nominalisations, while the group B ones represent process(ual) (active) statives. This suggests also that their respective predicate counterparts are also stative (Group A) and active (Group B). In fact, the reduplicative component of the group B nominalisations would appear to be iconic with their activity shade of meaning (action nominalisation in Ewe in general is expressed by reduplication).

It is interesting to note that the group A elements can have process(ual) counterparts made of verbs of experience and the nominal of emotion. For example,

ɖu ɲukpe
consume shame
'be ashamed'

kpɔ́ dzidzo
see happiness
'be happy'

kpɔ́ dziku, or: dó dziku'
see anger wearanger
'be angry' 'be angry'

These differences have consequences for the roles that experiencers can fill with respect to the two groups of predicates.

Thus the N component of the group A items can function independently as the subject of the verbal component and the experiencer is coded as the object:

[3a] ɲu kpe - m
side weigh 1SG
'I was ashamed'

[3b] dzi dzɔ - m
heart straighten 1SG
'I was happy'

[3c] dzi ku'- m
 heart die 1SG
 'I was angry'

In this function, these nominal elements can even be focussed as illustrated below:

[4a] ŋu - e' kpe - m
 side aFOC weigh 1SG
 'Ashamed I was'

[4b] dzi - e' dzɔ - m
 heart aFOC straighten 1SG
 'Happy I was'

[4c] dzi - e' ku'- m
 heart aFOC die 1SG
 'Angry I was'

The nominal components of group B items cannot function in the same way as subjects nor can they be focussed in similar fashion. Note the unacceptability of the following:

[5a] * ŋu - (e) va - m
 side aFOC move 1SG

[5b] * nu'- (e) xa - m
 thing aFOC suffer 1SG

[5c] * dzi - (e) bi'- m
 heart aFOC bend 1SG

(See below for a discussion of the implications of this behaviour).

This brings us to another structural type of phrasal predicates; those of the form [N V]. In this case the (inherent) nominal component functions as subject, and the experiencer is the object. [In traditional Ewe lexicographic practice the object slot is filled by the generic nominal **ame** 'person' for some of these. The slot is indicated in the examples below by a dash]. Consider these examples:

GROUP C

GROUP D

də	wu —	vɔvɔ˥dʰo˥˥
stomach	kill	fear reach
	'to be hungry'	'to be gripped by fear'
dəme	ɬu ---	hia˥ tu ---
stomach-in	consume	need reach
	'to have stomach ache'	'want has caught up with'
aɬuɬɔ	to˥—	alo˥ tsɔ˥ --
urine	grow	sleep carry
	'to have an urge to urinate'	'to be sleepy'

The subclassification here is based on the semantics of the N. In group C the N denotes a body part which is the seat of the sensation and bodily products (or exuviae). In group D the N stands for an emotion/sensation; typically it is a nominalised form of an affective predicate. The general semantics of the verbs in both groups are also different: in group C the verbs are typically those of activity (with an experiential dimension) while in group D the verbs are achievement verbs.

Although group C items in particular might look very much like group A terms, especially when the nominal functions as subject, there are subtle differences between them: firstly, the group A forms typically denote emotions while the group C terms denote sensations; secondly, their nominalisation patterns are different. Typically, the group C forms nominalise by compounding the N, the V and a generic nominal **ame** or a generic pronominal **i**. For example:

də- wu- ame
 stomach kill person
 'hunger'

dəme- ɬu- i
 stomach-in eat 3SG
 'stomach ache'

aɬuɬɔ˥ to˥- ame
 urine grow person
 'urine urge'

The nominalised forms of group D items make use of similar elements.

vɔvɔ̃ ɖɔ́ ame
 fear reach person
 'fear'

hiã tu- ame
 need reach person
 'a (human) need'

10.2.4 Summary

By way of summary; affective predicates have structures similar to other predicates in the language. The following structural types and subtypes have been identified and described in this section:

- simple verb stem: single verb that denotes a predicate meaning.
- complex verbals: two verbs that co-lexicalise a single predicate meaning.
- phrasal predicates: phrases made up of a verb and its inherent complement.

These are of two main subtypes:

the basic [V N] PRED type and the [N V] PRED type.

These have subgroups depending on semantic and morpho-syntactic distinctions: [V N] type (a) is stative while type (b) is active/processual

[N V] type (a) has body part Ns as seat of sensation and bodily products while the Ns of [N V] type (b) designate emotions.

In the ensuing discussion, it will become evident that one can make use of different configurations of these affective predicates (together with tense and aspect variation) to code distinctions between emotional dispositions or attitudes on the one hand and emotional reactions (or occurrent feeling) which may be instantaneous on the other. In combination with other grammatical factors, the former may be expressed by the habitual or the aorist and the latter by the present progressive or the aorist. For example,

[6a] ɖevi ma' kpe - a ɲu
 child DEM weigh HAB side
 'That child is shy' (emotional disposition)

[6b] ɖevi ma' le ɲu kpe m'
 child DEMbe: PRES side weigh PROG
 'That child is feeling shy' (emotional reaction).

In addition, through the use of the causative verbs: na''cause, give', do''cause, wear', wɔ 'do, make', the inchoative copula zu 'become' and the stative or

identity copula *nye* 'be', one can indicate the causative, the inchoative and the stative nature of a particular affective situation. Compare the following:

[7a] *aña do' nu'axa na'- m*

A. cause worry to 1SG

'Ama caused me to be worried'

[7b] *aña na' me - xa nu'*

A. cause 1SG suffer thing

'Ama caused me to be worried'

[8a] *e'- zu nu'axa na'm*

3SG become worry to 1SG

'It became a worry to me'

[8b] *e'- nye' nu'axa na'm*

3SG beworry to 1SG

'It is a worry to me'

The way these interact with the coding of experiencers in various grammatical constructions will be explored in the subsequent sections.

10.3 The grammatical coding of experiencers

The main hypothesis of this chapter is that the grammatical coding of the experiencer argument in an affective predication is iconic with its conceptualisation. It is shown that when the experiencer is coded as subject, it is conceptualised as an active participant; when it is coded as an object - direct or prepositional - it is construed as a non-volitional participant in the situation. In addition to these broad coding patterns, the experiencer may also be presented as the causer or causee; the recipient or the target of the affective experience. Each of these conceptualisations corresponds to some distinct grammatical pattern. In an attempt to reveal these subtle differences, natural language definitions are provided for the (general) grammatical constructions in the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) framework.

10.3.1 Experiencer as subject

When the experiencer is coded as the grammatical subject in an experiential predication then it is conceptualised as an 'active', volitional participant in the situation with some degree of control. Intuitively, it can be argued that prototypically subjects in transitive clauses, at least, are actors. Thus when an argument fills the subject slot in a transitive clause it can be claimed that it has

some, if not all, of the properties of actors. Indeed, the kinds of affective predicates which have experiencer subjects in Ewe provide language-internal evidence for these claims.

10.3.1.1 Predicates of cognition and perception

The experiencers of predicates of cognition are coded as subjects. Thus the cognizing participant of predicates such as: *nya* 'know' *bu* 'think' *suŋu* 'imagine' *xɔ se* 'believe' *dɔ'ŋku* X *dzi* (lit: set eye on X) 'remember' and *ŋlɔ be* 'forget' all fill the subject slot. For example,

- [9] e- ŋlɔ- na dɛvi- a- wo' kple' wo' nɔ bekeŋ
 3SG forget HAB child DEF PL and 3PL mother VS all
 'He forgets the children and their mother completely'
 [Mɔtabiala]

- [10] kofi' nya' gɛ~
 K. knows Accra.
 'Kofi knows Accra'

For these cognitive predicates, it is reasonable to claim that the experiencer performs some mental act, hence s/he has some volition and control over the degree to which s/he wants to perform the act.

Similarly, the perceiving participant in a predication of perception tends to be coded as subject. For instance,

- [11] wo'- se ŋli seŋe' aɖe'
 3PL hear shout hard INDEF
 'They heard a loud noise' (Akpatsi 1980: 16)

- [12] kofi' kpɔ' ama le mɔ- a' dzi'
 K. see A. at way DEF top
 'Kofi saw Ama on the way'

In these cases too, the perceiver is conscious of the percept/stimulus hence s/he performs a kind of mental act. Before turning to emotional predicates that have experiencer subjects, I propose the following formula, tentatively, as the representation of the meaning of constructions that have experiencer subjects in general:

X EXPERIENCER (= SUBJECT) [PRED] Y PERCEPT/ STIMULUS

When X thinks of Y
 something happens in X
 [because of this: X feels something]
 One can think:
 X could do something not to think/feel this if X wanted to

The third line of the formula is in brackets because it applies only to emotions. The point of the first component is that when X perceives Y, the stimulus, it triggers something in him/her which causes him/her to feel something or think something. The last component captures both the volitional and controllable nature of the affective situation by the experiencer. The data outlined above with respect to cognitive and perception predications support this formula. Further evidence is provided by emotional predications, the possibility of the prohibitive with these predicates, and the fact that experiencers that are coded as subject may be the referent of agent nominalisation. Each of these properties are taken in turn.

10.3.1.2 Predicates of emotion

The emotional predicates that take experiencer subjects seem to fall into a number of natural or semantic classes. First, there are the desiderative ones, that is those predicates that have a 'want' component in their semantics. These include: *di* 'want, seek, look for, like etc.'; *hia* 'want, need'; *dzro* 'desire, crave'; *tsri* 'avoid, abstain, hate'; *bia* *ŋku* (lit: 'redden eye') 'covet'. The interesting thing about these predicates is that they may take either subject or object experiencers without any change in their structure. But the interpretation of the experiential predications in which they occur is influenced by the grammatical role of the experiencer argument. Compare the following pairs of examples (the experiencer is underlined in each case):

[13a] kofi *hia* ga
 K. need money
 'Kofi needs money.'

[13b] *ga* *hia* kofi
 money need K.
 Lit: money needs Kofi
 'Kofi is in need of money.'

[14a] ama *tsri* *agbeli*

A. hate cassava,
 'Ama avoids/hates cassava.'

[14b] agbeli tsri ama
 cassava hate A.
 'Ama is allergic to cassava.'

[15a] me - dzro' fufu
 1SG desire fufu
 'I coveted (someone's) fufu.'

[15b] fufu dzro'- m
 fufu desire 1SG
 lit. 'Fufu desires me.'
 'I craved for fufu.'

The implications of coding the experiencer as object will be discussed in §4.2. However it should be apparent from the glosses provided that the different grammatical roles of the experiencer correlate with different shades of emotions. Furthermore, it is apparent that where the experiencer is coded as subject, there is some control or volition on his part of the situation. For instance, in (14a) the experiencer consciously does not want to have anything to do with cassava. But in (14b), it is possible that the experiencer likes cassava but s/he cannot do anything about the situation.

Another class of emotional predicates concerns those that may be said to denote emotional attitudes and dispositions. These include *lɔ̃* 'love, like' and *vɔ̃* 'be afraid, fear' as simple verbs and several phrasal predicates of the form [V N], for instance,

tsi' dzi	bi' dzi
remain heart	bend heart
'be anxious	'be angry'
xa nu'	fa konyi'
suffer thing	cry? poverty?
'mourn'	'lament/wail'
ua ŋu	le' fu
move side	catch hatred
'jealous'	'to hate (someone)'

All these have experiencer subjects and do not have alternative conceptualisations as do, for example, the desiderative predicates. The semantics of these predicates does suggest that the experiencer would have to be conscious of the percept and perform some mental act. In some cases, the experiencers may even perform some physical act as a manifestation that they are in that state or have that attitude or disposition towards the stimulus. Note that in example (16) below Kofi displays a behaviour of not speaking to his mother which signals that he hates her. Consider these examples:

[16] kofi' le' fu dada' a'
 K. catchhatred mother DEF
 e'ya-ta me' φo- a nu ne o
 therefore 3SG:NEG beat HAB mouth to:3SG NEG
 'Kofi hates the mother therefore he does not speak to her.'

[17] dɛvi' a' tsi' dzi
 child DEF remain heart
 e'ya-ta me' te-ŋu'dɔ' alɔ̃ o
 therefore NEG:3SG can sleeps sleep NEG
 'The child was anxious therefore s/he could not sleep.'

It is curious and instructive that a number of phrasal predicates which have the same structure as those discussed above - i.e. [V N] structure - do not take experiencer subjects. These predicates are:

dzo	dzi	ku'dzi
straighten	heart	die heart
'be happy'		'be angry'
dzi' ŋɔ'		du lañe
ooze worm		eat flesh-in
'to frighten'		'excite'

The semantic motivation for this behaviour may be that these predicates denote emotional reactions over which the experiencer has no control. In addition, they are triggered by some external cause or stimulus which gets coded as the subject. In this case the experiencer of such situations is coded as the object of a dative preposition (see § 10.3.3 below for further details):

[18] e- ku'dzi na- m
 3SG die heart to 1SG
 'It angered me.'

[19] e- dzi' ηɔ' na- m
 3SG ooze worm to 1SG
 'It frightened me.'

Where the external cause or stimulus is not linguistically specified, the experiencer is coded as object1. Note that in this case the structure of the affective denoting predicate is [N V], that is, it is the same as the structure of those predicates which refer to sensations (see § 10.3.2 below). This provides some evidence that these forms represent uncontrollable emotional reactions rather than emotional dispositions. Compare the following sentences with those above.

[20] dzi ku- m
 heart die 1SG
 'I was angry.'

[21] ηɔ' dzi- m
 worn ooze 1SG
 'I was frightened.'

In fact the predicate *kpe ηu* 'shy, shame, embarrassed etc.', which has the same structure as these emotional reaction ones, can take an experiencer subject. Its behaviour with respect to the grammatical role of the experiencer influences the interpretation of the experiential situation as either an 'active' /voluntary or an involuntary one and presents the different shades of the affective situation:

[22a] kofi' kpe ηu le e' ηu' (attitude)
 K. weigh skin at 3SG side
 'Kofi was shy/ashamed about it.'

[22b] e- kpe ηu na kofi (emotional reaction)
 3SG weigh skin to K.
 'It was an embarrassment to Kofi.'

[22c] ηu kpe kofi' (emotional reaction)
 skin weigh K.

'Kofi was ashamed.'

The English glosses give an indication of the different shades of meaning that are coded largely by the grammatical role of the experiencer.

The 'active' or 'voluntary character of experiencer subject constructions is further supported by the fact that the predicates which denote emotional reactions and which would otherwise not take experiencer subjects may be transformed into a predicate that takes an experiencer subject. This is achieved by nominalising the affective predicate to form a phrasal predicate with another verb of experience. The form of these predicates is: [V_{experience} N_{emotion}]PRED. The verb of experience is either an activity verb such as *ɔ* 'consume, eat' or a verb of perception such as *kpɔ* 'see, experience'. For example,

<i>kpɔ</i> dzidzɔ	<i>kpɔ</i> dziku
see happiness	see anger
'to be happy'	'to be angry'
<i>ɔ</i> ŋukpe	
eat shame	
'be ashamed'	

It is equally interesting that although *dziŋɔ* 'frighten' and *ɔ* laŋme 'excite' do not take an experiencer subject, they do not undergo this conversion. One could speculate that this may be due to the fact that they already have corresponding activity verbs. It seems more plausible, however, to think of this constraint in terms of the differences in the conceptualisation of the affective situations denoted by these predicates. That is, the emotions denoted by these predicates are always thought of as emotional reactions.

Thus far it has been shown that predicates of cognition and perception have experiencer subjects. It has also been argued that when emotions are conceptualised as dispositions or attitudes, the experiencer may be coded as subject. However, the experiencer of experiential situations which are emotional reactions is not coded as subject in the clause. It has also been argued that when the experiencer is subject, then it means that the experiential situation is viewed as a voluntary one and the experiencer is conceptualised as an active participant.

Two further pieces of evidence can be adduced in support of this analysis.

First, all the predicate forms which take an experiencer subject can also occur in the prohibitive. The prohibitive in Ewe is formed by the negative, the repetitive and the predicate. Consider these examples:

- [23] me - ga vɔ̃o
 NEG:2SG REP fear NEG
 'Do not be afraid.'
- [24] me - ga dzro' nu' o
 NEG:2SG REP desire thing NEG
 'Do not crave for things.'
- [25] me- ga tsi' dzi o
 NEG:2SG REP remain heart NEG
 'Do not be anxious.'
- [26] me - ga kpe ɲu o
 NEG:2SG REP weigh side NEG
 'Do not be shy.'
- [27] me - ga kpɔ' dziku' o
 NEG:2SG REP see anger NEG
 'Do not be angry.'

Note however that the predicate forms that refer to emotional reactions are not felicitous in the prohibitive when the addressee is the experiencer. For example,

- [28a]* me- ga ku'dzi o
 NEG:2SG REP die heart NEG
- [28b]* me- ga dzi' ɲɔ' o
 NEG:2SG REP ooze worm NEG

This implies that the experiencer when coded as subject can be assumed to be able to control the experiential situation. This is consistent with the view that such an experiencer is a conscious volitional participant in the situation. Since the experiencer has no control over emotional reaction situations, such situations cannot occur in the prohibitive. They are involuntary, so the experiencer cannot volitionally not get into such a state.

The second piece of supporting evidence is that the predicates that take subject experiencer can undergo agent nominalisation and the 'agent' is understood as the experiencer. Agent nominalisation is achieved by suffixing -la' to a nominalised stem. Predicates may be nominalised for this purpose by reduplication if they are simple intransitive verbs. For example,

- [29] vɔ-vɔ̃ la'
fear-RED NER
'someone who fears'

(In sub-standard Ghanaian English this may be rendered as 'an afraid person')
Or the [V - N] structure of the predicate may be permuted:

- [30a] nu' dzro' la'
thing desire NER
'a craver for things'

- [30b] ŋu- va - la'
side move NER
'someone who is jealous'

- [30c] dzidzɔ- kpɔ' la'
happiness see NER
'a happy person'

- [30d] dziku' kpɔ' la'
anger see NER
'an angry person'

Again, it is significant that the emotional reaction predicates do not undergo agent nominalisation. Thus the following are unacceptable:

- [31a]* dzi- dzɔ- la'
heart straighten NER

- [31b]* dzi- ku' la'
heart die NER

- [31c] * ŋɔ' dzi' la'
worn ooze NER

If the experiencers of certain emotional situations can be the referents of agent nominalisations, then one can conclude that they are perceived as 'active' participants.

A more general conclusion is that the prohibitive and agent nominalisation properties of the predicates that can take the experiencer subjects suggest that the experiencers of such situations are potentially agentive and more generally actors.

10.3.1.3 'Experiencer causative' constructions

Experiencer causative constructions provide further evidence for the view that experiencer subjects are conceptualised as 'active' participants in the experiential situation. Experiencer causative constructions are characterised as such because (i) they make use of the verb *dó* 'cause, put on' which is used in other causative constructions (see § 4.3 for its use with object experiencers), and (ii) because the experiencer functions as subject and is the 'causer', so to speak, of the situation. The general structure of these constructions is:

N_{experiencer} do' N_{affect} (PP)

The prepositional phrase codes the target of the emotion.

One can distinguish a number of subtypes of these constructions depending on the nature of the object and the obligatoriness of the prepositional phrase argument and also whether the N_{affect} names an emotion or is perceived as the seat of the particular emotion.

A minor type is the construction in (32) which expresses the idea that someone is brave: literally, that the experiencer has put on heart. In this case, the heart is viewed as the seat of the emotion. There is no prepositional phrase. This construction, one could say, is a grammaticalised experiencer causative structure in which the experiencer subject is viewed as the autonomous causer of the experiential situation described in the clause:

[32] *kofi do' dzi* (ɲufɔ)
 K. put on heart much
 'Kofi was (very) courageous'

The predicate *do'dzi* can be nominalised by compounding the verb and the noun elements as: *do'dzi* 'courage'. This pattern of nominalisation is a piece of evidence that suggests that the predicate is more or less grammaticalised. It is also possible to form an action nominal by reversing the V-N order of the predicate and reduplicating the verbal element: *dzido'do'* 'being courageous'.

This pattern of nominalisation links this minor type to the rest of the experiencer causative constructions whose predicates may undergo the same kind of nominalisation. The former pattern however sets it apart from the rest.

In a second type, the target of the emotion may or may not be expressed in a prepositional phrase. The examples that have been found all pertain to 'anger':

[33] aína do' dziku'
 A. put on anger
 'Ama is angry'

[34] wò e' do' dɔme- dzo- e de'ɲu' nye
 2SG aFOC put on stomach fire- DIM at side 1SG.
 'You were angry with me' (Nyaku in press: 24).

The implication of the optionality of the prepositional phrase would appear to be that the emotions involved here can be seen as feelings that arise in the experiencer and are contained within him/her or they can be directed at a target.

The final type comprises those in which the target prepositional phrase is obligatory. The emotions involved here are all pleasant ones.

[35] e' do' dzidzɔ *(de' ɲu' nye)
 3SG put on happiness at side 1SG
 'S/he was happy with me'

[36] e' do' vivi' *(de' ɲu' nye)
 3SG put on sweetness at side 1SG
 'S/he was pleased with me'

The target could be inanimate as in:

[37] mi' va' vivi' do' de'aza~ ɲu' ge'
 1PL come sweetness put on at feast side INGR
 'We have come to enliven/vitalise the celebration.'

The common thing about these sentences is that the experiencer does something as a result of what s/he feels and thus causes something to be sayable about the target person or thing. Thus if the experiencer subject in (37) above participates in the feast in a lively way because s/he feels pleased, then the feast can be described as pleasant or lively or joyous.

The obligatoriness of the prepositional phrases in this sub-construction also suggests two other things: (i) that the source of the emotion is the experiencer, and (ii) that the experiencer must cause someone else to feel something because of what s/he feels. Thus the experiencer is actively involved in the situation. It is no wonder then that the experiencer is coded as the subject of these causative constructions.

10.3.2 Experiencer as object1 or object2

When the experiencer is coded as the object of the clause - whether Object1 or Object2 - it is conceptualised as a passive, non-volitional participant in the experiential situation. We have already seen that desiderative predicates may have either experiencer subjects or experiencer objects (see § 10.3.1). The main difference between these two coding patterns is in the conceptualisation of the experiencer. It has already been argued that the experiencer subject is viewed as an active volitional participant. The claim being made here is that the experiencer object is conceptualised as a passive, non-volitional participant in the affective situation. Compare the following:

[38a] me - tsri aha
 1SG hate alcohol
 'I hate alcohol.' i.e. 'I quit drinking alcohol.'

[38b] aha tsri - m
 alcohol hate 1SG
 lit: 'alcohol hates me.'
 'I am allergic to alcohol.'

The difference between these two sentences is quite transparent: in [38a] the subject experiencer consciously makes the choice to avoid alcohol; in [38b], however, whether the experiencer wants it or not, s/he has to avoid alcohol. This difference corresponds to the difference between experiencer subject and experiencer object. The experiencer object just submits to the situation and is not able to do much about it.

This is true also of emotional reactions as we have seen (see § 10.3.1.3.). It should be recalled that predicates that refer to emotional reactions do not take experiencer subjects, but have experiencer objects. The explanation for this is that the experiencer of an emotional reaction cannot help but experience the situation. There is no conscious thinking on the part of the experiencer, although she becomes aware of the situation and feels the emotion.

[39] dzi dzo - m
 heart straighten 1SG

[45] avuvɔ ɖɔ'- m
 cold reach 1SG
 'I am cold.'

[46] ɖɛɖi' te' ŋu'- nye
 tiredness saturateside 1SG
 'I am tired.'

The main thing about these examples is that the affective situation comes upon the experiencer and s/he cannot do anything about it but have the experience. In other words, the experiencer does not have the experience out of his/her volition. (This aspect of these examples is not necessarily revealed by the translations.)

Perhaps the most instructive piece of evidence for the 'passive' or 'involuntary' nature of the object experiencer is provided by the fact that the experiencers of uncontrollable physiological experiences are always coded as objects. These experiencers do not have alternative conceptualisations. These constructions have as their subject a body part perceived as the seat of the sensation or bodily exuviae or the name of the sensation. The verbs are normally verbs of experience such as *wu* 'kill' and the object is the experiencer NP. For example,

[47] dɔ wu- m
 stomach kill 1SG
 'I was hungry.'

[48] tsi - kɔ wu- m
 water neck kill 1SG
 'I was thirsty.'

[49] alɔ̃ tsɔ'- m
 sleepcarry 1SG
 'I was sleepy.'

[50] aɖuɖɔ' to'- m
 urine arise 1SG
 'I wanted to urinate.' (i.e. I had the urge to urinate)

It should be noted that the body parts in these examples are generic. They cannot be made specific by a possessive phrase. Thus [47] above cannot be paraphrased as [51] below; in fact the sentence is ungrammatical.

[51] * nye dɔ wu- m
 1SG:poss stomach kill 1SG
 'I was hungry.'

In another set of constructions which characterise sensations, the body part which is viewed as locus of the affect may occur as subject and the experiencer as object. In this case the experiencer is coreferential with the possessor of the body part. This is the difference between these constructions and the ones discussed in the immediately preceding paragraphs. Thus the body part as locus of affect can be expressed in a possessive phrase which functions as the subject. The significant thing to note is that when the body part is expressed in a possessive phrase, the experiencer is still represented by a pronoun as the object in a clause. Compare the following pairs of sentences. (Note that the verbs are experiential ones):

[52a] ta ve' kofi'
 head pain K.
 lit: 'Head ached Kofi'
 'Kofi had a headache.'

[52b] kofi' φe' ta ve' - e'
 K.poss head pain 3SG
 'Kofi's head pained him.'

[53a] to'ne fi a'na
 ear-in itch A.
 lit.: 'Ear was itchy to Ama.'
 'Ear itched Ama'

[53b] a'na φe' to'ne fi - i
 A.poss ear in itch 3SG
 'Ama's ear was itchy'

[54a] dɔme du - i
 stomach-in eat 3SG
 'Stomach pained him/her'

[54b] e' φe' dɔme du - i
 3SG poss stomach-in eat 3SG

‘His/her stomach pained him/her’

It should be fairly clear that the experiencer as object is presented as a victim of the experiential situation.

Although the object experiencers in these situations are conceptualised as ‘involuntary’ or ‘passive’ participants, these situations are not perceived as those which one could not bring upon oneself. This observation is based on the fact they can occur in a prohibitive structure which roughly speaking says that the addressee should not allow or let themselves have the sensation - Do not let V happen. The prohibitive structure of these constructions is:

me ga na´ N.na´ V wo` o
 NEG:2SG REP cause N.SBJV V 2SG NEG
 ‘Do not let N - V you’

Consider the following examples:

[55] me ga na´ nu´ na´ dzro´ wo` o
 NEG:2SG REP cause thing SBJV desire 2SG NEG
 ‘Do not let yourself feel cravings for things.’

[56] me ga na´ dzi na´ ku´wo` o
 NEG:2SG REP cause heart SBJV die 2SG NEG
 ‘Do not let yourself get angry.’

[57] me ga na´ dɛdɛ na´ te´ ɲu´wo` o
 NEG:2SG REP cause tiredness SBJV saturate side 2SG NEG
 ‘Do not let yourself get tired.’

[58] me ga na´ dɔ na´ wu wo` o
 NEG:2SG REP cause stomach SBJV kill 2SG NEG
 ‘Do not make yourself hungry.’

[59] me ga na´ ta na´ ve´ wo` o
 NEG:2SG REP cause head SBJV pain 2SG NEG
 ‘Do not make yourself have a headache.’

These prohibitive structures express the idea that the experiencer should not create situations that would cause them to have these experiences. Note that this is different from the message of a straightforward prohibitive which was possible for the ‘experiencer subject’ constructions. Roughly speaking the

prohibitive structure for the active/voluntary situations simply said “Don’t feel this” which implied that the experiencer had some control over whether or not to undergo the particular experience. This is not the case for the prohibitive structure of the non-volitional sensations.

10.3.3 Experiencer coded as ‘recipient’

The experiencer may be viewed as the recipient of the emotion triggered by some stimulus. In this case, the experiencer argument in the situation is coded as the object of the dative preposition *na’*. Typically, the stimulus/cause is coded as the subject. In this case too, the experiencer is viewed as a non-volitional participant in the situation.

There are a number of sub-constructions in which the experiencer is coded as the object of the dative preposition namely, ‘stimulus as subject’ constructions; inchoative and stative - identification experiential constructions and causative experiential constructions. Each of these will be discussed in turn.

In the ‘stimulus as subject’ constructions, the object or cause of the experience is the NP subject followed by the affective predicate and the experiencer PP. For example,

[60] *dɔ la’ seʃeː na’kofi’*
 work DEF hard to K.
 ‘The work is difficult for Kofi.’

[61] *eː kpe ŋu na’ m*
 3SG weigh skin to 1SG
 Lit: ‘It is shame to me’
 ‘I am ashamed of it.’

[62] *eː - dzɔ dzi na’ m*
 3SG straighten heart to 1SG
 ‘It pleased me.’

It should be observed that without the experiencer prepositional phrase the interpretation of these sentences would be that the subject generates the emotion or has the property denoted by the affective predicate. For instance, the interpretation of [60] above without the PP would be ‘The work is hard’.

The stimulus as subject and dative prepositional experiencer construction may be explicated as follows:

Y STIMULUS [PRED] [*na’* X EXPERIENCER] PP

X felt something
 because of something that one can say about Y
 not because X wanted it

The two points to note here are first, that the feeling of the experiencer is due to some external stimulus. Secondly, the experiencer may not have any volition with respect to the situation, but is a recipient of the situation.

These features are shared by the other sub-constructions. The inchoative construction involves the use of the inchoative copula *zu* 'become' together with a nominal of emotion or affect and the dative experiencer prepositional phrase. The structure of these constructions looks like this:

$NP_{\text{stimulus}} \text{ zu } NP_{\text{affect}} \quad [n\acute{a} \quad NP_{\text{experiencer}}] \text{ PP}$

[63] e- ϕ e' gakpɔkpɔ' zu ŋkuβia~ na'amesiame
 3SG poss wealth become envyto everybody
 'His/her wealth became the envy of everybody.'

[64] e- zu ŋukpe na'fofo- a'
 3SG become shame to father DEF
 'It became a shame to his/her father.'

Again, if the prepositional phrase is omitted, the rest of the sentence can stand alone and express the meaning that the subject NP has become the object of the situation denoted by the nominal of emotion.

Similarly, the experiencer can also be expressed in a stative experiential construction as a dative object. In this case one can think of the experiencer being presented as the recipient. These sentences are identical in structure to the inchoative ones, except for the copula *nye'*:

$NP_{\text{stimulus}}nye' \quad N_{\text{affect}} \quad [n\acute{a} \quad NP_{\text{experiencer}}] \text{ PP}$

For example,

[65] δ evi' tsibome nye' ŋukpe na'fofo- a'
 child foolish is shame to father DEF
 'A foolish/stupid child is a shame to his/her father.'

[66] e- nye' dzidzɔ na- m be' mie- va
 3SG is happiness to 1SG COMP 2PL come

'It is a pleasure for me that you came.'

The semantic formula provided above would by and large account for these other sub-constructions. The causative sub-construction is however a bit different. The discussion will concentrate on the use of the causative verb *do'* 'put on, cause' since this involves simple clause structures. The other verbs; *na'* 'cause, give' and *wo* 'do, make' occur as higher predicates in complex clauses and the experiential clauses may occur embedded in these clauses. By and large there is no difference between the configuration of the experiential clauses in these instances and when they occur as simple independent clauses.

For the *do'* causative constructions, *do'* functions as the main verb and its complement or object1 is an emotion nominal. The experiencer is either second object or the prepositional object of a dative preposition. These sentences have the following structure:

NP	<i>do'</i>	NP _{emotion}	NP/ <i>na'</i> NP
causer/stimulus			experiencer

Thus the experiencer as a causee has two possible conceptualisations. In some cases it is viewed as a 'passive' victim of the situation and hence coded as object2. For example:

[67] *kofi' do' vovɔɔ- m*
 K. put on fear 1SG
 'Kofi frightened me.'

[68] *a'na do' ŋukpe- m*
 A. put on shame 1SG
 'Ama shamed me.'

[69] *nya la' do' avi- m*
 word DEF put on cry 1SG
 'The matter made me cry.'

Note that if the experiencer is omitted from these sentences, the rest of the sentence cannot stand by itself. This perhaps shows that the experiencer argument is a subcategorised one and it is the patient of the situation characterised by the verb and its complement.

The more common conceptualisation of experiencer causees, however, is that they are viewed as involuntary recipients of the situation. Thus they are coded as dative prepositional objects. For example,

[70] ɖevi- a' do' adã nafofo- a'
 child DEF put on rage to father DEF
 'The child enraged his father.'

[71] kofi' do' dzikuña'áña
 K. put on anger to A
 'Kofi made Ama angry'

In the examples above, if the experiencer is omitted the rest of the sentence is meaningful. But its meaning is different: the subject is interpreted as the experiencer rather than the stimulus. Thus the following are interpretable in the way indicated in the glosses (compare these examples with [70] and [71] above, and cf § 10.3.1.3 on experiencer causatives):

[72] ɖevi- a' do' ada'
 child DEF put on rage
 'The child is enraged (/wild).'

[73] kofi' do' dziku'
 K. put on anger
 'Kofi is angry'

However, there are some situations characterised by the do'causative and dative experiencer phrase where the experiencer cannot be omitted because the resulting clause would not be grammatically acceptable:

[74] ame- si dzo' le gbɔ' nye do' nuɣaxa na'-m
 person REL leave at side 1SG put on worry to 1SG
 'The one who has left me has caused me to worry.'

[75] ɖevi- a' do' dzidzɔ na' m
 child DEF put on happiness to 1SG
 'The child caused me pleasure.'

The semantics of these causative constructions in which the experiencer is a causee and is coded as a dative prepositional object may be represented as follows:

NP(=Z) do NP[emotion] na NP(=X) experiencer
 Z did something

because of this X felt something
 not because of anything else
 X did not want it (or: not because X wanted it)

It is interesting that some of the causee experiencers of similar experiential situations can be presented as object₂ or as prepositional object. Compare the following examples:

[76a] kofi' do' vovɔɔ' m
 K. put on fear 1SG
 'Kofi frightened me'

[76b] kofi' do' vovɔɔ'na'- m
 K. put on fear to 1SG
 'Kofi caused fright to me.'

The difference in this minimal pair may be characterised loosely in terms of 'direct' [76a] and 'indirect' [76b] causation. Typically [76a] will be used in a situation where I immediately perceive something frightful about Kofi. [76b], on the other hand, is used where Kofi did something scary as a result of which I became frightened. These two situations, that is, Kofi's doing something and my becoming frightened, need not be temporally or spatially contiguous. These differences are reflected somehow in the semantic formulae for object experiencers (see §4.2) and for dative causee experiencers.

10.3.4 Experiencer coded as 'unintended' target of the experience

In some affective situations, the experiencer may be conceptualised as the (unintentional) target of the experience. There are two essential points about such situations: first, the affective situation was not necessarily directed at the particular experiencer; second, the experiencer cannot do anything but have the experience: it cannot be avoided and anyone in the same situation could feel the same. Experiencers of such situations are coded as the object of the allative (directional) preposition *ɔe*' (and its variant *ɔa*). Consider these examples:

[77] nya la' ɔi ɔe' m
 word DEF surprise to 1SG
 'The case surprised me.'

[78] ami- a ue' ɔa'- m
 pomade DEF smell to 1SG

'The pomade (i.e. scented ointment) smelled to me.'

Notice that these experiences are 'involuntary'. Thus the experiencers undergo these experiences not because they want to but because they cannot escape from them.

Perhaps a comparison between sentence [78] above and sentence [79] below, which describe very similar situations, would bring out this aspect of these structures more clearly:

[79] me ue^r ami - a' se
 1SG smell pomade DEF perceive
 'I smelled the pomade (i.e. scented ointment).'

In [79], the experiencer deliberately sniffed the pomade to smell it. In [78] the experiencer need not do anything like that. S/he would have come into contact with the smell of the pomade accidentally. One can think of the affective predicates in the experiencer as target constructions as characterising a property of the subject NP. That is to say, in [78] the pomade has an odour and in [77] the matter has a surprising property. These features are projected on to the experiencer, as it were, when they come in contact with them.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication, tentatively, for such constructions:

NP(=Z)[PRED]_{affect} qé NP (=X)_{experiencer}
 One could say something about Z
 because of this X (could) feel something
 not because someone wanted it
 X cannot not feel this.

10.4 Conclusion.

In this chapter, the grammatical structures in which experiencers are found and the messages they contain have been explored. The specific conceptualisations of the experiencer associated with particular grammatical configurations in which they appear have been investigated. It was argued that if the experiencer is coded as the grammatical subject in the clause then it is construed to be an 'active' participant in the situation. When it is coded as the object whether primary or secondary, it is viewed as a 'passive' argument. As a dative prepositional object, the experiencer may be presented as a 'recipient' of the situation characterized in the rest of the clause. The experiencer may also be conceptualised as an unintended target of an affective situation, and in

this case it is coded as the object of the allative preposition. The structures described here in a way supplement the inverse constructions described in Chapter 9. It should be recalled that in the inverse constructions, the Actor who is coded as an oblique object introduced by the dative preposition *na'* is viewed as an Experiencer.

All the constructions described show that word order and grammatical relations are meaningful or are used to convey specific meanings. To this extent and to the extent that word order and grammatical relations can be viewed as purely syntactic phenomena, one can say that this chapter has shown that syntactic phenomena as such have meanings. Furthermore, the chapter has illustrated the fact that grammatical word order of specific semantic role arguments can be exploited to package information about the arguments and about the situations in which they are involved.

Above all, it has been argued that in Ewe it is the grammatical packaging of the experiencer and specific syntactic constructions which provide clues to a typology of affective situations as either voluntary or involuntary or neutral. In this respect Ewe differs from those languages in which such a typology is rooted in the inherent semantics of affective lexemes or in the case marking of the experiencer argument. To understand the conceptualisation of emotions and affective situations in general, it seems to me, the grammatical behaviour of experiencers and the grammar of affective predicates in general should not be ignored.

10.5 APPENDIX: English and Ewe versions of the explications

1. X EXPERIENCER (= SUBJECT) [PRED] Y PERCEPT/ STIMULUS

[11] wo'- se yli sese' aɖe'

3PL hear shout hard INDEF

'They heard a loud noise'

(Akpatsi 1980: 16)

When X thinks of Y

something happens in X

[because of this: X feels something]

One can think:

X could do something not to think/feel this if X wanted to

ne' X bu Y ɲu' la'

nañe' dzɔna le X me

[le eɣiata: X sea nañe' le lañe]

ame aɖe' ate' ɲu' aɖu be'

ne' X di' la', X afe' ɲu' a'wɔe be' mabu eɣia / ase sese-le-lañe sia o

2. Y (PERCEPT/STIMULUS) [PRED] AFFECT X (=EXPERIENCER)

[40] dzi ku'- m

heart die 1SG

'I was angry'

X felt something

not because X wanted it

X cannot not feel this

X se nañe' le lañe

me'nye' le eɣi X di' i la' ta o

X mate' ɲu' a'gbe' nu' sia sese le lañe o

3. Y STIMULUS [PRED] [ná X EXPERIENCER] PP

[62] e' - dzɔ dzi na' m

3SG straighten heart to 1SG

'It pleased me.'

X felt something
 because of something that one can say about Y
 not because X wanted it

X se nañe'le lañe
 le nañe'si ame aḍe'afe'ñu'aḡblo tso'Y ñu'ta
 meñye'le e'si X di' i la'ta o

4. NP(=Z) do NP_[emotion] na NP(=X) experiencer

[75] ḍevi- a' do' dzidzo na'm
 child DEF put on happiness to 1SG
 'The child caused me pleasure.'

Z did something
 because of this X felt something
 not because of anything else
 X did not want it (or: not because X wanted it)

Z wo nañe'
 le e'siata X se nañe'le lañe
 meñye'le nu'bu'bu aḍe'ke'ta o
 X me'di'nu'sia o (alo' meñye'le e'si X di' i la'ta o)

5. NP(=Z) [PRED]_{affect} ḍe NP (=X) experiencer

[78] ami- a ue' ḍa'- m
 pomade DEF smell to 1SG
 'The pomade (i.e. scented ointment) smelled to me.'

One could say something about Z
 because of this X (could) feel something
 not because someone wanted it
 X cannot not feel this.

wo'afe'ñu'aḡblo nañe'tso'Z ñu'
 le e'siata X (afe'ñu) se nañe'le lañe
 meñye'le e'si ame aḍe'di' i la'ta o
 X ma'fe'ñu'aḡbe'nu'sia sese le lañe o

PART IV:

ILLOCUTIONARY DEVICES AND CONSTRUCTIONS towards an illocutionary grammar of Ewe

OVERVIEW:

In this part of the study, an attempt is made to describe the devices that speakers of Ewe use to express their attitudes and feelings towards their addressees and other elements in a communicative situation. Every language, it would appear, has a number of illocutionary strategies which are used to fulfill interactional and expressive functions. These illocutionary devices or 'illocutes' as Bolinger would like to call them (Wierzbicka private communication) include:

illocutionary or speech act and modal verbs

illocutionary or speech act or modal particles or markers

linguistic routines viz:

forms of address, speech formulae, discourse routines,
interjections and expletives.

The system of illocutionary devices in a particular language may be referred to as that language's illocutionary grammar.

A detailed investigation of illocutionary verbs and particles is outside the scope of the present study. They receive only incidental mention where they have a bearing on the point at issue. Strictly speaking a description of the verbs belongs to lexicography, which is not the principal focus of the present study. The particles have been described elsewhere (see Ameka 1986 and chapter 8 this volume).

The class of illocutes which is the concern of this part of the study is that of linguistic routines - that is, linguistic signs that are used recurrently and almost automatically in more or less identical contexts of situation and in particular types of interaction which are relatively conventionalised in a particular language.

Since the illocutionary grammar of any language is rooted in the ethnography of speaking of the language (cf. Wierzbicka 1990a), the first chapter in this part provides a rudimentary description of the ethnography of speaking Ewe. In the second chapter the technical notion of linguistic routine and the various categories of items that fall under this rubric are explained. The third chapter is devoted to one category of routines - modes of address. It is argued in this chapter that personal names are relatively unimportant in the Ewe system of address especially with respect to adults. Teknonyms, titles and to some extent appellations or praise names are by far the most important categories of address. Various summoning exclamations are also described. A number of speech formulae are described in the fourth chapter. And the grammar and meaning of interjections are explored in the last chapter.

Chapter 11

TOWARDS AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF SPEAKING EWE

11.1 Preliminaries

The concerns of ethnography of communication as a perspective on language use have been succinctly summarised by the editors of one of the first volumes on the subject as follows:

...the ethnography of speaking centers its attention upon an entirely new order of information, bridging the gap between what is conventionally found in grammars on the one hand and ethnographies on the other: its subject matter is speaking, the use of language in the conduct of social life

Bauman and Sherzer 1975:96

Ideally, to describe the ethnography of Ewe one should attempt a comprehensive description of language use in the conduct of the social life of the Ewes. Such an enterprise is beyond the scope of the present study. However since an illocutionary grammar of a language - or a description of illocutionary devices - cannot in a sense be divorced from the ethnography of communication in that society/language, I will attempt to provide some description of the salient features of the ethnography of speaking through a description of a speech event. My concern in this chapter is to draw attention to the structure and context of some of the interactional and social acts within which the forms of language described in subsequent chapters are used.

The discussion of encounters which follows is necessarily superficial in the sense that it is only meant to provide a means of contextualizing the illocutionary grammar. It is not an exhaustive description of the ethnography of speaking Ewe. [It only outlines some of the areas in this domain within which the routines discussed in the following chapters are used.]

First, I will outline different types of encounters that occur between interlocutors. I will not dwell on very formal and ritualised types of interaction such as funerals, marriages etc. Second, I will describe a particular type of encounter - a social visit - drawing out its various constitutive factors and elucidating the linguistic routines that may be used in such situations.

11.2. Towards a typology of encounters

Interactions between people who do not otherwise live in the same place or household may occur as chance meetings or as planned encounters. By chance meetings, I mean those encounters which occur just because the interlocutors

happen to be in the same location at the same time. The paths of the interlocutors cross, so to speak, as they go about their individual activities. This implies that chance meetings take place between interactants (either as individuals or groups), none of whom could be said to be at their place of abode or work. Encounters of this kind occur between people who meet in the street, in the neighbourhood, at the river side, on the way to the market, to the farm, to school etc. The key element here is that the people meet in the course of going about some other business. It is not a purposeful or a planned meeting.

Such meetings are usually brief and involve the exchange of greeting routines. They can be accompanied by brief general conversations. They could also develop into a sort of 'purposeful' encounter where the interlocutors retire to a spot (with some shade) and exchange news, ideas, gossip etc. (see §14.2 for a discussion of the greeting routines used).

By planned meetings, I mean encounters which have a defined social or transactional purpose. In this case one can identify two participants or groups of participants: a host who is construed to be at home either in reality or at least functionally (cf. Naden 1980, 1986) and a visitor - one who is not at his/her home or does not function as such. Thus a trader in the market, a teacher at school, a farmer on the farm etc. can all be said to be functionally at home. A customer in the market, a visitor to a school or farm etc. is not at home. Such encounters may vary in their level of formality, in their length and content and, above all, in their purpose.

Socially, one can visit another for the purpose of paying respects to the neighbours and relatives, or to exchange greetings and just check on the well-being of the others. Thus one can just indicate to people at his/her home that s/he was going to person X to greet him/her. The following is a fairly common parting expression that is used in such contexts:

[1] me- yi má dógbe ná.. má vá
 1SG go 1SG:1RR say voice to ... 1SG:1RR come
 'I am going to greet X, and I'll be back'

Similarly, one can visit another to express one's best wishes to a new parent or a sick person; condolences to a bereaved person; or to give thanks to a benefactor. Such visits are viewed as a manifestation of social unity, interdependence, harmony and above all communality. These are characteristics that have been commented upon by many students of African society and also of Ewe society (see for example, Dickson 1977; Gyekye 1987; Dzobo 1975; Agblemagnon 1969). These perceptions of visits as an

interactional or communicative habit of members of the Ewe society are enshrined in various traditional sayings such as:

- [2] nɔvi-kpɔ kpɔ - é nyé nɔví wɔ- wɔ
 friend see see aFOC befriend do do
 'Seeing (visiting) friends is making friends'
- [3] afɔ mé gblɛ á ame dome o
 foot NEG spoil HAB person between NEG
 lit.: foot/leg does not spoil relations between people
 'Going by foot to visit people does not destroy
 friendships/relationships'

These social visits could be of varying length. They could be 'flying' visits in the sense that the visitor comes around to say hello and departs after that; or they could be 'sitting' visits, where the visitor accepts a seat from the host and spends some time with him/her. These 'sitting' visits may be for the exchange of news or for some economic transaction, such as the visitor wanting to negotiate a loan from the one at home.

Indeed sitting down is an important feature of various other kinds of more formal or ceremonial encounters such as funerals, marriages, arbitrations etc. There are ethnographic accounts of some of these more formal ceremonies (see for example, Agblemagnon 1969; Nukunya 1969; Obianim 1956 etc.). I am not going to be concerned with these, other than incidentally. Each of the interactions are defined by, or have cultural/situational frames or scripts. To provide a frame for looking at Ewe interactional verbal behaviour, I will concentrate on social 'sitting' visits.

One of the assumptions of the ethnographic perspective on language use in social activity is that a systematic investigation of particular communicative or speech events can provide an account of those features of communicative behaviour 'that are relevant for the study of discourse patterns in the conduct of social life' (Duranti 1985:201). Thus a typical 'exchange of news' speech event will be described. An 'exchange of news' event is an activity in which a visitor goes to a host with the specific purpose of giving a piece of news to the host. (Usually the visitor in such situations would be the messenger of someone else .)

11.3 A frame for a social visit

To describe a speech event such as news exchange, it is useful to make use of the emic model of a speech event proposed by Hymes (e.g. 1968; 1974a; and

see also Duranti 1985; Saville-Troike 1989). This model assumes that a speech event is made up of a set of features and functions.

We can assume that the setting of this event is a compound house with seats in the courtyard (and children playing around). The scene in the sense of the culturally defined situation is a social visit. The participants in this event are a host and a visitor. Each of these may assume the role of speaker or addressee in the act sequences that constitute the event. In addition, there may be a spokesperson for each of the host and visitor or just one person acting as spokesperson for both parties. The spokesperson serves as an intermediary (or channel) through whom messages are sent from one party to the other. This spokesperson, referred to in Ghanaian English as a linguist, is a microcosm of the staff-bearer of a chief. The addressor either whispers the content of his thought to the spokesperson who frames it in good language and verbalises it to the addressee (or through the addressee's spokesperson). Alternatively the addressor/speaker invites the spokesperson to pass on the information while he says the message to the hearing of the addressee (and his spokesperson). During social visits of the kind we are concerned with, the second option is usually adopted.

Social visits may have different purposes but it will be assumed that the purpose is that of exchanging news. I shall now describe the sequences of acts that make up the speech event:

Attention calling:

The visitor initiates the action by calling the attention of the host outside the house. Vocative and hailing routines such as agoo (see §14.8.1); kókókó 'knocking' or a phrase such as:

[4] mile é me a?
 2PL be3SG in Q
 'Are you inside?'

The effect of this act is to draw the attention of the host to the visitor. It also helps the addressee to ascertain whether the host is available or not.

Response to attention:

If the host (or someone in the host's home) is available, they will give an appropriate response to the hailing routine, for instance ame! 'come in' ehé 'yes' or:

[5] gé dǎ é me
 enter to 3SG in
 'Get in.'

Welcome:

This is an optional move and its execution depends on where the visitor is coming from. If the visitor is from the same village or neighbourhood, then there is no need for this act. However if the visitor comes from another village or is perhaps coming back from work or from the farm etc. then the host welcomes him/her home (see §14.3 for the appropriate formulae).

Seat offer:

Immediately the visitor enters the compound, a seat is offered to him. In this respect Ewe practice seems to be different from that of the Gas. For the Gas, according to Kropp Dakubu (1987), the visitor is seated and offered water only after the initiation of greetings. The verbal routines used to offer the seat are usually variations on the idea that there is a seat for the visitor. These are:

[6a] zi le mia té
 chair be2PL under
 'There is a seat/chair under you.'

[6b] zikpui lǎ
 chair be: 3SG
 'There is a chair'

[6c] nɔ̀fɛ lǎ
 sit-place be: 3SG
 'There is a (place to sit)/seat'

The illocutionary forces of these utterances in the context of the offer of a seat to a visitor are very similar. The essential difference would be in the propositional content component. To save space, I have given all of them one representation and differentiated them in the illocutionary dictum component. The illocutionary meaning of these utterances could be tentatively represented as follows:

I think you want us to do some things for some time
 I know people should sit down when they do things of this kind
 I think it will be good if we sit down
 I think you think the same
 I say: [6a] a seat is at this place for you
 [6b] a chair is at this place
 [6c] a seat is at this place
 I say it because I want you to sit down if you want to and to cause
 you to feel something good.

The second component indicates that it is a social convention that one should offer a seat to a visitor, even if the visitor rejects it. The purpose of this is to make the visitor feel comfortable. In a sense this can be viewed as part and parcel of the admission of the visitor to the home of the host. If a host does not offer a visitor a seat, the visitor may interpret it as a sign of not being welcome.

Offer of water:

This act depends on whether the visitor is a traveller or not. That is, whether s/he came from some other village or was just visiting from the same village. When the visitor is offered water s/he pours a little bit on the ground and then drinks the rest. The pouring of a bit of the water on the ground is done as a kind of offering to ancestors and to ask for peace in the transactions that follow. Traditional prayer in Ewe society (and in many other African societies) is always accompanied by the pouring of some liquid be it alcoholic or just water on the ground as an offering to God and the ancestors. Hence one could argue that when the visitor pours some water on the ground, it is a kind of prayer. It should be noted that even if the visitor is not thirsty s/he has to take a sip of the water before giving it back. It is considered bad manners to reject the offer of water without performing these rituals.

Exchange of greetings:

After all these preliminary acts of attention calling, welcome, offer of seat and water, the interlocutors are now ready to exchange greetings. The Ewe folk-label for this component of the interaction is *gbe-lã lã* which literally means, 'voice-weaving'. This is quite instructive given the way in which this act is performed (see sample greeting exchange below).

The greeting itself may be preceded by a pre-greeting sequence. The pre-greeting sequence may be skipped. If it is performed it may be initiated by the host or the visitors. In the case of the visitor initiating it, its purpose is to alert

the host and seek permission, as it were, to greet him. Typically a pre-greeting move performed by a visitor is effected by a verbal routine such as the following:

[7a] má dó gbe ná mí ló
 1SG:SBJV say voice to 2PL ADD
 'May I greet you!'

The host's response is:

[7b] yoo, gbe- á né vá
 OK, voice DEF HORT come
 OK, let the greeting come!

In essence, the host's response acknowledges his/her preparedness to receive the greeting.

When the host initiates the move, the same utterance without the assent-giving signal *yoo* is used. It shows that the host is ready after all the preliminaries for the next stage of greeting.

The greeting exchange:

After the pre-greeting sequence, a series of greeting acts are initiated by the visitor. In this case, Ewe practice is similar to that of the Ga where greetings are initiated by the visitor (Kropp Dakubu 1987:508). However, Ewe practice may be different from what obtains in other African societies such as the Gonja (Goody 1972:40) and the Bisa (Naden 1980) where it appears that hierarchical status, that is, in age or office, determines who initiates the greeting exchange. It is also reported that among the Zulu and the Sesotho in southern Africa, it is the superior interlocutor who greets first (van Jaarsveld 1988). (See § 14.2 on the constraints on initiating greetings in Ewe which are not relevant in the present context).

Greeting exchanges in Ewe are made up of a series of speech act sequences. These may be broadly divided into 'greeting sequence' and 'howareyou sequences' (cf. Ferrara 1980). The greeting sequence is made up of routines referring to the time of day such as *ndí* 'morning' or the borrowed and adopted word *móni* 'morning' and *ndɔ* 'afternoon' (see §14.2.1 on greeting formulae). The 'howareyou sequences' usually consist of several turns in which the well-being of various people are asked about. These sequences could be divided into those inquiries that are made by the one who was greeted and its return,

so to speak. Schematically, these aspects of the greeting exchange may be represented as follows:

Greeting sequence:

A: Greeting

B: Response

'Howareyou' inquiries:

B: Well being inquiries

A: Response

(several exchanges each made up of a pair of these).

A: Well being inquiries

B: Response:

(several exchanges).

Note that it is the interlocutor responding to the greeting who initiates the 'howareyou' sequence. The 'howareyou' sequence consists of several question and answer pairs during which the interlocutors in turn ask about the well-being of each other; their relatives; parents; children and the people in the household they belong to in general (cf Agblemagon 1969:57ff). Consider the following sample greeting exchange:

- [8] Kofi: ɲdí
 morning
 Komla: ɲdí
 morning
 aɸé me- tɔ- wó ɸé?
 house in MEMBER PL Q
 'How are the people at home?'
 Kofi: wó - dɔ́
 3PL sleep
 'They are fine'
 Komla: ɸevi - á - wó?
 child DEF PL
 '(And) the children?'
 Kofi: wó li
 3PL be: 3SG
 lit.: they exist;
 'they are fine'

: wó nɔví- wó?
 3PL sibling PL
 (what about) their friends?
 i.e. How are their friends (= your children).

Komla: wó fɔ
 3PL awake
 'They are fine'

Kofi: wó dada?
 3PL mother
 'What about their mother?'

Komla: é - dó gbe ná wò
 3SG send voice to 2SG
 'She sends you her greetings.'

Note that this is an average size exchange. Note also that the interlocutors in this case know each other fairly well and are both adults. (See §14.2.2 on the meanings of some of the individual expressions employed in the exchange). The greeting exchange could be accompanied by a handshake (especially if the interactors are both male).

Inquiry about purpose of visit:

The next set of acts relate to the purpose of the visit. The folk Ewe label for it is amanié bɔ́bɔ́ literally, recounting of news. (amanié is a word perhaps borrowed from Akan aman-nee 'town matters'; amanie is also found in Gã, which also borrowed it from Akan). This segment of the interaction is initiated by the host.

Various combinations of formulae are used. These are illustrated in the two excerpts below. The second excerpt also shows how a spokesperson may be used and notice that he paraphrases what the addressor said.

[G. and Al. are the visitors and have been given seats and water and they have exchanged greetings. Av. is the host]:

[9]a. Av: gbó nye fá ló
 side 1SG cool ADD

b· nya vɔ̃ aɖéké mé li o
word bad noneNEG be: 3SG NEG

c mià wó é le azɔ̃li dží
2PL PL aFOC be: PRES journey top

My place is cool! There is no bad news.
You have travelled (= Welcome).

d Gb: miá wó hã mié le afõ vɔ̃ aɖéké dží o
1PL PL too 1PL be: PRES foot bad any top NEG

e tsa ko mié ɖi bé miá kpó wò ɖá
wandering only 1PL bury COMP 1PL see 2SG VS

We have also not come with a bad mission. We have only
wandered to come and visit you.

f Av: miè wɔ- e nyuíeta...
2PL do 3SG well exactly
'You have done the right thing.' (Nunyamɔ̃ p.12)

Notice that Av. does not explicitly question his visitors about their mission. Rather he makes use of formulae which indicate that he does not have bad news and that the visitors are welcome. The situational context of his statement provides a cue to the addressees to spell out their mission. It can be argued that the sequence of formulae produced by Av. together constitute an act of inquiry of the purpose of the visit. However this act is introduced by a variant of the core formula which may be represented with a variable as:

X gbó fá
side cool
'X's side/place is cool'

The X variable may be filled by 1SG or 1PL pronouns or in a reportive context by a logophoric pronoun (see example 10 below). Warburton et al. (1968:217) offer an instructive comment on a realisation of this formula. They explain the formula *miá gbó fá* 'our side is cool' as follows: 'This is the way an Ewe asks his visitor "What can I do for you?"' It is perhaps true that the Ewe formula and the English 'what can I do for you' are functionally equivalent, but the

meanings they convey are different. The Ewe formula may roughly be explicated as follows:

X gbó fá

I say: good things have happened here

I say it because I want you to know it

I think you and I know this:

after I say this, you will say some things to me about you

(I think you will say something that would cause me to know why you have come here)

Two comments on this paraphrase are in order: First, the dictum has 'good things' in it because this formula is not used in the 'inquiry of purpose' act at funerals, for example. At funerals, the host - the representatives of the bereaved family - would initiate this act by saying they have bad news at their place. The typical Ewe form used is:

vɔ́ dzí mié le

bad top 1PL be: PRES

'It is bad things we are dealing with.'

The conclusion to be drawn from this is that X gbó fá is used in the context where the host has good news for the visitor. A further piece of evidence in support of this view comes from the lexical meaning of fá. I have glossed it literally as 'cool' but it can also be used to mean 'be peaceful' as in the nominal fafa 'peace' or núti-fáfá 'peace'. This shows that fá has an element of 'good' in it. Furthermore, it should be observed that in the above excerpt, an explanatory sentence expressing the idea of the absence of bad news is explicitly added to clarify the meaning of the initial formula.

A second point is about the last component which spells out the convention and shared knowledge of the Ewes. Thus even though this form does not explicitly encode a request for the addressee to outline his/her purpose, it is a social expectation that s/he would state this after the speaker has said these things.

The illocutionary point of this formula as indicated in the explication is that the speaker wants to inform the addressee about the prevailing state of affairs. Some support for this view comes from the fact that this formula tends to be accompanied by an addressive particle ló meaning roughly 'I advise you' as in the excerpt above. The speaker is thus advising the visitor about the prevailing circumstances in the place where s/he has come to.

Now consider another excerpt in which the participants make use of spokespersons: Note also the different formulae used to inquire about the purpose:

- [10]a. bokó:ameteḡé se- é né wò a- tu
 A. hear 3SG COMP 3SG IRR reach
 va-vá lá- wó
 come RED NER PL
- b. wó nyá - ná hã wó biá ná
 3PL know HAB too 3PL ask HAB
- c. amanié a?
 news Q
 ‘Ameteḡe hear it and pass it on to the visitors. (it is said that) even though one may be aware of it one can still ask. What’s the news/mission?’
- d. ameteḡé: tɔ- nye- tó wó mie- se
 POSSPRO 1SG MEMBER PL 2PL hear
 gbe- á ḡá a?
 voice DEF VS Q
- e. bokó bé ye gbó fá
 diviner say LOG side cool
 ‘My friends, have you heard the message? The diviner says everything is peaceful here.’
- f. tsiami: mié se- é se- é né wò a - tu
 1PL hear 3SG hear 3SG COMP 3SG IRR reach
- g. bokó setsonyame bé miá wó hã
 diviner S. COMP 1PL PL too
- h. mié le afɔ vɔ́ áḡéké dží o
 1PL:NEG be:PRES foot bad any top NEG
- i. náné ko- é dó tsizí
 something only aFOC wear darkness
- j. ná miéyata mié vá
 to 1PL therefore 1PL come
- k. bé wò a- biá máwu- wó
 PURP 3SG IRR ask god PL

- l. kplé tógbuí wó ná mí
and ancestor PL to 1PL
- m. bé núka tútútúmiá wɔ máhã?
COMP whatexactly 1PL do Q

‘We have heard it. You hear this and pass it on to Diviner Setsonyame that we have also not come with any bad mission. There is only something which is obscure to us, therefore we have come so that he can consult the gods and the ancestors about it for us to see what exactly we should do!’

- n. ameteφé: bokó è se gbe- a dá a?
diviner 2SG hear voice DEF VS Q
‘Diviner have you heard the message.’

- o. bokó:me- se- e...
1SG hear 3SG
‘I have heard it....’ (Nyaku in press: 6 - 7)

A number of routines occur in this excerpt which shed further light on various aspects of the ‘inquiry of purpose’ component in Ewe social encounters. These expressions are underlined in the excerpt (see lines b, c, e, and h).

One stereotyped phrase used as a pre-question or disclaimer in the inquiry turn is wó nyá ná hã wó biá na ‘even if one knows one (still) asks’ (see line 10b in the excerpt above). This phrase tends to be used as a preface to other inquiring expressions. It is used in situations where the mission of the visitor would seem to be predictable because of the context. For instance, in the example above the host is a diviner and so when people come to his place, it is plausible to assume that they were coming to ask for his services as a diviner, as is the case with these visitors. Hence it is appropriate that the diviner prefaces his inquiry with this phrase. This phrase is also appropriate in contexts where meetings are pre-arranged. In such cases, it is reasonable to assume that the host may have had some prior warning about the purpose of the encounter. The force of the expression seems to be roughly speaking ‘I am asking the obvious question.’

Notice that in the example above this pre-question routine is followed by a question: amanié-a? ‘the news?’ The question force is indicated by the question particle at the end. The equivalents of this question in English could be: ‘what’s up?’ ‘any news?’ or ‘what’s the news?’ With these considerations, the significance of the routine: amanié a? could be paraphrased as follows:

I think you are in this place

because you want us to do something together
 I don't know what you want us to do
 I want to know it
 I say: I want you to say what you want us to do (here)
 I say it because I want you to say something that would cause
 me to know it.

The explication above captures the idea that linguistically the speaker assumes no knowledge of the mission of the visitor. And the host is genuinely asking the visitor to make his/her purpose known. It should be noted that the spokesperson reports the inquiry of the addressor in the form of the formula X gbó fá discussed earlier.

The next turn after the host's inquiry is the response in which the visitor spells out the broad outline of his mission or his topic. Notice that in the second excerpt [10], Tsiami only states that they have come to seek the diviner's help in solving some problems (see lines 10f et seq). He does not go on to say what the problems are immediately. In fact that comes in the next series of turns. The host asks for the details after the initial announcement of the topic. Thus the content follows in the other turns.

As is evident in the two extracts cited above, the visitor's response usually begins with a formula of the following form, where X is a variable representing the visitor (see lines [9d] and [10g - h]):

[11] X hã me-´ le afo vɔ́ ádéké dzí o
 too NEG be:PRES foot bad any top NEG
 'X has also not come with any bad news'

This response is based on an inquiry question which is functionally equivalent to *amanié a?* for example. This routine question could have been used by any of the hosts in the excerpts we have seen. The question is:

[12] afo ka dzí é nè le / mie- le?
 foot WH top aFOC 2SG be:PRES 2PL be:PRES
 'What is your mission?'
 lit.: What leg are you on?

It should be observed first of all that the response in [11] above cannot be used by a visitor who was coming to deliver some bad news, such as news about the death or sickness of someone. Thus the use of this response indicates that the visitor is not bringing any bad tidings.

To gain an understanding of the inquiry question, it should be noted that *afɔ* ‘foot, leg’ is used metaphorically to mean message, purpose or mission. There is a socio-historical explanation or motivation for the metaphorical extension of ‘foot’ to these domains. The primary means of transport for the movement of people from one location to another in Ewe territory before the advent of motor-vehicles was by foot. Even today, transportation between some villages in the area is usually done on foot. Thus when people were sent with messages from one village to the other they went on foot. Needless to say messengers within the same village move on foot. Thus messenger and message came to be associated with movement on foot, consequently *afɔ* came to be used for ‘message’. Also implied in the use of *afɔ* is the idea that the visitor has travelled or moved (on foot) to the host’s place.

The literal translation of the inquiry question is equally instructive: ‘what leg/foot are you on’. That is to say, what kind of message do you have? Note that when people today go by motor-vehicles to deliver messages, the same question may be used to enquire about their purpose. With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication tentatively for the routine question:

[13] *afɔ ka dʒí é nè le?*
 leg WH top aFOC 2SG be:PRES
 ‘What is your mission.’

I think you have come to this place because of something
 I don’t know it
 I want to know it
 I say: I want you to say the kind of thing you have come here to do
 I say it because I want you to say something that would cause
 me to know it.

This explication is very similar to that of *amanié* above. This is not surprising because both forms are questions and have almost identical communicative functions.

The inquiry turn of the host tends to be ended with (or includes) expressions similar to the following (cf excerpt [9] line c. above)

[14] *mia- wó é le azɔli dʒí*
 1PL PL aFOC be:PRES journey top
 ‘You are travelling.’

The implication of this kind of expression in the context of the overall encounter is that the visitors are perceived to be still on the move. They are not settled or fully welcomed until their mission is fully known. The continuative aspect of the expression provides a linguistic clue to its interpretation. Furthermore, it should be noted that the routines of welcome that involve verbs of motion occur in the aorist and not the progressive (cf. the discussion of wòé zò ‘you have walked’ and wòé de ‘you have come back’ in § 14.4)¹.

A final part of the inquiry of the purpose of the visit is where the visitor may enquire about the news and business that the host may have at their place. This can only be done after the mission and the purpose of the visitor has been established. This turn is usually included when the visitor comes from another village. In such situations, the host may recount some of the things that have happened or are planned to be done in the village, such as recent deaths and festivities.

Leave-taking:

The ‘leave-taking’ segment of the interaction may be divided into a number of parts: the pre-closing or permission seeking; the closing and the departure. Each of these will be taken in turn.

The pre-closing:

The Ewe folk label for this act is móbábiá ‘way asking/permission seeking.’ The visitor literally asks permission to take leave of the host and go home or terminate the current encounter. A typical expression used by the visitor for this involves the form biá mó ‘ask way’, i.e. ‘ask permission’ and different tense and aspect combinations. For example, the encounter represented in excerpt [10] above concluded in the following way:

[15] tsiami: ...fífíá miá biá mó
 ...now 1PL ask way
 ‘...Now, we will ask permission to leave.’

bokó: mó li faa
 way be:PRES freely
 mià de aφéme nyuíe

¹ After the purpose of the visit has been established, there may be a drink of alcoholic beverages. It may call for the pouring of libation - making a prayer to God and other divinities and ancestors on the occasion with drinks. This is not necessarily a feature of social visits that we are concerned with here and we will not have anything more to say about it.

2PL go home well
 'You may go. Have a safe journey home.'

tsiami: yoo
 OK.
 'OK' (= Thank you) (Nyaku in press:9).

Notice that in this example, the visitor (tsiami) asks permission to leave and the host (bokó) grants it. It must be stressed that in the pre-closing, the permission to leave act is a genuine request which may be granted or denied. In the above example permission was granted. It is only after this that leave-taking can occur. It should be observed that the host adds a leave-taking expression after granting the permission. This represents the departure phase and the interlocutors may depart with a handshake. For most encounters such a closing is appropriate.

The closing:

For some other encounters especially those involving elders and more formal occasions, there is a physical gesture performed by all present to show that the encounter has been completed. The spokesperson is asked to lead all present in this. This act occurs after permission has been granted to the visitor to leave. The ritual has two stages, at least: a preparatory stage and the performance. The core of the ritual is that all present get up from their seats a little and sit down again. This process is accompanied by a linguistic gesture said by all at once as they return to their seats. The linguistic noise made is: [fiẽ] depicting the noise associated with sitting down. This action is described in Ewe folk terms as either [16a] or [16b]:

[16a] así dɛ́dɛ́ zikpui tó
 handput RED chair edge
 'putting hands on the edge of chairs'

[16b] zikpui- lélé
 chair catch RED
 'holding chairs'

This closing act is performed like this: first the spokesperson warns all the people present that the elder is going to pick up his chair with the following phrase:

[17] tógbui béye le zikpui lé gé
 grandfather say LOG be:PRES chair hold INGR
 'The elder (or chief) says he is about to get up'

He then states that the elder has gotten up and on hearing this all the people get up a little and sit down again. The expression for this second phase is:

[18] tógbui béye lé zikpui
 grandfather say LOG catchchair
 'The elder (or chief) says he has gotten up!'

This closing ritual is not part of every encounter. But every 'sitting' encounter would have the pre-closing and departure phase. Thus for every such encounter there is a formal closure. In this respect, Ewe practice seems to be different from that of the Mampruli of northern Ghana where according to Naden (1986:195) 'at the end of business, interactants drift apart without any formal closure'.

The departure:

As noted earlier, after permission has been granted to the visitor to leave (and if necessary the closing ritual performed), the host proffers good wishes to the visitor and the visitor responds (see example [15] above). At this point, the visitor and host may shake hands and part. The host may see the visitor off or appoint someone to do this on his/her behalf. The choice of routine expressions at this stage depends on what the host/speaker perceives the visitor/addressee to be doing after the present encounter. For instance, is the interlocutor going to his/her home in the same village; in a different village or to the farm or to the market? Is it night time, and is the interlocutor going to bed? etc. (see §14.9 for a discussion of parting expressions). The encounter finally terminates when the host and the visitor part.

11.4 Concluding remark:

In this sketch of a social encounter in Ewe, the focus has been on the pragmatics of the language used in the encounter and on a few accompanying gestures. Thus particular attention was paid to the linguistic routines used in the course of the speech event and the folk labels for the various turns within the speech event. Mention was also made, however, of various social activities. It is hoped that the illocutionary devices described in the subsequent chapters can be contextualised and appreciated against the background of this broad ethnographic framework.

Chapter 12

LINGUISTIC ROUTINES: AN EXPLORATORY SURVEY

We need much more patient and careful description of the structure and use of politeness formulas in different communities and different languages.

Ferguson 1976: 146.

12.1 Introduction

Members of a speech community interact and communicate with each other daily. In these interactions, certain words or sequences of words, syntactic constructions and actions, as well as situations, keep recurring. These recurrent elements in conversation, be they verbal or non-verbal are referred to as conversational routines. For example, when people who have never met meet each other for the first time, they are introduced. This type of situation keeps occurring every time and calls for the performance of a ritual, so to speak, of introduction. Introductions then constitute a routine strategy - a kind of conversational routine. In the performance of the routine strategy of introduction in English, a number of conventional and relatively fixed expressions are recurrently used. For instance,

This is X

Meet X

May I introduce X

It is my pleasure to introduce X

The verbal aspects of this routine behaviour are linguistic routines.

Thus there are two dimensions to conversational routines: routine strategies - conventional more or less automatic non-verbal behaviour which is tied to particular interactive situations, and linguistic routines (see below for a definition). These two aspects of conversational routines are not always clearly distinguished in the literature (cf. Brown 1983, Irvine 1986). The principal focus of this study is on linguistic routines.

In the rest of this chapter, an attempt will be made to characterise and categorise linguistic routines. The points will be exemplified largely from English to facilitate comprehension.

12. 2. Defining linguistic routines

There are several definitions for linguistic routines in the growing literature on the subject. Some of these have a narrow scope and are applicable mainly to speech formulae (see below for a typology of routines). Others attempt to cover the whole range of items which are considered to be routines in this

study. Hymes (1968: 126) for example defines a linguistic routine as 'a recurrent sequence of verbal behaviour whether conventional or idiosyncratic'. This definition allows for nonce forms used in standardised communicative situations to be considered as routines. Hymes further argues that linguistic routines are not only formulae - fixed recurrent expressions - but also 'the full range of utterances which acquire conventional significance for an individual, group or whole culture' (Hymes 1968: 127). Thus Hymes allows for elements other than formulae to be routines

Coulmas, on the other hand thinks of routines as 'highly conventionalised prepatterned expressions whose occurrence is tied to more or less standardised communication situations' (Coulmas 1981: 2- 3). In this definition Coulmas seems to insist on the prefabricated and predictable nature of routines and does not seem to allow for nonce forms which may be used in standardised communicative situations to be routines. It will be argued below that such forms fall under the rubric of routines because of the context of their usage.

In this study, I assume that linguistic routines are expressions which occur in more or less predictable environments and in specific social situations or in particular types of interaction and are relatively conventionalised. In English, for instance, the expressions thank you! and thanks! are highly conventionalised ways of expressing appreciation to someone who has done something good for you. That's very kind of you! or I'm much obliged! are other less conventionalised yet appropriate fixed expressions used in similar situations. All these expressions are therefore routines by virtue of the identical context of situation in which they are used.

Linguistic routines are not only formulaic or prepatterned or prefabricated or fixed expressions, they may also be creatively constructed expressions which are automatically produced in predictable environments. For example, it is said that Americans avoid the use of formulaic expressions at funerals and produce nonce forms to show their sympathy. Thus instead of saying something like: Have my sympathies! or I'm very sorry about this, Americans are often heard to say things like: There's really nothing to say at a time like this. (cf, Tannen and Öztekin 1981). Since these occur in a context in which one would socially expect some form of standardized communication, they are considered to be linguistic routines, even though they are not formulaic or prepatterned expressions. One implication of this view is that speech formulae are but one category of linguistic routines (see below). Alternatively, one could say that an expression such as There's really nothing to say at a time like this has both a free and a formulaic or routine usage (cf. Pawley in press). In the context of expressing sympathy it has a routine or formulaic use. Thus a linguistic routine is an expression which is itself

conventionalised or occurs in a conventional situation. The degree to which an expression is formulaic or fixed is relative.

Similarly, the routinization of an expression is a matter of degree. As Brown (1983: 217) notes:

One might imagine a continuum of rigidity ranging from formulae like 'God bless you!' (said when someone sneezes) through conventional or stereotyped expressions and ritualised strategies like greeting or thanking sequences, to general conversational predictability ranging from basic constraints on topic and sequential organization.

Notice that Brown's continuum includes both routine expressions and routine strategies. Nevertheless it reflects the view that the formulaic nature of an expression (like idiomaticity in general) is a matter of degree.

Linguistic routines are almost automatically produced in the appropriate context. Speakers of a language acquire and learn these routines. Once acquired they tend to persist and are not easily lost. It has been reported that different categories of linguistic routines are some of the bits of language that are not lost in aphasia or senile dementia (Greif and Gleason 1980). This may be partly due to the fact that as children (and as language learners), people are taught and drilled in the appropriate use of these routines. If routines persist in aphasia and senile dementia where referential speech is lost, this may suggest that routines do not have referential meaning but rather expressive and interactional meanings.

Routines are part of a speaker's linguistic and pragmatic competence and hence should be accounted for in a linguistic description. Like Hymes (1962) I believe that the speech habits of a community cannot be fully described without a thorough account of routines. Besides, every speaker would appear to have a repertoire of these expressions which are accessed quite easily. Speakers can easily bring the pragmatic functions of these items into consciousness (Fillmore 1984).

Every linguistic community makes use of linguistic routines but "their character and the incidence of their use vary enormously from one society to another." (Ferguson 1976: 143) That is to say that linguistic routines constitute a universal, yet culture-specific, linguistic phenomenon. Because of their culture-specific nature they pose problems in cross-cultural communication. For example, the use of 'sorry' in native varieties of English is different from its use in African varieties of English. In native English sorry is used as an apology for something bad that the speaker has done to another person in native English. In the African varieties of English, it is used in addition to

apology to express sympathy when something bad happens to another. This extended usage is inappropriate in native varieties. Consequently, the utterance of sorry in such contexts by Africans to Anglo Saxons is misunderstood and is often met with retorts like 'What are you apologising for?' (see Akere 1978, Ameka 1987, Hannah and Trudgill 1982 and Spencer 1971).

Several studies of linguistic routines in different languages and cultures bear testimony to the fact that these snippets of ritual in everyday conversation 'conceal the many intricacies of man's verbal behaviour ' and their 'study is sure to be of value both in practice and in theory' (Drazdauskiene 1981: 155). A practical value of studying routines should be the promotion of cross-cultural understanding and easing of problems in second language acquisition (cf. Thomas 1983, Richards and Sukwiwat 1983, Pawley and Syder 1983, Ameka 1987, Davies 1987 among others).

12.3 Types of linguistic routines

Different categories of linguistic expressions fall within the characterisation of linguistic routines adopted in this study. These may be outlined as follows:

i) Formulaic syntactic constructions: These are syntactic constructions which are conventionally used to codify specific speech acts - usually, the illocutionary force of these constructions are different from what one would predict from their surface form. (They have been referred to as speech-act idioms or pragmatic idioms.) English whimperatives and queclaratives are the best exemplars of such structures:

Can you do X?
 Why don't you do X?
 How about X?

These expressions are language specific illocutionary devices and their translation equivalents in other languages may not have the same or similar pragmatic force. For instance, the utterance: Why don't you come and visit us? has the force of an invitation which can be roughly spelled out as follows:

I want you to come and visit us
 I think it will be a good thing to do
 I want you to say what you think about it

The Ewe surface equivalent of this utterance is:

núkata ma- d̩ tsa á vá kpó mí ɖa o?
 why NEG:2SG:IRR bury wander IRR come see 1PL VS NEG

This sentence may have the force of a question and an added component of a rebuke . Roughly its interpretation may be represented as:

I think you should have come to visit us by now
 I feel something bad towards you because of that
 I want you to tell me why you will not come and visit us

The illocutionary effect of the two utterances in the respective languages is quite different.

One can extend the notion of syntactic formulaic construction to include grammatical constructions as the term is applied in certain varieties of cognitive grammar. A grammatical construction in this sense is the pairing of a grammatical formula which specifies not a single expression but a set of expressions with a discourse or pragmatic function (see e.g. Lambrecht 1984, Pawley 1986, Fillmore, Kay and O'Connor 1988 and Fillmore and Kay 1987). A simple example of this is the English time telling expressions of the form M past/to H (Pawley in press). Notice that M and H are variable but they have specifications. M specifies time before or after the hour and H specifies the hour. It should also be observed that M is restricted to minutes up to twenty nine and the fractions a quarter and half where the latter combines only with past and not to. Such structures are also very language-specific. For instance, to say 'it's half past the hour e.g. two' in Ewe one has to say literally 'it is two o'clock and half' as in the following:

é φo ga eve kplé afã
 3SG strike metal two and half
 lit: the bell strike two and a half
 'Its half past two.'

One cannot use the analogous 'it strike X o'clock (past) Y minutes' for the fraction. And afã is the only fraction used in telling the time in Ewe.

ii) Vocatives and terms of address: These items signal the social relationship and the relative social status of interlocutors in a communicative situation. Where there is a choice of forms to use in address, the use of a particular item reflects the attitude of the speaker towards the addressee. In English, for example, speakers may address their interlocutors by their first name or a variant of the first name: John, Mary, Johnnie etc. by a title and the last name: Mrs Brown, Dr Jones etc.; by a kin term: Uncle! Daddy! Mummy! and religious or occupational titles: Rev. Sister, Doctor etc. Each of these ways of

addressing people in English convey a particular pragmatic meaning (cf. Brown and Ford 1964, Ervin Tripp 1974). Like other routines, modes of address are language specific and the pragmatic value associated with each of the strategies across cultures or subcultures is different. For instance the pragmatic force of first names in (Australian) English is different from the use of personal names in address in Ewe (see chapter 13, and see also Wierzbicka 1990).

iii) Interactional speech formulae: These are relatively fixed expressions which are conventionally associated with particular interactive situations. These are standardised expressions for various interactional acts and purposes such as greeting, taking leave, thanking, apologising, expressing wishes etc. Some English examples are: How are you? Congratulations! See you later. Thank you. I have used the words 'interactional' and 'speech' in the label to distinguish these formulae from the syntactic formulae discussed earlier. I have also used them to create a neutral term. Sometimes the items I have in mind have been referred to as 'politeness routines' or 'deference formulae'. Such terms are inappropriate because the use of these formulae does not always entail politeness (Ferguson 1976: 128 fn 2). Another term that has been used for this set of routines is situational formulae (e.g. Richards and Sukwiwat 1983). The problem with this term is that it is not discriminatory enough because all the other types of routines are also situational and can thus be referred to as such (see chapter 14).

iv) Discourse routines are those linguistic signs that are used to signal the structure, flow, content and organisation of discourse as well as the speaker's state of consciousness or attitude in the discourse context. These discourse routines may be subclassified into gambits and backchannelers.

(a) Gambits or stereotypes (cf. Keller 1981, Drazdauskiene 1981 and James 1983) are verbal signals which indicate the structure and flow of discourse either by being topic frame introducers such as Tell you what, Generally etc. or they symbolize the logical development of the argument, for example, anyway, actually.

(b) Back-channel markers signal a speaker's state of consciousness and provide cues to the addressee that s/he is following what is being said. They thus have a communication control function. One can distinguish between lexical and phonation types of these markers. Examples of the lexical ones are well, you know, I mean, yes, you see, listen etc. Oh! er, uh, hm etc. are examples of back-channel phonations. These are sometimes referred to as pause fillers or hesitation markers (see Færch and Kasper (1984) and references for a more extensive classification of discourse routines and their functions).

Interjections, the next type of routines discussed, are separate from this class of items even though they may be related. Some interjections may function in discourse as markers of discourse units like the gambits do (e.g. English *oh*). Furthermore, the backchanneling phonations could be considered as interjections. The fundamental difference between discourse routines and interjections is that the former are defined by their function whereas interjections constitute a word class defined in terms of form and distribution. For this reason, some interjections may be exploited for some of the functions that are served in discourse by the discourse routines. Hence there is some overlap in the typology (see Zwicky 1985, Fraser 1990b and especially Schiffrin (1987: 328) who demonstrates that different linguistic items from different formal classes can function as markers in discourse)

v) Interjections are words which conventionally constitute non-elliptical utterances by themselves and express a speaker's current mental state or reaction towards an element in the linguistic or extra-linguistic context. Some English examples are: *Oops!* *Ouch!* *Oh!* *Yuk!* and *Bewdy!* *Hell!* *Christ!* (see Goffman 1981, Kendon 1985 and papers in Ameka ed. 1991 as well as chapter 15).

All these categories of linguistic routines have a number of things in common: they are expressive and/or interactional in nature, they are culture-specific and reflect aspects of the cultural value system associated with a particular language or group of languages. Different types of routines have different social and pragmatic functions. The specific functions of the relevant subtypes will be mentioned in relation to their description in subsequent chapters.

It should also be noted that the typology of routines is proposed as a heuristic framework for their description. There could be overlapping membership of the categories as we have already seen with phonation discourse routines and interjections. However each of the subtypes would appear to have core members.

As indicated in the Overview to Part IV, the present description will focus on terms of address, interactional speech formulae and interjections in Ewe. This last category overlaps to some extent with a subtype of discourse routines - back-channel markers - hence discourse routines may receive some incidental mention. In a sense some of the grammatical constructions described in the previous parts could be viewed as some manifestations of syntactic formulae, but these are not dealt with in the present part. The discussion will now turn to the sociolinguistics of routines.

12.4 Sociolinguistic aspects of routines

The usage of a linguistic routine by a speaker is affected or determined by a number of sociolinguistic variables: age, sex, relative social status, personal beliefs or religion, authority and politeness relations between interlocutors. These factors may also affect people's perception of these items. For instance, Euren (1987) reports that some migrants in Australia find Australianisms such as *No worries!*, *No sweat!*, *Bewdy!* etc. irritating. The attitude one has towards these expressions may prevent him/her from using them. The mechanics of what factor determines the usage pattern of routines deserve to be studied in a sociolinguistic framework. There are some studies of linguistic routines from this sociolinguistic perspective (see for example, Taylor (1976) on swearing in Australian English, Laver (1981) on the choice of greeting formulae and terms of address in British English and Holmes (1986, 1987) on the comparison of the use of 'you know' and 'of course' as discourse markers by men and women in New Zealand). The present study is not about these sociolinguistic variables and these factors will only be used as supporting evidence for the analysis of the individual linguistic routines.

It has sometimes been claimed, unfortunately, that these routines do not have a place in a core linguistic description and that they should be studied only from a sociolinguistic point of view. Excluding these forms from linguistic descriptions, to my mind, makes such descriptions incomplete. As Hymes (1962) points out the speech habits (i.e. the language) of a community cannot be fully described without a thorough account of routines. What is needed is a linguistic description from which one can predict various sociolinguistic or usage factors.

One can think of the grammar of routines as a description of the grammaticalization of discourse and social deixis (Fillmore 1975, Lyons 1977, Levinson 1983, Anderson and Keenan 1985). Discourse routines relate to discourse deixis and the routines that we are concerned with in this study: forms of address, speech formulas and interjections pertain to social deixis (see Wilkins 1991 and Evans 1991). If the description of deixis belongs to linguistics and these items are different types of deictics, then they should be included in a linguistic description. As Levinson (1983: 93) observes 'social deixis can be systematically restricted to the study of facts that lie firmly within the scope of structural studies of linguistic systems leaving the study of usage to another domain.' This is precisely what the present study seeks to do: it attempts to describe the systematic facts about Ewe routines from which their usage may be predicted and thereby provide a reliable guide to their usage.

The present study will also be concerned with the social meanings of the routines. It will seek to explicate the social conventions associated with them and the socio-cultural content that they embody. The descriptive and

theoretical problems that should be overcome in any such study are surveyed in the next section.

12.5 The meaning and grammar of routines

Linguistic routines tend to have special conventionalised meanings. They are one class of linguistic items that directly encode pragmatic meanings in their linguistic structure. Thus components of their meaning pertain to the interaction or interpersonal relationship between the speaker and the addressee. For example, part of the meaning of Congratulations in English is: I feel something good towards you (cf. Ameka 1987: 305). Other items have meanings that pertain to what Evans (in press) calls 'discourse placedness' and 'social placedness' conditions. That is, they encode contextual information relevant to the use of the item (cf. Gumperz's (1982: 131) and 1989 contextualization cues). For instance, there are some routines that one may use only to a certain kind of addressee who perhaps is in a special relationship. Thus a form kss is described in §13.9 has the following social placedness condition: 'people lower in social status should not use this form to their superiors'.

Similarly a presentative routine to! 'here you are' in Italian encodes the social placedness condition formulated along the following lines by Wilkins (1991) "I think I can say this to you because you are someone I say '[tu]' to". It is not always clear whether such meaning components should be included in the semantic explication of the linguistic items or belong to the set of general interpretation rules. Further research is required. The rule of thumb I have employed in deciding whether it belongs to the semantic formula or not is whether it is generalisable to other elements. Thus since the condition for kss cited above applies to several other linguistic elements, it is treated as an interpretation rule rather than as part of the semantic formula of the individual items. Wilkins however treats the condition on to! as part of its semantic explication because that is the component that helps to distinguish the Italian form from an equivalent form in Mparntwe Arrernte (Aranda), an Australian language. There might thus be different motivations for taking the decision one way or another.

Linguistic routines also tend to codify shared cultural beliefs and attitudes about the norms, habits and institutions of a speech community. For Pawley (in press) the quintessential speech formula - one of our categories of routines - 'is a social institution, a culturally standardized recipe for binding utterance context, function and form.' Routines are an index of the cultural ecology of a speech community. For example, in the Australian English expression of Good on you!, a cultural attitude towards 'toughness' and of 'having a go' is partially

encoded. This is reflected in component (b) of its meaning proposed by Wierzbicka (1986:365), see also Wierzbicka 1990 for further justification):

Good on you!

- (a) I perceive that you are able to do things that one couldn't expect everybody to be able to do
- (b) I think because of that that you are a kind of person that you and I would want people to be but couldn't expect anyone to be
- (c) I feel good feelings towards you because of that
- (d) I say this because I want to show what I think about it and what I feel because of it.

(Being tough i.e. tenacious, and willing to give things a try is an admired and desired quality in Australia).

The extent to which individual routines encode interactional, social, contextual and cultural meanings varies from one routine to another. But each routine, generally speaking, has a codified pragmatics in its meaning, that are its set of conditions of use.

Routines also differ in the extent to which they have descriptive or propositional meaning. It could be said that prototypical interjections such as ouch! or yuk! in English do not have propositional content. In terms of their semantic structure, they do not have an illocutionary dictum although they have a communicative or illocutionary purpose component (see chapter 15 on interjections and references there, and see also Wierzbicka 1990 for a similar view, and Wilkins 1991 for an opposite view).

Other routines, such as speech formulae, which could be said to have propositional content (dictum) vary in the extent to which they are transparent. That is, different routines have relative degrees to which their propositional content is reflected in their surface compositional meaning i.e. the lexical and morpho-syntactic content of the expressions.

Thus there is a variation among routines of how frozen they are. For example, the propositional content of the expression "(God) bless you!" uttered to someone who sneezes bears no relation (or only partial relation) to its surface lexical content. It is highly frozen. But the formula "well done!" is very transparent. Its dictum reflects its lexical and morpho-syntactic surface form (see Ameka 1987: 305); i.e. I say: you have done something well.

It has been difficult to adequately treat linguistic routines in grammatical and semantic theories largely because they encode pragmatic and cultural meanings and partly also because they tend to be idiomatic. Notwithstanding the

difficulty, linguistic routines "constitute another set of facts about human language which the linguist must somehow fit into their theories of grammar ..." (Ferguson 1976: 150).

In recent years, several attempts have been made to incorporate these forms within different frameworks. Thus linguistic routines have been described from various theoretical and methodological perspectives: ethnography of communication (Hymes 1962, Ferguson 1976; Tannen and Oztek 1981, Coulmas 1979, 1981b), psycholinguistics (eg Keller 1981), conversational analysis (e.g. Gritten and Merlan 1981, Edmondson 1981), speech act theory (e.g. Fraser 1981, Verschueren 1985, Wierzbicka 1986, Ameka 1987, in press, Davies 1987 Fillmore 1984). There has been a programmatic suggestion for their treatment in generative grammar (Haggo and Kuiper 1983). It seems that each of these perspectives can contribute to an understanding of the nature and meaning of routines. In line with the general 'ecumenical' orientation adopted in this study, insights from these different fields are brought to bear on the elucidation of the significance of routines in Ewe.

However, an illocutionary semantic framework is adopted for the representation of the meanings of the routines because routines are assumed to constitute communicative acts, and an illocutionary semantic approach seems better suited for the explication of communicative meanings. It is assumed that illocutionary forces are amalgams of the feelings, intentions, wants and purposes of speakers. As such they can be decomposed into their meaning components (cf Van Dijk 1981, Searle 1979: 1-29; Norrick 1978, Wierzbicka 1980, 1987, 1990; Ameka 1987, to appear a) and b)). Thus the illocutionary force of the English routine expression Congratulations may be decomposed as follows (see Ameka 1987 for justification and cf. Wierzbicka 1987 on the speech act verb 'congratulate'):

I now know this: something good has happened to you
 I think it wouldn't have happened if you hadn't done something
 to cause it to happen
 I think you feel something good because of this
 I want to say the kind of thing that one should say when things of
 this kind happen to him/her
 I say: I feel something good towards you because of what has
 happened to you
 I say it because I want you to know what I feel because of it

The various components in this explication represent various aspects of the illocutionary force of the utterance Congratulations!. For example, the last

component represents the illocutionary purpose while the last but one represents the propositional content. The other components represent various assumptions and wants of the speaker.

To conclude the discussion on the grammar and meaning of routines it should be stressed that the theoretical point of the investigation of the conversational routines is twofold: one, to suggest and demonstrate a way of representing the meaning of routines i.e. the knowledge that a native speaker has of a language's routines; two, to attempt to link the pragmatic meanings associated with the routines with the social and cultural setting in which they are used. It is thus an exploration of the connections between the illocutionary grammar of a language and the cultural styles associated with that language. The language in question in the context of this study is Ewe.

Chapter 13

MODES OF ADDRESS

... titles of address and all vocative forms seem invariably marked for speaker-referent relationship: there is no such thing, it seems, as a socially neutral summons or address. (Levinson 1983:92)

13.0 Introduction

A paraphrase of the quote above from Levinson is that forms of address have encapsulated in them interactional and social meanings. Through their use, speaker's convey various attitudes towards their interlocutors. The task in this chapter is to investigate and explicate the pragmatic meanings of various categories of address forms in Ewe - a topic which has not been explored either from a linguistic or a sociolinguistic perspective. The present study does not seek to describe the sociolinguistics of address in Ewe, rather it attempts to document the meanings conveyed (and negotiated) between speakers and addressees when address terms are used. This should not be construed as playing down the importance of the variation that may be manifested in the choice of one term over another when one person could be addressed in a number of different ways. The choice of address term is meaningful in itself. However, it seems that one has to know the semantic and pragmatic value of the various forms and strategies in order to explain such choices and variation that may occur in actual usage.

The chapter is organised around the various categories that feature in the Ewe system of address: personal names, appellations, kinship terms, status terms, allonymous terms, human categorisation terms, pronouns and exclamatory summons. The chapter concludes with an attempt to relate the Ewe data to some cross-cultural issues in address systems. For example, the Ewe data is examined in relation to the universal 'Invariant Norm of Address' proposed by Brown (1965).

13.1 Personal names

There is no shortage of literature on the symbolic importance, the categories and the sociolinguistic relevance of personal names in Ewe (see e.g. Agblemagnon 1969, Egblewogbe 1984). The existing literature however fails to present a balanced picture with respect to how these names are used in address.

It will be argued here that personal names are unimportant as address terms for adults in spite of their symbolic importance in Ewe culture. In the course of this chapter, it will be demonstrated that there are other strategies of address that compensate for this feature of personal names. I will first outline the symbolic importance and the various categories of Ewe personal names (§13.1.1) and then go on to discuss the pragmatic meaning that the use of personal names in address convey (§13.1.2).

13.1.1 The symbolic meaning of personal names

The importance of personal names and the sorts of meaning they carry in Ewe are summarised from a sociological point of view by Agblemagnum as follows:

...dans la société ewe... Le nom est l'expression sociologique de faits sociaux, de réactions sociales, de croyances religieuses, d'attitudes et de comportements tant individuels que collectifs. La fonction du nom dans cette société n'est pas seulement de numéroter les individus, mais d'exprimer une crainte, de marquer une date, de conjurer un sort, de remercier la Providence, de caractériser un événement. Dans cette société, le nom a toujours une référence et une signification précises. Il reflète les croyances fondamentales et la dynamique de la société en cause.¹ (Agblemagnum 1969:71)

Thus it can be said that in Ewe every personal name has some cognitive meaning. This may be supported in part by a folk comment by an author concerning Ewe names:

- [1] ewe- a' - wo' me' tsɔ' a' ŋkɔ' dzro' o,
 Ewe DEF PL NEG take HAB name vain NEG
 ke'boŋ gome- se-se si le ŋkɔ' si' la'
 but rather under hear RED REL be:PRES name handTP
 ta- e' wo' tsɔ' ne
 because aFOC 3PL take HAB:3SG
 'The Ewes do not take names in vain, rather a name is taken
 because of the meaning it has.' (Gadzekpo 1982:9)

¹ `...in Ewe society... A name is the sociological expression of social phenomena, and reactions, of religious beliefs, of attitudes and behaviour both individual and collective. The function of a name in this society is not only to label individuals, but also to express a fear, mark a date, invoke fate, thank Providence, characterise an event. In this society, a name always has a precise meaning and referent. It reflects fundamental beliefs and the dynamics of the society in question.

The different sorts of functions that the names serve or the circumstances surrounding their use leads to different categories of names.

First, there are the **birth-related names**. These are of various types.

(i) Birthday names: There is a name for people according to the day of the week on which they are born. The names used in Ewe are tabulated as follows:

	MALE	FEMALE
Monday	Kɔdzó/Kúdzo	Adzó(a)
Tuesday	Kɔmla/Kɔbla	Abraʔ/Ablá
Wednesday	Kɔku/Anku	Akú(a)/Ankúá/Akúyo
Thursday	Yawo	Ya(wá)
Friday	Kofí	Afuá/Afí
Saturday	Kwami	Áma
Sunday	Kɔsí	Akɔsíá/Esí

Table 13.1 Ewe birthday names

This practice of birthday names is rather widespread in southern Ghana. It appears that it spread from Akan into Ewe and Ga (see Kropp Dakuba (1981: 84-87) on the historical sense of these names and the Akan forms). The birthday name of a person is given together with other names on the eighth day after the birth of the child. These names mean something like 'a female/male born on day X'. For example, if someone has the name 'Kofi' as this writer does, it means he is a male born on Friday. It can be asserted that every person born to an Ewe parent has a name of this category, but there are people who have never been addressed or referred to by such a name. Some children may never know the birthday name of their parents.

However, the day on which a person is born and its associated name is important in traditional religious contexts. For example, if one wants to give a party in thanksgiving to God for having recovered from a sickness or an accident etc., it has to be done on the day s/he was born. Other people born on the same day have a special role during such activities. On other occasions when libation is being poured for the specific intention of someone, his/her birthday name is used (in addition to other names). Thus the birthday names play a significant role in rituals and religion. This is partly because it is believed that a person's soul is intimately linked with the day on which s/he is born.

The birthday names and the days on which people are born also play a role in the socio-economic life of the people. Thus fund-raising competitions are

organised around the days of the week on which people are born. This practice plays on the solidarity that traditionally exists among people born on the same day. It should be evident from this discussion that birthday names are symbolic in Ewe. But like other personal names, their use in address is restricted (see Bean 1978 on the distinction between symbolic and pragmatic differences between Kanada address terms).

Although birthday names play a significant role in symbolic terms, I contend that in pragmatic terms, especially in address, they are avoided. Children may be addressed and referred to by bare birthday names but if adults are addressed in this way, it is perceived to be rude. It conveys an attitude that the speaker wants to relate to the adult as a child, someone who does not have much responsibility. It will be seen later on that many of the terms, e.g. status titles and teknonyms etc. for adults convey a certain respect for the adult as being a responsible person. There appears to be a communicative strategy in Ewe (and other African cultures, perhaps) which may be formulated as follows:

Do not address or refer to adults by their personal names.

This generalisation applies also to the other categories of names to which we now turn.

Other names pertain to the circumstances around the birth of the person. These are of various kinds.

(ii) There are names that relate to the order of birth of the person in the family. Is the person the first or the last child of the family? or of the mother? Is s/he the third male or female child? etc. Thus the first son and daughter may be called Foli and Agoe respectively. The third son in a row and the third daughter may be called Mensa or Mansa respectively. The last born is Katsere or Dɔmlɔe. Some of these names are borrowed from Akan, for example Mensa and Mansa are based on the word for 'three' in Akan.

(iii) Multiple birth names: Other circumstances of birth names pertain to multiple births. For example, there are special names for twins and the children born after them. Two male twins may be called Atta and Atta-kuma (presumably borrowed from Akan) or Atsu and Atsu-tse (the indigenous Ewe terms). A male and female twin may be called Atta and Atta-φoe or Atsu and Atsu-φoe, while two female twins are Attawa and Attawa-kuma. The suffixes -kuma, -φoe and -tse mean 'younger' so the names they attach to mean 'younger' Atta, or Atsu or Attawa. There is a tradition where the female of female-male twins is said to be the younger sibling of the male. But for two males or for two females, the one who is born last is said to be the elder and therefore called Atta (male) or Attawá (female) and the one who was born first is the younger sibling. S/he is said to have gone ahead to prepare the way for

his/her senior. A child born after twins (by the same mother) is Tawia (borrowed from Akan) or Doe (an Ewe term).

(iii) Other circumstances of birth names: Some children may be given names to reflect their posture during birth. For instance a child who came out with the legs first may be called xevi 'a bird'. Others may be named according to the unusual places where they were born. For example a female child born on the farm may be called agblesi 'wife of the farm'.

Another category of circumstances of birth names is what are called 'ahamájkwó' lit.: 'insinuation names'. These names are given to people and through them the parent mocks some other person. The examples that come to mind all relate to broken relationships and absence of commitment on the part of a man with respect to the child. Thus there are names like:

Adíkpo' - 'You sought and found'
Nyexawoe - 'I bothered you'

These are ironical, and they cast insinuations at someone else.

(iv) Commemorative names: In addition to the names outlined above, people may be named in thanksgiving to God or in appreciation of the marvels they have received. Some parents may dedicate their children to a religious entity during pregnancy and when the child is born, s/he may be named with respect to the specific requests made. Today some names that relate to God - theophorous names - are used in Christian churches at baptism e.g. Seláse 'The Hearer has heard' Akpéne 'Thanks to Him = God' delaðem 'The saviour has saved me' etc.

Sometimes people are also named after a relative because they resemble them or because the parents want to keep the name of the relative alive.

(v) Christian names: These are predominantly English names, or rather European names, but as noted earlier, some Ewe names are now being used in the Christian context. e.g. Máwúli 'God exists', Séná 'God/destiny gave', Dzigbɔɔɔ 'patience' etc.

(vi) Surnames: Finally, there are surnames which in Ewe are called tɔ́gbé-ɲkɔ́-wó 'grandfather's name'. These are used in official government contexts and schools. In fact children are more likely to refer and call out to each other by their surnames than any other name at school. In universities, students generally refer and address each other by surnames and the English titles of Mr or Ms. One can say that in a formal education context and in political circles surnames are often used.

13.1.2 The pragmatic meaning of personal names in address.

Many studies have focused on these categories of names and their 'hidden' cultural meaning and significance. Not much attention has been paid to their pragmatic meanings (see Egblewogbe and references therein). In this section, I discuss the uses of names in address.

As noted at different points in the discussion, children in general can be addressed by these personal names without any titles etc. added. When people become adults, for example, when they finish High School, they may still be addressed by personal names but usually titles are added, e.g. Fo Kɔmla 'elder brother Kɔmla', Da Ama 'elder sister Ama' etc. Such address terms disappear and are replaced by status, occupational or parenthood names as the individual proceeds to assume responsibility in one of these roles. Thus someone who marries and has children ceases to be addressed by personal names and may be addressed by parenthood names in the traditional context. Similarly, if the person takes on an occupation such as teaching s/he may be addressed as teacher etc. By adulthood then, a person's names are seldom used in address. An individual tends to be addressed and referred to by other titles and address terms apart from names. No wonder then that some children never get to know the names of their parents.

The conclusion one may draw from this is that personal names are avoided in addressing adults in Ewe. This may be formulated by way of a rule of speaking Ewe as follows:

Do not address or refer to adults by their personal name.

Given this rule, it is possible for people to express an attitude towards adults by using a personal name. If this happens, it can be inferred that the speaker wants to imply that the adult is irresponsible and is still a child. Thus someone who is rebuking an adult can use a personal name instead of a status related or adult related term to show disrespect to the adult in question.

The use of a bare personal name or of an address term involving a personal name may thus be said to have the following significance:

I don't want to speak to you the way people speak to adults
 I want to speak to you the way people speak to children
 I want to show I feel something towards you of the kind people
 show they feel towards adults who they don't want to speak to
 the way they speak to adults

The use of personal names for adults is perceived to be rude. As an illustration, I want to recount the following incident that happened several years ago. A child was sent to come and give a message to my father. I think the one who sent him referred to my father as 'Mr Ameka'. The child came and asked after my father using the same name. An aunt of mine then asked him not to refer to my father like that. She asked him if he knew what work my father does and if he knew the children of my father. The child replied in the affirmative. My aunt then said next time he should refer to my father in terms of one of these; either an occupation term 'master' or use a 'father of X' title. This anecdote shows that people are trained to avoid the personal names of adults as much as possible. People may be corrected when they err in this.

To compensate for the non-use of personal names in adult address several other address terms have evolved. These are discussed in subsequent sections.

13.2 Appellations

Appellations are forms of address that are given to people or taken by people in praise of something that they have done or someone else has done. These are used especially by men. For example:

[2] kpe' to' ηku' me' φo- a aqaba o
 stone grow eye NEG strike HAB eyelash NEG
 'A stone with an eye cannot wink'.

Appellations are different from personal names in a number of ways. First, appellations are typically used in address, they are not used in reference, unless in abbreviated form. Second, as should be evident from the example above, appellations usually have a complex structure. They are usually made up of one or more clauses. The responses they take may be equally complex. A third difference is that the enactment of appellations is reported with a special predicate. This predicate is:

φo ηkɔ' qo'
 pile name up

The meaning of this predicate implies that the speaker showers or heaps names on the addressee. When people are addressed with personal names or other address terms, that activity is not reported with such a verb, it may be reported simply with $yɔ'X \eta kɔ'$ 'call X's name'.

All these pieces of evidence suggest that appellations are a significant means of address in Ewe. They are similar to what have been called 'praise-names' for example in Akan (see e.g. Nketia 1955, Finnegan 1970). The appellation implies an acknowledgement of certain powers or characteristics of the addressee which are enshrined in the various phrases. One context in which appellations are used is when the addressee has displayed some unique qualities and the speaker admires him for it. In other contexts, appellations may be used to inspire and urge the addressee to pluck up courage and do something. Someone can also invoke his own appellative to imbue him with confidence to do something. For example, when the speaker of the following extract was about to have a fight, he saluted himself with his appellation so that he could perform at his best and defeat his opponent:

- [3] nye dagbanaɖu, gadawuye be'
 1SG D. G. say
 ye- bɔ ga- wo' ga- wo' de' me
 LOG bend metal PL metal PL put in
 'I Dagandaɖu, Gadawuye says he bent several pieces of metal in'
 (Gadzekpo 1982:12)

It can be said that appellations are not personal names but 'praise' terms that are used for adults. They serve specific functions including providing a means for addressing people without using their personal names. The illocutionary significance of the use of appellations in address may be characterised as follows:

- I want to speak to you the way men speak to other men who can do
 things that not all men do
 I want to show that I feel something good towards you of the kind
 people feel towards men of this kind
 I want you to feel something good

In Ewe folk terms appellations have several names all of which reflect different aspects of this category of address terms. They may be called $\eta f s u \eta - k \omega'$ 'masculine names'. This label suggests that they are used by men to address other men. They may be called $g b e s a - \eta k \omega'$ 'magical names', that is, names used in invoking one's magical powers. It is men who have such

powers. From this perspective appellations are titles for men who have certain powers or qualities. This idea is what I have tried to capture in the explication in terms of ‘men who can do things that all men cannot do’. In addition, these names may be called ahano-ηkɔwo ‘drinking names’, that is names used by men when they are drinking. These folk labels indicate the salience of these appellations within the Ewe address system.

Unlike personal names, appellations or forms based on appellations can be used to address the bearer of such appellations throughout their life and afterwards. For instance a famous poet-cantor of aɲɔ is known by both young and old, men and women by the name Akpalu. This became his pen-name so to speak. But Akpalu ‘is an abbreviation of a much longer appellation the poet-cantor gave himself, a kind of summation of life time of hardship and deprivation’ (West Africa 21/11/88 p. 2190, cf. Anyidoho 1984). The full appellation is:

akpalu, akpa ɔɔɔɔ̃ ɔu- tɔ; bibi- a' bi- a
 A A half-cooked eat NER cooked DEF cook TP
 wo- tɔ- e na' wo' vi- wo'
 3PL take 3SG give 3PL child PL
 ‘Akpalu Akpa, he-who-eats-half-cooked and spoiled food, they reserve
 the best prepared meals for their children.’

[morphemic analysis and interlinear translation mine F.A.]

The features of the name Akpalu illustrate a number of points about appellations. First they can become the address term and name of people. In this case they are abbreviated. The second point is that people can take this name as opposed to personal names which are given or inherited. However the appellation of someone could become the family/surname of his descendants. Some present day surnames are like this. In fact, Akaplu’s personal names are Atsu Akakpo. I believe Akakpo is his surname and Atsu probably indicates that he is a twin.

The use of appellations in several Ghanaian languages has a reflex, I believe, in the use of what are called ‘guy names’ by secondary school students in Ghana. These students usually take a name of their heroes and their peers use them as forms of address for them. The performance of the ‘guy names’ is very similar to what happens in the appellations. Some of my peers had the following ‘guy names’:

- [4a] Susten Se Ra
 Response: 'Son of the Royal Sun'
- [4b] Bob Janingo
 Response: 'The boy from Honolulu, capital of Hawaii'

The use of such names identifies the people as cool guys and they are used to salute them and praise them. The use of such 'guy names' could be thought of as a strategy that the adolescents develop so that their peers at least might not address them by their personal names. Similarly, one could argue that appellations constitute another means by which personal names, and in this case the names of adult men, can be avoided in personal interaction. Apart from this they have the specific function of indicating that the style of interaction that the interlocutors are engaged in is a masculine one. Among other things, kin terms also provide another means by which people can avoid using personal names in address in Ewe. They are discussed in the next section.

13.3 Kin terms

Kin terms are used extensively in address in Ewe (and in many other societies). In Ewe, they are used not only for true kin but also for classificatory and 'fictive' kin. Indeed as Agblemagnon (1969) observes, the use of kin terms in address suggests that interpersonal relationships in Ewe society are modelled on family relationships. This relates to the key concept of 'communality' that is an aspect of Ewe and other African societies (see e.g. Ayisi 1979). People are seen as related to one another along family lines. In this section, I will first outline the kinship system - the language of kinship, and point out those kin terms that are used in extended ways and characterise the attitudes that such a use entails. Since some terms of social relationships are based on kin terms, some of the social relation terms used in address are also discussed.

13.3.1 The Kinship system

The language of kinship provides a useful basis for understanding relationships in a society. The Ewe society is no exception. Within the kinship system some relations are distinguished according to sex and others according to their rank with respect to a particular relative. This suggests that in certain relations sex/gender differences are significant while in others, seniority in rank is more important.

Terms for parents are distinguished by sex. Ego refers to his/her father as *e-tɔ* but s/he may address him as *fofó* or *papá*. Father's sisters (i.e. aunts) are called both in reference and address *ete* or *tasi*. The terms for father's brothers are distinguished with respect to their ordering in relation to father. Father's

male siblings who are older than him are called tɔ́-gã (lit.: father big) ‘elder father’ and those who are younger than father tɔ́-ɖe² (lit.: father young) ‘younger father’. These terms are also extended to the cousins etc. of father.

Ego calls his/her mother e-nɔ́ in reference but she may be addressed as nana or dadá. Mother’s siblings are also distinguished according to sex. The male siblings of mother may be referred to or addressed as ɔ́fa (borrowed from Akan) or nyruie. The female siblings of mother are differentiated on the basis of rank with respect to mother. The sisters of mother who are older than mother are nɔ́-gã (lit.: mother big) ‘elder mother’ and those who are younger are nɔ́-ɖe (lit.: mother young) ‘younger mother’. These terms are extended to cousins of mother as well and to any female relative of mother’s generation. Note the parallelism between the terms for female siblings of ‘mother’ and male siblings of ‘father’.

Terms for grandparents are distinguished in terms of gender but there is no difference between the terms for father’s parents or mother’s parents. Male grandparents are tɔ́gbé ‘grandfather’ and female grandparents are mamá ‘grandmother’ (see below for extended uses of these terms). Terms for great grandparents are modelled on those for grandparents. The ‘grandfather’ and ‘grandmother’ terms are reduplicated and a diminutive suffix is added: tɔ́gbétɔ́gbé-é ‘great grandfather’ mamá́mámé ‘great grandmother’. These terms are used in reference. In address, tɔ́gbé and mamá are used for great grandparents in the same way that they are used for grandparents.

A child of parents may be referred to as ví and in address a possessive pronoun is added: vi-nye ‘my child’. The terms for ‘son’ and ‘daughter’ may be distinguished by compounding ɲútsu ‘man’ and nyɔ́nu ‘woman’ to ví respectively. This process yields the following forms: vi-ɲútsu ‘son’ and vi-nyɔ́nu ‘daughter’. These terms are not used in address.

The siblings of Ego are referred to as nɔ́ví literally ‘mother’s child’. In address a possessive pronoun is added to get nɔ́ví-nye. This term is extended to other people. To differentiate between brothers and sisters the same words for man and woman used with child are used to produce the following forms: nɔ́ví-ɲútsu ‘brother’ nɔ́ví-nyɔ́nu ‘sister’. Siblings are further distinguished by sex and by rank with respect to Ego. Male siblings older than Ego are referred to, and addressed as fo or fofó ‘elder brother’ while female siblings older than Ego are daa or dadá ‘elder sister’. Younger male siblings are referred to as tse ‘younger brother’ and ɔ́oe ‘younger sister’. The terms for younger siblings are sparingly used in address. In some dialects, for example the ɲlɔ dialect, the term tse is used in general for ‘younger sibling’ irrespective of sex.

² This ɖe suffix is realised as dja in ɲlɔ. Thus tɔ́ɖe in the inland dialects is tɔ́dja in ɲlɔ and nɔ́ɖe is nɔ́dja.

These sibling terms may sometimes be used with possessive pronouns when used in address. For example, fo-nye 'my elder brother'. The terms fo and dadá are used 'fictively' to address any male or female person respectively whom the speaker assumes to be older than him/her and belongs to his/her generation.

Cousins of whatever order are referred to either as tɔ́gá~tɔ́de-ví 'elder father-younger father child' or nɔ́gá~nɔ́de-ví 'elder mother-younger mother child' depending on whether the relationship is on the paternal side or the maternal side. The rationale for these terms is that Ego and the other are children of siblings one younger and one older. These terms are not used in address. Cousins are addressed in the same way as siblings with fo or dadá depending on their sex and age relative to Ego.

Nephews and nieces are referred to with terms based on the relationship between Ego and the other. Thus if Ego is the male sibling of the child's father, the child - the nephew or niece - is a tɔ́gá~yɔ́-ví literally 'elder father call child', that is, 'a child who calls me elder father' or tɔ́de~yɔ́-ví, literally 'younger father call child', that is, 'a child who calls me younger father'. Similarly a female sibling of the father of the child would refer to him/her as tasí~yɔ́-ví 'aunt call child' that is 'a child who calls me aunt'. Parallel terms exist for the child of a female sibling of Ego: nɔ́gá~yɔ́-ví 'elder mother call child' that is, 'a child who calls me elder mother'; nɔ́de~yɔ́-ví 'younger mother call child', that is, 'a child who calls me younger mother', and ɔ́fa~yɔ́-ví 'maternal uncle call child', that is, 'a child who calls me maternal uncle'.

Affinal terms also exist. The term for spouse is srɔ́ and the gender specific terms for 'husband' and 'wife' are atsú and asi respectively. Each of these terms may be used in address when combined with a possessive pronoun, for example, srɔ́~nye 'my spouse'. These terms can also be used in a fictive sense. Thus a man who is fond of a young girl can address her as asi~nye 'my wife'. The attitude conveyed by such a usage is that the man thinks of the girl and wants to relate to her as if she were his wife.

The parents of one's spouse are referred to and may be addressed as e-tó 'father-in-law' and lɔ́xó 'mother-in-law' which literally means 'agreed already'. These terms are used reciprocally to address or refer to sons-in-law and daughters-in-law respectively. Brothers-in-law call one another akúnta or akɔ́nta. Brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law may designate or address themselves as srɔ́~nye-tsitsi-a 'my elder spouse' or srɔ́~nye-devi-tɔ́ 'my younger spouse' according to their respective ages. In general affinal relatives may address one another from the point of view of the children. Thus a wife may address the female siblings of her husband as tasi- the term that her children use to address her.

To summarise, Table 13.2 outlines the kinship terms and shows those that are used in reference and in address for the different kin relatives.

Kin relation	Address term	Reference term
Parent(s)	dzi-lá-wó	dzi-lá
father	fofó/papá	e-tó
mother	da(dá)/na(na)	e-nó
child	(vi - nye)	ví
son	(vi - nye)	vi -ŋuʃsu
daughter	(vi - nye)	vi-nyońu
sibling	nóví - nye	nóví
elder brother	fo(fó)	fo
younger brother	(tse - nye)	tse
elder sister	dada/daa	dada/daa
younger sister	(foe - nye)	foe
grandfather	tógbé	tógbé
grandmother	mamá	mamá
father's elder brother	tógã	tógã
father's younger bro.	tóde	tóde
father's sister	tasi/ete	tasi/ete
mother's elder sister	nógã/(da)dagã	nógã/(da)dagã
mother's younger sister	nóde/dadja	nóde/dadja
mother's brother	nyrui/ɔfa	nyrui/ɔfa
cousins	(fo/dada)	tógã-tóde-ví
		nógã-nóde-ví
		tasi-vi-nyrui-ví
nephews/nieces	(fo/dada)	tógã - yɔ - ví
		tóde - yɔ - ví
		ndgã - yɔ - ví
		nóde - yɔ - ví
		ɔfa - yɔ - ví
		tasi - yɔ - ví
spouse	srɔ̃ - nye	srɔ̃
husband	atsú - nye	atsú
wife	asi - nye	asi
brother-in-law	akonta/akúnta	akonta/akúnta
father-in-law	tó	tó
son-in-law	tó	tó
mother-in-law	lɔxo	lɔxo
daughter-in-law	lɔxo	lɔxo

Table 13.2: Kin terms for address and reference

In general, when kin terms are used in address with respect to kin relatives, the attitudinal meaning of the speaker can be portrayed as follows:

I want to speak to you as my X
 (where X stands for the kin relation)
 I feel something good towards you because you are my X

Thus if someone, addresses his brother as fo 'elder brother' s/he is expressing the following meaning, I suggest:

I want to speak to you as my elder brother
 I feel something good towards you because you are my elder brother

The extended use of kin terms in address is discussed in §13.3.2

Different tones of affection may be added to some of the kin terms in address using some emotive strategies. A diminutive form exists for some of these terms. Thus an elder sister may be affectionately addressed as dadáví (elder sister DIM). An elder brother may also be addressed as fo(fó)ví. The diminutive in these contexts adds a meaning component which could be paraphrased as:

'I feel something good towards you of the kind one feels
 towards small things'.

Another emotive device is the reduplication or repetition of the kin term. For example, a mother-in-law could address a son-in-law as etó-tó 'brother-in-law, brother-in-law' and the son-in-law may address her in response asi bǒǒ- bǒǒ 'mother-in-law, mother-in-law'. The repetition adds a component of meaning which may be paraphrased as:

I feel something very good towards you
 I say it one more time because of that

13.3.2 Kin terms in address

In this section, some of the kin terms that are used in address are discussed. These terms are used for people who are not biologically kin relatives. The terms that are commonly used are fo 'elder brother' dadá 'mother, elder sister'

tɔgbé ‘grandfather’ and mamá ‘grandmother’. Each of these will be discussed in turn.

13.3.2.1 fo

This term can be used to address any male person whom the speaker assumes to be an adult and with whom the speaker wants to relate in a way that people relate to their elder brothers. In general, any male whom the speaker assumes to belong to a youthful generation, including adolescents rather than that of grandparents or elders, may be addressed using fo.³ Younger people are obliged to address grown up males in this way. Women address men in this way. Wives may address their husbands in this way.

This term may be used as a title in combination with other address terms. For example, it may be combined with personal names to address people. Thus in the following example, the fiancée of the man Adladza addresses him with the title fo + a personal name:

- [5] Nyuiko: fo adeladza~..
 elder brother A.
 “Elder brother Adladza~ (Nyaku in press: 18)

This title can be used to address any male stranger whose name the speaker doesn’t know. In this case, it can be said that the speaker conveys a respectful or deferential attitude towards the addressee. The same thing can be said for the use of fo to address someone by an elder man. A male person who belongs to a generation or two higher than another male can address the junior person with fo. This use implies that the speaker respects the addressee in the same way that younger people show respect to their elder brothers.

Another use of this form is in response to a call from a young man. For example a boy could respond to a call from another man older than him with fo. The following is a possible call-response pair:

- [6] A: Kofi
 ‘Kofi’
 B: fo
 ‘elder brother’

³ In the southern dialects, a reduplicated form of fo, namely, fofó is used for both elder brother and father both as reference and address terms. I will only discuss the use of fo since that is what occurs in the colloquial standard dialect.

Essentially, when this title is used in address, either in combination with other address terms or in response to a call, the message conveyed is that the speaker wants to interact with the addressee the way people interact with their elder brothers. The speaker also conveys the idea that s/he has some feelings for the addressee comparable to the good feelings that a sibling should have for his/her elder brother. These aspects of the illocutionary meaning of the use of fo in address may be represented as follows:

I want to speak to you the way people speak to a man
who is their elder brother
I feel something good towards you of the kind that one feels
towards one's elder brother.

When fo is used in address it can take the diminutive suffix to get foví. In this case the meaning of the diminutive is added to the explication above. Essentially, the meaning of the diminutive is: 'I feel something good towards you of the kind people show they feel towards small things'.

The meanings outlined above can be fully interpreted once the significance and modes of behaviour towards an elder brother in Ewe society are understood. Elder brothers are important for a number of reasons: first, because they are thought of as old people and therefore are assumed to have some wisdom and experience of life; second, elder brothers are meant to be responsible and take up leadership in the family. Since Ewe society is based on a patrilineal system it is elder brothers who inherit from their fathers and the sons are put in charge of the family's wealth. For these reasons elder brothers are important and are respected in Ewe society. This is the kind of attitude that the extended use of fo bestows on anyone who is addressed this way.

13.3.2.2 dadá

dadá or da are used in much the same way as fo, to address females who the speaker assumes to be an adult and wants to relate to as an elder sister. These are more commonly used in the diminutive form: dadáví or daví. Any youthful woman including adolescents can be addressed in an endearing way with these terms. Thus suitors affectionately address women they are courting with this term. For instance in the example below, Amenyo was interested in a woman and was offering her a home. He addresses her with a diminutive form of this address term:

- [7] Amenyo: *dadáví, a- te'ɲu'á' nɔgbɔ' nye,*
 2SG:IRR can IRR stay side 1SG
eýe ne'é- lɔ̃ la' ma- ɖe wo` faa
 and if 2SG like TP 1SG:FUT marry 2SG free
 'Miss/Lady you can stay with me and if you like I will
 marry you.' (Setsoafia 1982:114)

However, females can also address their fellow females with this term. For example, the two women in the following excerpts who meet for the first time address each other with this title. It should be observed that they add positive qualifiers to reinforce the warm feelings and the esteem in which they hold their interlocutor. This is the conveyed attitude.

- [8] Fafa: *dadáví dzetugbe*
 beautiful
 Ama: *dadáví lɔlɔã,*
 dear
 Fafa: 'Beautiful lady'
 Ama: 'Dear lady' (Setsoafia 1982:113)

A husband can address his wife with this term. A parent can address a daughter in this way if the daughter is grown up and has become a mature woman. In these cases, the speaker uses the address term to show respect to the addressee.

As the examples above show this title can be modified with qualifiers to express various attitudes. It should be noted here that *fo* can also be used with modifiers. Like *fo*, *dadá* and its variants can be used in combination with personal names. For instance, a woman called Ama may be addressed as:

- [9] *daáma*
 Ama
 'Lady Ama'

dadá can also be used as a response to a call from a woman although it is less frequent than the more common form *mami* (see below).

To account for the message of *dadá* and *da* in address, I propose the following explication:

I want to speak to you the way people speak to a woman
 who is their elder sister
 I feel something good towards you of the kind that one feels
 towards one's elder sister.

The two essential features here are first, that the addressee is a woman, and second, that the addressee wants to relate to her as if she were his/her elder sister. Here as elsewhere, the prototype upon which the interaction is based is one of a kin relation. As noted above these terms can be used for strangers hence the blood kin relation is not what is emphasised. It is rather the mode of interaction in relation to kin that provides the model for interaction with people, even people who are not kin. If the diminutive form of these terms are used then the diminutive component is added of the form:

I feel something good towards you of the kind people feel
 towards small things

13.3.2.3 tɔ́gbé and mamá

It should be recalled that tɔ́gbé and mamá are the kin terms for 'grandfather' and 'grandmother' respectively. These terms are however used to address any person whom the speaker assumes to belong to his/her grandparents' age, or is old enough in the speaker's judgement to be a grandparent. It should be added here that tɔ́gbé is also used as a title for a chief both in reference and address. It can thus be said that a chief is viewed as a grandfather of people.

When tɔ́gbé and mamá are used in address, the speaker conveys a deferential attitude towards the addressee. There is an obligation in Ewe society (and other societies in Ghana) that people should show deference to old people and also to people in authority such as a chief. This may be anachronistic in the view of some people (e.g. Wiredu 1980 argues that respect for old age is a stumbling block to individual and personal development). However, older people are always judged to be the people who are correct in case of disputes. The law of 'do what you are told before you complain' which is entrenched in some secondary schools with respect to orders of seniors is just one manifestation of the pervasive nature of the principle of respect for old age in the Ghanaian society. For this reason, a deference indicating component in the form of the speaker not being able to disobey the addressee is included in the explications. This, in fact, follows from the fact that the speaker wants to relate to the addressee the way people relate to their grandparents.

These titles can be used to address people who are known to the speaker as well as strangers. They can be used in combination with other address terms

such as teknonyms or appellations and other status terms. For instance, the following is the way in which a heroine in a novel addresses an old woman who came to give her water just before her death:

[10] mama, adzi- wo- nɔ,
 child PL mother
 ‘Grandma, mother of children,..’ (Dogoe 1964:42)

Note however that personal names are sparingly used with these titles because personal names are avoided as much as possible with old people. Thus these terms may be used with teknonyms (e.g. [11a]) or occupational status terms (e.g. [11b]).

[11a] mama, vevi- nɔ
 twin mother
 ‘Grandma, mother of twins’

[11b] tɔ́gbé, gbede´
 blacksmith
 ‘Grandpa, the blacksmith’

When tɔ́gbé is used to address chiefs and others with political office, it may be used with the stool name⁴, as in [12a], or with the title of the office, as in [12b]. For instance:

[12a] tɔ́gbé tepre hódó III
 Tɔ́gbé Tepre Hodo III

[12b] tɔ́gbé ágbota
 lamb-head
 ‘Tɔ́gbé stool father’

In these usages, the title is just adopted into English.

Like the other terms discussed in this section, tɔ́gbé and mamá can be used in response to calls from someone who the respondent assumes falls into the category of people that s/he can relate to as grandparents. This includes

⁴ Every chief has what is called a stool and associated with this stool is a name. This is comparable to the way in which a Professor in an academic institution has a chair and the chair may have a name based on the one who endowed it. It is also comparable to the way Bishops etc. in Catholic and Anglican churches have Episcopal chairs and these may be referred to by the name of the patron Saint of the diocese.

people who hold office and can thus be addressed as tɔ́gbé. In the excerpt below, Adeladzã responds to the call of Agɔ̀kɔ̀li who is the chief with tɔ́gbé:

- [13] Agɔ̀kɔ̀li: adeladzã
 Adeladzã: tɔ́gbé
 Agɔ̀kɔ̀li: ‘Adeladza’
 Adeladzã: ‘Yes, grandfather (Chief)’. (Nyaku in press:33)

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explications for tɔ́gbé and mamá when they are used in address:

tɔ́gbé

I want to speak to you the way people speak to a man
 who is their grandfather
 I feel something good towards you of the kind one feels
 towards one’s grandfather
 I want to show that I think of you as someone to whom
 I couldn’t say: ‘I don’t want to do what you want me to do’

mamá

I want to speak to you the way people speak to a woman
 who is their grandmother.
 I feel something towards you of the kind one feels
 towards one’s grandmother
 I want to show that I think of you as someone to whom
 I couldn’t say: ‘I don’t want to do what you want me to do’

13.3.2.4 nɔ̀vɪ́

nɔ̀vɪ́ is the term for sibling, i.e. brother or sister. Recall that it literally means ‘mother’s child’. This term may be used in reference with respect to cousins and other relatives of the same generation. In address, it may be used with respect to anyone with whom the addressee wants to be friendly. It is thus sometimes glossed as ‘friend’.

This term is never used in combination with personal names or status terms. This suggests that its use implies an attitude on the part of the speaker that the addressee is someone whom s/he doesn’t know very well. I assume that if someone knows another person, s/he will at least know a status term or something similar for him/her. Some support for this contention is provided by the fact that nɔ̀vɪ́ is very commonly used in combination with other social category terms. For example:

[14] nɔvi' kristo- tɔ' lɔlɔ̃ tɔ'- wo'
 Christ BELONG love BELONG PL
 'dear friends in Christ'

[15] nɔvi', aɣble- de- la' wo'
 farm go NER PL
 'fellow farmers'

[16] nɔvi' nya- se- la' wo'
 word hear NER PL
 'friends, the audience'.

This behaviour suggests that nɔvi is used to show solidarity in a social context. It does not focus on an individual relationship but on the common aspirations that the speaker assumes is shared between the interlocutors. In the following example, a poet enjoins everybody to behave well and addresses his audience in the singular form with nɔvi:

[17] nɔvi', nɔnɔme nyui hiã
 charactergood need
 'Friend, good character is needed' (Akpatsi 1980:37)

Apart from the social solidarity that nɔvi's use in address conveys, the speaker also expresses good feelings towards the addressee. The kind of good feeling involved is the kind that one has towards one's brother or sister. As should be evident from the discussion so far nɔvi can be used to address complete strangers. The message here is that the speaker wants to relate to the addressee the way people relate to their brothers or sisters.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication for the use of nɔvi in address:

- (a) I want to speak to you the way people speak to people
 whom they don't know, or whom they don't know well
- (b) I want to speak to you the way people speak to someone
 who is their brother/sister
- (c) I feel something good towards you of the kind that one feels
 towards one's brother/sister
- (d) I think of you as someone who is my brother/sister

Component (a) accounts for the fact that nɔvi can be used to address strangers. Notice that it can be used in a fairly impersonal way by a radio announcer to address listeners to the radio (see examples [15] and [16] above). In these cases, the speaker may not know the addressee. Nevertheless s/he wants to relate to him/her in a personal way - in a way similar to that of a brother/sister. This is what is captured in component (b). Component (c) also relates to the same issue and portrays the speaker's thought that s/he thinks of the addressee as his/her brother/sister. Component (d) concerns the kind of feeling that the speaker expresses.

This view may be further supported by the fact that nɔvi in these contexts may be modified by the 1SG pronoun in a possessive structure. Thus when one meets a stranger in the street one could just address him/her as:

[18] nɔvi-nye
 1SG
 ‘my friend’ or ‘my brother/sister’

This phrase has been taken over into English and sometimes people are addressed with a mixed code of Ewe-English as:

[19a]nye sister
 ˘my sister’
 [19b]nye brother
 ˘my brother’

And brother is sometimes shortened to ‘bro’ [brɔ]. This has led to a nickname for Ewes on university campuses as ‘nye brɔ’, i.e. people who say ‘nye brɔ’.

The use of these sorts of address forms further strengthens the claim that interpersonal relationships are modelled on the relationships that exist among kin relatives. In the next sub-section, two response forms which are based on kin terms are discussed to further support this contention.

13.3.2.5 Responses based on kin terms

In the previous section it was indicated that some kin terms like fo ‘elder brother,’ dadá ‘elder sister,’ tɔ́gbé ‘grandfather’ and mamá ‘grandmother’ can be used in response to people who the respondent can relate to in these ways. In this section, I will discuss two forms papáá [papa:] and mamíí [mami:] which are also used as response words. The former is used in response to a male caller and the latter in response to a female caller. papa is obviously related to or derived from papá [papa] which is an address term for one’s father. mamíí

also seems to be related to mamá ‘grandmother’, but it seems that it is borrowed from the Akan word for ‘mother’ which is mami. Incidentally, these response forms are used in other languages of southern Ghana as well.

If an adult man calls you, one can respond with papáá, as Ama does in the following dialogue:

- [20] Mensa:... áma
 ‘Ama’
 Ama: papáá
 ‘Yes, Daddy’
 Mensa: vá affi
 come here
 ‘Come here.’ (Setsoafia 1982:85)

Since this response is based on the address term for ‘father’, it is reasonable to claim that the respondent wants to interact with his/her interlocutor the way people interact with their father. Indeed, one responds to the call by one’s father with this form, as illustrated in the following excerpt.

- [21] wo’fofo: yao-ví
 (their father) Yao-DIM
 ‘Yaovi’
 Yaovi: papáá!
 ‘Daddy’ (Nunyamɔ p. 45)

Similarly if a woman calls you, one can respond with mamíí. Consider the following dialogue:

- [22] A: Kúmá
 ‘Kuma’
 Kuma: mamií’
 ‘Yes, mummy’

This response mamíí can be used when one’s mother calls you. It can thus be argued that the response implies that the respondent wants to interact with the interlocutor the way people interact with their mother, or to show the same degree of respect to the addressee that one would show towards one’s mother.

Both responses of papáá and mamíí can be used with people that the addressee knows or does not know. If a stranger hailed you in the distance with an address term like ɲutsuqa ‘big boy’ (see §13.6.1), one can respond with

either of these. Thus what is crucial is the attitude and the manner of interaction that the respondent wants with the interlocutor. The illocutionary significance of these responses may be explicated as follows:

papáá

I want you to know I have heard you
 I want to know what you want to say to me
 I want to speak to you the way people speak to their father
 I want to show I feel something good towards you
 of the kind one feels towards one's father

mamíí

I want you to know I have heard you
 I want to know what you want to say to me
 I want to speak to you the way people speak to their mother
 I want to show I feel something good towards you
 of the kind one feels towards one's mother

The first two components in each explication account for the response to a call function of the forms. If someone calls you, it can be assumed that s/he wants to say something to you, hence if you respond you acknowledge your readiness to listen to him/her. This is the idea captured in the second component. The third and fourth components attempt to capture the mode of interaction that is embodied in the response forms, namely, the respondent wants to relate to the addressee in a way that people relate to their mothers or to people they think of as their mother.

13.3.2.6 Summary of kin terms in address

In the preceding sections, an attempt has been made to outline the way kin terms are used in address and to explicate the meanings that are conveyed by these terms in address. The most noteworthy thing about the use of kin terms in address in Ewe is that they may be used with respect to people who are not kin. It was indicated that any old man or woman irrespective of blood relationship to someone could be addressed with the words tɔ́gbé 'grandfather' or mamá 'grandmother'. Similarly, any young man or woman may be addressed with the words for 'elder brother' or 'elder sister' respectively. It was also noted that marriage partners may also use sibling terms to address one another. Thus, a wife may address a husband with the elder brother term fo and a husband may address a wife with the 'elder sister' term dada. These may be used in the diminutive form. In this case, Ewe seems to be different

from Asian cultures such as Thai in which a husband uses a 'younger sister' sibling term for his wife, while a wife uses an 'elder brother' term (cf. Haas 1978:39 - 47).

The extended use of kin terms in address can provide some clues to the nature of social relationships in Ewe society since modes of address reflect the modes of interaction in a society (cf. Braun 1988, Bean 1978, Adler 1978). Thus one may infer from the extended use of kin terms in Ewe society that social interaction and interpersonal relationships are not distinguished from family relationships. In Ewe society, people interact with one another as if they were related by kin. This would appear to be the ideology that underlies the use of kin terms in address. This conclusion is consistent with the 'communality' that is characteristic of Ewe society and other African societies.

The sociologist Agblemagnon (1969:91) made a similar observation. He noted that:

le fait aussi que les relations interpersonnelles impliquant un certain degré d'affection ou d'intimité soit rendues par des termes nɔvi frère, soeur, fofo 'grandfrère' dada 'grandsoeur' mama 'grandmère' tɔgbe 'grandpère' exprimant la parenté montre que, pour cette société le modèle des relations d'affection et d'intimité est le modèle des rapports interpersonels au sein du groupe de parenté naturelle.⁵

These views are perhaps deducible from the explications proposed to account for the usages. It should be recalled that in most cases, there is a component which links the speaker's attitude to the way people interact with a specific kin. For example, for fo, it was suggested that the speaker among other things wants to speak to the addressee the way people speak to their elder brothers. In the next section, some terms which are based on social groups to which people may belong are briefly surveyed. These also portray another aspect of the modes of social interaction in Ewe society.

In the discussion, I have assumed that the kin terms that have an extended use are polysemous. That is, in one meaning they refer to blood kin and in a second meaning they refer to their extended use. I contend that kin terms display this regular polysemy (cf. Mufwene 1988 for other views). Thus a term like nɔvi 'sibling; brother/sister' can be entered in the lexicon with the

⁵ The fact also that interpersonal relationships implying a certain degree of affection or intimacy may be rendered by the terms nɔvi 'brother/sister' fofo 'elder brother' dada 'elder sister' mama 'grandmother' tɔgbe 'grandfather' which express kinship shows that for this society, the model of relationships of affection and intimacy is the model of interpersonal relationships within the immediate family.

following definition (cf. Wierzbicka to appear for the justification of the use of FATHER and MOTHER as universal ‘molecules’):

- 1a. **X’s nɔvi** = someone born of the same FATHER or MOTHER as X
English translation equivalents: X’s sibling: X’s brother/sister
 - 1b. **X’s nɔvi** = someone born of people who have the same FATHER or MOTHER as X’s FATHER or MOTHER
English translation equivalent: X’s cousin
- 2 **X’s nɔvi** =
someone not born of the same FATHER or MOTHER as X.
X does things with this person as if they had the same FATHER or MOTHER
English translation equivalent: X’s friend, mate etc.

For a proper understanding of the social networks and of kinship terms and their linguistic meaning, the semantics and pragmatics of the extended use of these items in address must be investigated.

13.3.3 Social relation terms in address

The focus of some address terms is on the social relationship between the interlocutors or on the socio-cultural groups to which the addressee belongs. Some of these are examined in this section. The implication of the use of such social relation terms is that the speaker wants to express solidarity with the addressee and relate to him/her in an appropriate social manner. Thus some of the terms have to do with friendship or comradeship e.g. xɔʔ xɔʔb̃ ‘friend’. Others pertain to the fact that the interactants have the same name. The term for this is dóko. People can also be addressed with terms that relate to their function at the time of interaction, e.g. nyaselaʔwo ‘audience’. Finally, there are terms based on the geographical or lineage origin of people, e.g. anɔawo ‘the anɔb̃s’. It is significant to note that some of these terms are reciprocal in use, that is the speaker and addressee address one another and respond to one another with the same term. Others are used in the plural to reflect the multiple or group nature of the terms. I will discuss some of these here.

13.3.3.1 xɔʔ

xɔʔ and its variant xɔʔb̃ ‘friend’ are used in much the same way as nɔvɪ ‘sibling’ whose use in address has been discussed in §13.3.2.4. The essential difference between them is that nɔvɪ signals the intention of the speaker to interact with the addressee in the way one interacts with one’s brother or sister. For xɔʔ, the basis of the interaction is different. The speaker wants to relate to the

addressee as a friend, a mate or a comrade. Its use implies that the speaker feels something good towards the addressee, and s/he would like to do things with the addressee.

The term $\chi\text{ɔ}^{\sim}$ may be used to address anybody, male and female, young and old, with whom the addressee wants to relate in a friendly way. It can be used in address to strangers. It should also be noted that siblings can use this to address one another. Similarly marriage partners can on occasion address one another with this term. The point of these uses, I think, is that the speaker wants to relate to the addressee in a friendly way in that particular instance and not in the way one would behave because s/he is related to the addressee either consanguinally or affinally.

Another point to note is that $\chi\text{ɔ}^{\sim}$ tends to be used with the 1SG possessive pronoun to give it a personal dimension. Consider the use of this address term in the following extract where the speaker has been saved from being beaten by a stranger:

[23] $\chi\text{ɔ}^{\sim}$ nye- wo, me- daákpe na'ími
 friend 1SG PL 1SG clap applause to 2PL
 'My friends, I thank you' (Setsoafia 1982:26).

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication to account for the use of $\chi\text{ɔ}^{\sim}$ (nye) in address:

I want to speak to you the way people speak to someone
 towards whom they feel something good
 I want to show I feel something good towards you
 I want to show I think of you as someone I can do things with

It should be noted that $\chi\text{ɔ}^{\sim}$ or $\chi\text{ɔ}^{\sim}\text{ɔ}^{\sim}$ can also be modified with positive adjectives like *nyuí* 'good' when used in address as in the following example:

[24] $\chi\text{ɔ}^{\sim}\text{ɔ}^{\sim}$ nyui, e'ía- ta- e' srɔ́-dedɛnyo'
 friend good this because aFOC marriage good
 'Good friend, this is why marriage is good.' (Akpatsi 1980:63)

This perhaps provides partial support for the view that the use of these terms in address has an element of good feeling in it.

13.3.3.2 *dóko*

doko is a term that may be used reciprocally by people who have the same name. It may be translated as ‘namesake’. This term of address is one of the strategies that are in place for avoiding the use of personal names. Thus people who know they have the same name such as the same birthday name or order-of-birth name can address each other with this term. Typically, people of the same generation may exchange this term. Older people can address younger people with this term. Younger people may not address older people with it, although they can respond to an address of this sort to an older person with the same term. People with the same surname and who are not related can also address each other with this term.

The characteristic attitude expressed when this term is used is that the interlocutors want to relate to each other as people who belong to the same social group. The defining feature of this group as well as what binds the members of this group is the identical names that they have. It should be recalled that people who share the same birthday name, for example, form an important socio-religious support group for one another. From this point of view, it can be said that the use of doko among people who have the same name is a display of solidarity with one another. The fact that the addressee echoes the same address form in response suggests the mutual and convivial attitude that is associated with this term.

The following explication may account for the illocutionary meaning embodied in the use of doko as an address term:

I want to speak to you the way people speak to people
 who have the same name as them
 I want to show I feel something good of the kind people feel
 towards people who have the same name as them.

13.3.3.3 Terms for social groups

In this section, I want to briefly mention the use of terms for socio-cultural groups in address. Collective nouns that stand for social groups such as people belonging to the same village, the same clan or even the same dialect group can be used vocatively. Thus in the following example, a woman invokes the people of her dialect group to come to her aid because she has heard something which people of her group would condemn.

[25] aŋlɔ-a' wo', mi- nyo' na' m
 AŋlɔDEF PL 2PL good to 1SG
 ‘The Aŋlɔ’s, help me’ (Nyaku in press 39).

It appears that in this context, the speaker wants to relate to the addressee the way people relate to members of a group. The emphasis would appear to be on the attributes of the person as a member of a particular social group.

One can also address a group of people based on the common function that they have. Thus a radio news reader typically starts the bulletin with an utterance of the following kind:

[26] nya- se- la' wo', mi- se nya dzɔdzɔ- wo'...
 word hear NZR PL 2PL hear word happen PL
 'Audience, listen to the news...'

New address terms based on such social groups can be coined. Thus the spectators at a football match or a drama may be addressed as:

[27] nu' kpɔ' la' wo'
 thing see NZR PL
 'Spectators'

Roughly, the attitudinal meaning involved in the use of such address terms may be stated as follows:

I want to speak to you the way people speak to members of group X
 I want to show I feel something good towards you of the kind
 people feel towards people who are members of group X

13.4 Status terms

We have seen so far that appellations and especially kin terms are used extensively in the Ewe address system. It may be suggested that these categories of address are part of the system of strategies that are used to compensate for the constraint on the use of personal names especially in adult address. In this section, another set of terms which are used to address people, and thereby avoid the use of their personal names, are examined. These terms are based on the status or role of the addressee in the society. First the terms that are used to address adults based on their status 'owner' of a home i.e. $\text{a}\phi\text{e}\phi'$ and $\text{a}\phi\text{e}\phi\text{o}$ are discussed. These terms are sometimes translated as 'mister' or 'missus'/'madam' respectively. Then various terms which pertain to the political, religious or social role of the individuals are outlined. Finally the terms that relate to the occupation or profession of the addressee are described.

13.4.1 aɸeɸɔ́ and aɸeɸɔ̀

These two words are used to address adults who the speaker assumes are independent and have become established in their own right. In Ewe folk terms, such people are said to have set up a home and a farm. One can say the following about such people in Ewe:

- [28] eɸ ɸɔ́ aɸeɸ ɸɔ́ agble
 3SG set up home set up farm
 ‘S/he has become established’

Indeed, the compositional meanings of the forms are instructive. They are made up of the noun aɸe ‘home’ and the possessor suffixes ɸɔ́ which comes from the word ‘father’, and -ɸɔ̀, which comes from the word for ‘mother’ (see Chapter 7 on possession for a full discussion of these affixes). Literally the terms mean ‘owner of a house’. The specific contexts of use of these terms accord with this literal meaning.

In formal, official and non-traditional contexts such as in schools, government circles and churches, aɸeɸɔ́ and aɸeɸɔ̀ are used as equivalents of ‘Mr’ and ‘Mrs’ or ‘Madam’ respectively in English. In such contexts they are used in combination with surnames or full names. For example:

- [29a] aɸeɸɔ́ameka
 ‘Mr Ameka’
 [29b] aɸeɸɔ̀ odum
 ‘Madam Odum’

They can also be used by themselves to address people. In this case they tend to be used in the meaning of ‘Lord’ or ‘master’ for aɸeɸɔ́ and ‘Lady’ or ‘mistress’ for aɸeɸɔ̀. Consider the following example, in which a man who meets a woman for the first time addresses her as aɸeɸɔ̀. Note also that in this case a positive evaluative adjective is used as a modifier.

- [30] aɸeɸɔ̀ nyui,... alekeɸoɸ ɸɔ́ na´ na´wo`
 madamgood how 3PL call HAB to 2SG
 ‘Good madam, how are you called?’ (Akpatsi 1980:15)

Thus these titles can be used to address either people who the speaker knows or people who the speaker doesn’t know.

Another context in which these titles are used is where marriage partners address each other using the appropriate gender form. Thus a husband can

address his wife as aφeńɔ-nye or nye-aφeńɔ ‘my mistress’, and a husband can be addressed by a wife as aφeńɔ-nye or nye-aφeńɔ ‘my master’. In fact the words aφeńɔ and aφeńɔ are sometimes used in reference to mean ‘husband’ and ‘wife’ respectively. Note however that in address they are used in conjunction with the first person. In the following extract, a husband calls out to his wife using this term. Note incidentally that the wife responds with a sibling term for ‘elder brother’.

[31] wo’ fofo: nye aφeńɔ
 (their father) 1SG:poss madam
 ‘My wife’

wo’ dada: fo!
 (their mother) elder brother
 ‘Yes, ‘elder brother’’ (Nunyamɔ p. 44)

The various uses of these terms described so far can be linked in the sense that they pertain to the adulthood of the addressee. It is assumed that the addressee is, so to speak, ‘master’ or ‘mistress’ of a home. These two features characterise the core of these terms. I suggest that when these terms are used by marriage partners, the communicative attitude conveyed is one in which a spouse acknowledges the role of the other spouse as ‘master’ or ‘mistress’.

I propose the following explication to account for the use of the terms aφeńɔ and aφeńɔ in address.

aφετό

I want to speak to you the way people speak to men
 who they think of as people who can do what they want
 I don't want to speak to you the way people speak to children
 I want to show I feel something good towards you of the kind
 people show they feel towards people who they think of as
 people who can do what they want

aφεño

I want to speak to you the way people speak to women
 who they think of as people who can do what they want
 I don't want to speak to you the way people speak to children
 I want to show I feel something good towards you of the kind
 people show they feel towards people who they think of as
 people who can do what they want

The idea of the independence of 'master' or 'mistress' is captured by the phrasing in the form of 'people who can do what they want'. It is hoped that this can account for all the uses of the term. It should be noted however that these terms are different from their English equivalents in the sense that the Ewe forms can be used on their own without any other address term whereas 'Mr' and 'Mrs' cannot be used like that. They require a surname. In this respect the Ewe forms are more similar to the French forms of 'Monsieur' and 'Madame' which can be used by themselves. However, I think the Ewe forms differ from both the French and English titles in the nature of the relationship involved. Wierzbicka (1989:740ff) suggests that the English and French titles are modelled on a prototype of unfamiliarity, i.e. the speaker wants to speak to the addressee the way people speak to people whom they don't know or whom they don't know well. I do not think this is part of the meaning of the Ewe forms. It seems that the Ewe forms are modelled on the fact that the addressee is an adult and is independent. The transparent lexical meaning of the items supports this view.

13.4.2 Status terms based on political roles

The political role of an individual in the society confers a certain status on him/her. This person may become identified with this role and be referred to or addressed by a term based on this political role. Thus people who hold political office at the village level may be addressed by the term appropriate to that office. For example, a chief may be addressed as fiá 'chief'. This may be modified as appropriate to indicate the kind of chief that the person is.

Consider the following example in which the addressee is a chief from another village who has been wandering through other places:

- [32] *fia tsatsala, me- srɔ̃ nuɲya' le*
 chief wanderer NEG:2SG learnwisdom at
wõ fu- wo' me kpɔ' o
 2SG:poss trouble PL in PFV NEG
 'Chief, the wanderer, you have not learned anything from your
 troubles.' (Setsoafia 1982:59)

It should be recalled that chiefs can also be addressed as *tɔ̀gbé* 'grandfather'. In fact, both *tɔ̀gbé* and *fia* can be used as co-utterances to address a chief. The message of the use of the word *fia* in address would be that the speaker wants to relate to the addressee in terms of his political office as a chief and not as 'grandfather' or 'old man' necessarily.

Similarly, someone who is the linguist or the spokesperson for the chief and his elders may be addressed by the title of his political office as *tsiami* 'linguist' or *tsiamigã* 'elder/chief linguist'. For instance:

- [33] *tsiami- gã, nye- e' nye' esi*
 linguist AUGM 1SG aFOC bethis
 'Chief linguist, here I am' (Setsoafia 1982:115)

Again, it should be noted that the linguist could be addressed as *tɔ̀gbé*, and the use of *tsiamigã* conveys an attitude that the speaker wants to relate to the addressee as the holder of a particular political office.

Other terms of political office are used in similar fashion. Thus the person who is the stool father may be addressed as *agbota* 'stool father', and the person who is the leader of the youth may be addressed as *asofoatsye* 'chief of the youth'. The town crier may be addressed as *kpódólá* literally 'one who beats the gong'.

People who hold office in the modern political system also may be addressed with forms based on their political role. Thus in colonial times when there were District Commissioners (DCs), they were addressed as *disi* 'DC' in Ewe. Some of the other roles are maintained in English and it could be argued that in the context of speaking Ewe, they are used as a switched code or they form a mixed code with Ewe.

These political role titles can be used with or without other address terms. The latter situation has been illustrated in the examples above. For instance, a

chief may be addressed with fia and the name of his stool as in the following example:

[34] ... fia sri, mi'áŋlɔ- a - wo' øe' Awoamefia ...
 chief S. 1PL A. DEF PL poss A.
 '... Chief Sri, the Awoamefia of Aŋlɔ ...' (Nyaku in press:44)

This was used during the swearing of allegiance to Fia Sri by another chief. This shows that titles of this nature may be used to address people who one knows well as well as people who one doesn't know well.

These status terms reflect two features of the Ewe address system. First, their use in address allows people to avoid the use of personal names to address adults. Second, their use further illustrates the point that address choice in Ewe does not seem to relate to familiarity, that is, whether the speaker knows the addressee well or not. Rather the controlling factor is the status that the speaker knows the addressee has in political life. It can be deduced from the existence of address terms of this kind and their pervasive use in the language that the society is rather 'status-conscious'. One parameter for classifying people in the society is by their status in political life. Furthermore interpersonal relations or interaction may be based on the political role as the use of these terms in address illustrate.

Perhaps the attitude conveyed by the use of political role address terms can be roughly paraphrased as follows:

I want to speak to you the way people speak to people
 who they think of like this:
 they do good things for people
 people want them to do these things
 I want to show I feel something good towards you
 of the kind that people feel towards people of this kind
 I want to show that I think of you as someone to whom I couldn't
 say 'I don't want to do what you want me to do'

The idea that the people who hold political office are appointed to those positions and are expected to do things for the common good of the people is what I have attempted to capture in a somewhat complex manner in the first and second components. The last component is meant to account for the deference and respect that people show towards people who are in political office. The general rule of behaviour is that one has to defer to anyone who is in political office.

13.4.3 Terms based on religious role

Another significant role in Ewe society is the religious one. People who have a religious ministry whether in Christian religion or in the traditional religion are addressed with terms for the various roles that they fulfil in that particular religion. For instance, a diviner is addressed as bokɔ́ as in the following where a woman was talking to one of them:

- [35] bokɔ́, nye dadi- vi' la' tsi...
 diviner 1SG:poss cat DIM DEF grow
 'Diviner, my small cat is grown...' (Gadzekpo 1982:25)

Similarly, a priestess of a fetish shrine may be addressed as trɔ̃-si (literally, 'wife/woman of a fetish') and the priest of a fetish shrine may be addressed as trɔ̃-nu-a (literally 'one in charge of a fetish').

In the Christian churches, a pastor of a non-Catholic denomination is addressed as osɔfo (which is perhaps borrowed from Akan). Consider the following example:

- [36] osɔfo, me- di' be' ma' gblɔ nya aɖe'...
 pastor 1SG wantCOMP 1SG:IRR say word INDEF
 'Pastor, I would like to say something...' (Setsoafia 1982:55)

Catholic priests are addressed as fáda based on the English 'Father'.

These terms for religious roles can be used by themselves or in combination with other terms of address. People who hold these positions have a distinct way of dressing so people don't have to know them personally to be able to address them with these terms. For example fetish priestesses would wear some beads around their wrists to show what their role is.

The attitude conveyed by the use of religious role terms is that the speaker wants to relate to the addressee as someone who is a person of God and/or of supernatural beings. These people are revered because they are thought of as religious people who have supernatural powers. The pragmatic meaning of these items in address may be represented as follows:

I want to speak to you the way people speak to people
 who they think of like this:
 they are people who can do things that other people can't
 they are people of God/other beings who are like God
 I want to show I feel something good towards you of the kind

one feels towards people of this kind
 I want to show I think of you as someone to whom I couldn't say
 'I don't want to do what you want me to do'

The first component is meant to reflect the idea that the people who hold religious positions have certain powers which other people don't have. Consequently they can do certain things which other people who do not have such a position cannot do. The last component is meant to account for the respect and deference that people show towards such people. Essentially, to respect someone or defer to someone is to show that people want to obey these people. They would not defy orders that come from them.

13.4.4 Terms based on occupation

Very commonly people are addressed by terms that are based on the kind of work they do. Some people are not addressed in any other way. For example, the father of this writer is a retired headteacher and he is addressed by most people as masta, a term based on the English word 'master' which is a truncation of the full form 'headmaster'. He has never been addressed with a teknonym and even after his retirement people still address him as masta. Teachers in general may be addressed by the loan word titsya 'teacher' or by the Ewe term núfiála 'teacher', (literally one who teaches).

Other profession-based terms include gbedé 'blacksmith', and the English term 'carpenter', dɔkita 'doctor' and agbledelá 'farmer'. Such terms are created and used as appropriate. For example, an interpreter or translator is addressed as gbesevi, literally 'child who hears (or understands) language', in the following extract:

[37] gbesevi, me- se yevu- gbe tufufuó
 translator 2SG:NEG hear white language exactly NEG
 'Translator, you don't know English (i.e. whiteman's language)
 very well.' (Setsoafia 1982: 118)

It must be understood that socio-economic status is rather important in Ewe society and in Ghanaian society in general (see Asimeng 1981). Respect for people is based not only on their age but also on their wealth or what may be called gainfull employment. Thus an old person who has a distinguished career or white-collar job commands more respect than someone who is an old person but has no such job.

The essential thing about the use of occupation-based address terms is that the speaker wants to relate to the addressee as someone who has a certain socio-economic status in the society. Surely, for the individual address terms, there may be other specific attitudes associated. For example, one of the assumptions about a teacher is that s/he is someone who knows a lot and who can provide answers to certain questions. Such a view should be represented in the specific semantics of the item 'teacher' as an address term. In the explication below, an attempt is made to capture the meaning that is conveyed by the category of address terms based on occupation and not the specific terms.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication for the use of occupation-based address terms:

I want to speak to you the way people speak to people
 who do things of the kind that you do
 I want to show I feel something good towards you of the kind
 people feel towards people who do things of the kind you do.

This appears to be the core pragmatic meaning and in specific instances the particular occupation may contribute added nuances, which could then be explicated.

13.5 Allonymous terms

The term 'allonymy' is borrowed from the Japanese linguist Takao Suzuki who defines it as follows:

the habitual practice of designating a person by stating his relationship to someone else of his family, this being done to the exclusion, if not total, of the use of the individual name of the person designated. [...] what has been known as teknonymy proves to be a subtype of allonymy, the point of reference here being the child. (Suzuki 1987: 68).

For the purposes of this study, forms of address which characterise the addressee as parent - father or mother, spouse - husband or wife, and child - son or daughter of someone else are considered allonymous. Thus teknonyms or parenthood terms are considered a subcategory of these terms. Furthermore, address terms which are based on the names or titles of the addressee and of someone else related to him/her as parent or guardian or spouse are also considered allonymous.

These terms are different from and should be distinguished from the empathetic use of kin terms in relation to others. For instance, the address of a wife by a husband as 'mother' assuming the point of view of his children.

Allonymy as a strategy of address seems to be common in different African and Asian cultures, but the manifestations of the strategy seem to vary from culture to culture. In this section, the Ewe realisations of allonymy are described. First, teknonyms or parenthood terms are examined. This is followed by a discussion of 'spouse of X' terms and 'child of X' terms. Finally compounds of address based on the relationship between the addressee and someone else are investigated. These terms are frequently used in address. It seems clear that they are a useful strategy for avoiding the personal names of the addressee.

13.5.1 Teknonyms - 'Parent of X' terms.

Many adults are addressed by terms based on their status as parents. These terms are derived from the names or occupational titles of one of their children, usually the first born. The form of these teknonymic terms are:

X - tɔ' 'X - father' X- nɔ 'X - mother'

[where X is the name or title of the child of the addressee]

Some examples are:

[38]	kofi- tɔ;	ama- nɔ;	gbede- nɔ
	K. father	A. mother	Blacksmith mother
	'Kofi's father!'	'Ama's mother!'	'Blacksmith's mother!'

(See chapter 7 on possession for a full syntactic and semantic analysis of these forms).

Agblemagnon (1969) hints at the significance of this mode of address when he observes that:

appeler le père ou la mère "père de X" ou "mère de X"
est à la fois une manière déférente et affectueuse de
s'adresser à une personne chez les Ewe" (fn. 1 p. 71)⁶

The practice of teknonymy is not peculiar to the Ewes. It is used in other linguistic groups in southern Ghana and many other African and Asian cultures (see, for example, Takao Suzuki 1987 on the practice of teknonymy in Japanese culture and Evans-Pitchard (1964) on the Nuer).

Dakubu (1981: 145), for example, comments on this practice among the Ga people, the indigenous inhabitants of Accra and close neighbours of the Ewes as follows:

⁶ "To call a father or a mother 'X's father' or 'X's mother' is a polite and affectionate way of addressing someone among the Ewes."

It is very common practice to call a person of either sex by the name of his or her first-born child, with the suffix -tɕɛ 'father of' or -nyɛ 'mother of'. Many people ... are rarely called anything else, It is a very widespread way of politely avoiding lineage or other personal names and indicating respect for a person as a parent and hence a responsible adult.

The parallels between the Ga practice and the Ewe situation described so far should be evident.

From the observations made so far, it can be said that to address someone with a teknonymic term is to convey an attitude and respect towards that person as a parent and as an adult. There is a feeling of affection and admiration for the addressee's parenthood. This claim is supported in part by the fact that adolescent school children who become parents before they should are not, initially at least, addressed by such terms. This is because they are not thought of as adults and consequently their responsibility as parents is not respected.

Husbands and wives can refer to or address one another by their respective teknonymic terms. One couple known to this writer address one another with the following terms, they do not use any other form of address:

[39] kofi tɔ'	kofi nɔ
K. father	K. mother
'Kofi's father'	'Kofi's mother'

These terms are based on the name, Kofi, of their first child.

Some educated and westernised young women have a different perception of the use of such terms between spouses. They think it is not an endearing way for a husband to address his spouse. As one of them put it: during courtship and the early years of marriage, men would call you in all sorts of affectionate ways; eg. Connie (for Comfort) or 'Davi' (= Darling, Sweetie) etc. Once a child appears on the scene you are no longer 'Davi' etc. but X-nɔ 'X's mother'. Why not continue with 'Davi' etc.?

One can sympathise with the sentiment that the use of teknonymic terms between spouses can be perceived as creating a distance between the partners, especially when it comes from people who have been exposed to European ideas about the ideals of marriage, and European ways of addressing spouses etc. However, it seems that the nuptial bond between partners in traditional Ewe society is sealed through children. Indeed, as Pazzi (1980:277) observes, in Ewe society, "le mariage n'acquiert stabilité qu'avec la conception du premier

enfant".⁷ A number of marriages break up because of the infertility of one of the partners. It could be suggested, rather invidiously, that the use of teknonyms between couples reflects the following affectionate message: "I love you because you are a parent (of my child[ren])".

It is hardly surprising that teknonyms should feature very prominently in the address system of a society where there is so much importance attached to children. Childless adults do not command much respect. They are ridiculed and insulted because of it. They are perceived as being irresponsible. Some cultural practices reinforce this social perception about children. For instance, there are burial practices for adults who have not had children which differ from those for adults who have had children (see Obianim (1956) and Motte (1964) for a description of these practices).

Many proverbs and aphorisms also point to the importance that children have in Ewe society. Consider the following selected examples:

[40] vi vɔ̃ nyo' wu' ko- tsi- tsi'.
 child bad good exceed single remain remain
 'It is better to have a bad child than to be without one.'

[41] te- afɔ- ɖa- ma- yi- a
 shift foot away 1SG:SJV go ADD
 nyo' wu' aɖbalime gbɔlo.
 good exceed hall empty

"Move away and let me pass" is better than an empty hall.'

(The implication is that if you have several children such that there is not enough room for you to move about, it is better than not having any.)

It seems reasonable to claim that teknonymy is just one other practice that underscores the importance of children in Ewe society.

With these considerations in mind, I propose that the pragmatic meaning conveyed by a speaker who addresses someone with a teknonymic term may be explicated as follows:

⁷ 'A marriage does not gain stability until the conception of the first child.'

I want to speak to you the way people don't speak to children
 I want to speak to you the way people speak to someone
 who they know is a father or a mother
 I feel something good towards you of the kind people show they
 feel towards someone who is a father or a mother

The first component reflects the view that the addressee is thought of by the speaker as an adult. The second adds the parenthood dimension, and the third represents the respect that is conveyed in the use of this form of address.

There is a variation on these parenthood terms; some of them are not based on the names and occupational titles of the children, they are rather derived from the attributes of the parents in relation to children. Thus people who have had multiple births may have address terms based on this fact. Hence the following terms for father of twins and mother of twins respectively:

[42]	ve-	vi'	tɔ'	ve-vi'	nɔ
	two	child	father	two child	mother
	'Father of twins'			'Mother of twins' ⁸	

Very fertile people who have had many children, as many as ten or so, may have their teknonymic terms based on the order of birth names of the tenth child, for example (cf. § 13.1.1)

[43]	bequ'	nɔ	mensa-	nɔ
	tenth child	mother	third boy in a row	mother
	'Mother of Bedu'		'Mother of Mensa'	

In these cases, the attitude conveyed is not just towards one's parenthood but there is in addition the respect for being a special parent - i.e. a parent of twins/triplets or ten children or of three boys etc.

There are cultural practices associated with multiple births and parents in that category tend to form, as it were, exclusive groups for these purposes (see Nukunya 1969, for example, for a description of *evewɔwɔ* 'twin-doing' among the Anlo Ewes). These pieces of evidence seem to suggest that these teknonymic terms have a categorising function rather than an identifying function (as names in Western societies are said to have, see Adler 1978). That is to say that there is an identifiable cultural group or category of parents and

⁸ These terms may be varied: a plural morpheme may be inserted between the word for twin and the word for the parent eg. ve- vi'- wo'- tɔ'
 two child PL father

The alternative form for twins may also be used as in : ve-nɔ-vi' nɔ
 two sibling mother

people who are addressed with such terms. They are not only categorised as parents (as opposed to not being parents) but as special kinds of parents.

13.5.2 'Spouse of X' titles

Women are sometimes addressed with a form based on the appellative or occupational title of their husbands compounded with the noun *si* 'wife'. **X-si** forms may be paraphrased therefore as 'Wife of X' terms. Some examples are:

[44a] tǒgbé- si	[44b] masta- si
chief wife	Headmaster wife
'The chief's wife'	'The headmaster's wife'

The pragmatic significance of such address terms is that the speaker expresses an acknowledgement of the womanhood and the marital status of the addressee. Traditionally, the social expectation is that a woman should be married and through it command respect in the society. An unmarried woman is not respected very much. There is also the tendency for this kind of term to be based on status terms of the husband rather than on a personal name or a parenthood term. This suggests, I think, that the speaker ascribes a status to the woman through her husband. People expect a certain form of behaviour from women who are married to different categories of men. Thus people would expect a pastor's wife or a chief's wife to behave in a special way befitting her status, so to speak, which is not necessarily expected of every married woman.

The illocutionary meaning of 'Wife of X' terms could be paraphrased as follows:

I want to speak to you the way people speak to a woman
 who is married and whose husband they know
 I feel something good towards you of the kind people feel
 towards married women

The absence of 'husband of X' terms of address would appear to be due to the traditional conception of marriage. It is a man who goes to ask for the hand of a woman and brings her home and he is expected to look after her in all respects. Thus it is the woman who is thought of as associated with the man and not vice versa.

There is another category of 'X-si' terms which are not based on the address forms of husbands but rather on the hometown of the woman or of the husband. These should more appropriately be paraphrased as 'Wife/woman from place X'. Consider the following examples:

[45a] aɗame- si	[45b] wɔdze- si
A wife	W. wife
'woman who comes from Adame'	'woman married to a man from Wodze'

The techniques for the formation of these terms may be outlined as follows: first, for those with interpretations similar to that of [45a] above, it is usually the case that the woman marries a man from another village and the people of her new village by marriage address her as such; second, the basis of the terms with interpretations similar to that of [45b] above is that the woman marries a man from another village and the people of her hometown, her village by birth, would address her with such a title. In both cases there is an acknowledgement that the addressee is a married woman and they both indicate a speaker's desire to relate to the addressee as a stranger. For the first strategy, the people of the husband's village would want to treat and respect the woman as a stranger and in the second case, the people of the woman's home would want to relate to her as if she no longer belongs there. Thus although the interpretations of the two types may differ depending on one's perspective, they have an underlying commonality. These observations lead us to the following explication of the illocutionary meaning of Y [PLACE] - si address terms:

I want to speak to you the way people speak to a married woman
who does not come from the same place as her husband
I feel something towards you of the kind people feel towards a
married woman
[who does not come from the same place as her husband]

13.5.3 'Child of X' titles

Children may also be addressed by a term derived from the occupational title or other address term of their father or of their mother and the noun - vi 'child' Consider the following examples:

[46a] fia- vi'	[46b] osɔfo- vi'
chief child	pastor child
'Prince/princess'	'Pastor's child'
[47a] misi- vi'	[47b] masta- vi'
Misschild	Headmaster child
'Lady teacher's child'	'Headmaster's child'

There is a social expectation that children of parents who have some status in the community (eg. teachers, lawyers, priests etc) should behave in certain ways. They are thought of as belonging to a class and should behave in ways different from those of say the children of farmers.

Let me illustrate this point with the following situation that occurred some years ago: Two boys in the primary school had become notorious for being truants. One is the son of a teacher in the village, the other, the son of a farmer. When their behaviour was being discussed, the mother of the farmer's son commented that she could pardon her son for being a truant at school, because he is just a son of a farmer, but the other child cannot be excused because his father is a teacher. And one expects him to follow his father's footsteps and become an educated person. Thus although the two boys have misbehaved their misdemeanour is judged differently depending on the status of their parents.

The pragmatic significance of such terms is that the child is being addressed in relation to his parent's status. Through the position of the parent, the child is also being accorded some respect and with it an associated expected form of behaviour.

On the basis of these considerations, I suggest the following explication, tentatively, for the illocutionary meaning of 'child of X' address terms:

I want to speak to you the way people speak to a child whose
father or mother they know does a kind of thing (in the society)
I feel something towards you of the kind people feel towards
children of people towards whom they feel something good
because of the kind of thing they do (in the society)

It is assumed in the first component of the explication that a speaker who addresses a child with a term based on the occupational title of the parents knows something about them and in particular knows the kind of job they do. The respect given to the child by courtesy of the parent's role is the feature that has been represented in the second component.

13.5.4. Compounds of address.

Related to the teknonym-like terms discussed so far are address terms formed from the compounding of an address form of a parent or a spouse and the name of a child or spouse respectively. Patronymic or father-child and matronymic or mother-child compounds will be discussed first. This will be followed by brief comments on spouse-spouse compounds. (See chapter 7 on possession for a syntactic-semantic description of these compounds).

13.5.4.1 Patronymic and matronymic compounds of address:

These compounds have the form: N1-N2 + high tone suffix where N1 is an address form for father/mother - typically a teknonymic or an occupational title - and N2 is the name of the child. The head of such compounds is the noun representing the name of the child. Consider first some examples of patronymic compounds:

[48a]dzinaku-kɔsua	[48b] tɪtsa -yawo
D. A.	teacher Y.
'Akosua, daughter of Dzinaku'	'Yawo, son of Teacher'

Examples of matronymics are:

[49a]bakonɔ - kɔsi	
B's mother K.	
'Kɔsi, son of Bako's mother'	
[49b] vevi-nɔ - ŋkua	
twin's mother A.	
'Ankua, daughter of mother of twins'	

The diminutive suffix -i' may be added to each of these address terms. In these cases, I think the diminutive only adds a further component which may be paraphrased as follows:

I want to speak to you the way people speak to a small child
I feel something good towards you of the kind people feel
towards small things

The use of such compounds of address tends to convey the speaker's view that s/he knows the descent of the addressee and s/he would like to speak to them in that way. More specifically, it can be said that the speaker shows through the use of such terms that s/he knows the parents, or at least something about the parents of the addressee.

In some ways these Ewe compounds are comparable to patronymics found in Russian. Russian men, I understand, are addressed using the form: X: son of Y. Notice however that the Ewe system is more elaborate than the Russian one. The Ewe strategy, unlike the Russian one, applies both to sons and daughters. In Ewe, the child may be linked in these compounds to either a mother or a father while in Russian, the son is linked only to his father.

One can represent the propositional content of the compounds of address roughly (and in abstract terms) as: 'X, child of Y' where X is the name of the child and Y the address term of a father or a mother. It should be noted that the parenthood involved in these compounds need not be a biological one; social parents, or masters and mistresses or guardians, in general could be associated with their wards in this way. Thus an apprentice of a blacksmith named Kodzo could be addressed as follows:

[50] gbede' kɔdzo
 Blacksmith K.
 'Kɔdzo, apprentice of Blacksmith'

Perhaps a more general way to represent the propositional content of these compounds to account for such examples is this: 'X, child who is associated with Y'. And one could further add that Y is responsible for X.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following formula for patronymic and matronymic compounds of address:

I want to speak to you the way people speak to someone who
 they know (well) because they know the one who looks after them
 I feel something towards you of the kind people feel towards a
 child whose mother or father they know (well)

The view being represented in the first component of the formula is this: for someone to use such a form to address someone, s/he must be familiar with the person and should have some knowledge about the status of their parents or guardians. The responsibility that the parents or guardians have for people addressed in this way is captured in the formula by the phrase, "who looks after them". This expression is admittedly complex but it can be further decomposed. Here a delicate level of analysis is not required to capture the meaning.

In Ewe society, it is generally assumed that adults are responsible for children, or more generally, older people are responsible for children (whether the older people are strangers or not). If the older person happens to know the parents or someone associated with the younger one, the responsibility increases. Once such a situation holds one can assume that the speaker has a

feeling of obligation and affection towards the addressee the way s/he feels towards their own children. This is the reason for formulating the second component along the lines of the father/mother prototype.

A variation of these compounds are those that are formed from the name of a place that someone is associated with and his/her name. The nature of the association that the person may have with the place varies from person to person. For some, they may be addressed as such because they were born there, even though their parents may not be natives of that place. For others their parents may have come from that place and they live in a different place from that of their parents. For others still, they may have been working there for a long time. Consider these examples:

[51a] avate- kofi

A. K.

'Kofi, associated with Avate'

[51b] avedza- 'bra~

A. A

'Abra, associated with Avedza'

Perhaps one can represent the pragmatic meaning of the 'child associated with place Y' address terms as follows:

I want to speak to you the way people speak to someone

they know is associated with place Y

I feel something towards you of the kind people feel towards

someone who is not associated with the same place as them

The second component is included to capture the idea that the person being addressed this way is being treated or related to as a stranger. These terms are similar to the 'wife from a place Y different from that of her husband' forms discussed earlier (see §13.5.2). Their similarity is mainly in the conveyed sense of respect towards the addressee as a stranger.

13.5.4.2 'Spouse-spouse' compounds of address

Just as there are 'Spouse of X' (or more specifically 'Wife of X') terms of address, so are there spouse-spouse compounds of address. The basic principle underlying these compounds is similar to that of the patronymic and matronymic compounds discussed in the previous section. The more common form of these terms is the compounding of the name of the wife to the name or occupational title of the husband. Husband-wife compounds, like 'husband of X' terms, are rather rare, if not non-existent. Consider the following examples:

[52a]klemensi - kɔsua

Clemence A.

'Akosua, wife of Clemence'

[52b] viktɔ - meri

Victor Mary

'Mary, wife of Victor'

The diminutive suffix *-i'* may be added to such compounds just as it can be added to the parent-child compounds, with the same meaning, I think.

In addition to the explanation given for 'wife of X' terms which holds for these compounds as well, one should note the perceptions associated with such terms: the use of these compounds evokes the perception that either the woman is dependent on her husband for everything or that her husband is very possessive. In both cases the husband does things for his wife and protects her. This is not a bad image in traditional Ewe society (although some westernised women would not approve of such patronising relationships today).

What attitudinal meaning is conveyed when a woman is addressed using a spouse-spouse compound? I suggest that it can be tentatively represented as follows:

I want to speak to you the way people speak to a woman

they know (well) because they know her husband

I want to speak to you the way people speak to a woman

about whom people think this:

her husband does everything for her

I feel something towards you of the kind people feel towards

women married to men who do everything for them

The similarities between this formula and the previous one of the parent-child compounds are quite evident; in particular, they both have the element of one person having responsibility for the other. In this case it is a husband over a wife. In the former case, it was a parent over a child. In fact, it is conceivable that the spouse-spouse compounds are modelled on the parent-child ones. From this perspective one can appreciate the cultural reasons for the non-occurrence of 'wife-husband' compounds of address. The occurrence of such compounds would carry the implication that it is the woman who is looking after the man - a situation which is culturally unacceptable. This seems to provide a hint that the way the first components of the compounds of address are formulated is basically correct.

The address forms explored in this section relate to the status of people as parents, as spouses, or married women to be precise, or as children of different

categories of parents. Through the use of these modes of address a speaker conveys a feeling of respect towards the addressee's standing in the socio-cultural system and implies the attitude that a behaviour pattern is expected from him/her. In addition these address terms provide for the Ewes a means of indicating the descent and affinal relations that someone has and thereby express an attitude towards that person through the use of these terms.

13.6 Terms based on human categorisation

In addition to the various address terms discussed so far, an Ewe speaker may also address their collocutors with forms based on the kind of person they are with respect to the natural parameters of sex and age. The terms commonly used are the following:

[53]	<p>MALE</p> <p>ame- gã person big 'old man'</p> <p>ame- tsi- tsi person old old 'old person'</p> <p>ɲɪ̃su 'man'</p> <p>kaŋkua 'young man'</p> <p>ɖekakpui/ɖekadze 'young man'</p> <p>ɲɪ̃su- gã man big 'big boy'</p>	<p>FEMALE</p> <p>nya- gã (ɖeɖi) person big 'old woman'</p> <p>ablewɔ́ 'old woman'</p> <p>nyɔ́nu 'woman'</p> <p>ɖetugbui/tugbedze 'young woman'</p> <p>nyɔ́nu- gã woman big 'big girl'</p>
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These terms may be used in address for a variety of reasons. They tend to be used in situations where the speaker does not know any other adequate

address term for the addressee. They may thus be used to address strangers. However, this could not be considered the principal motivation for using these terms because family members could on occasion use these terms among themselves. Besides there are other ways of addressing strangers such as through the use of 'fictive' or extended kinship terms. For example, an elderly stranger could be addressed as **tɔ́gbɛ́** 'grandfather' or **mamá** 'grandmother' (see §13.3.2 above). Thus these terms would not be necessary if they were only needed for addressing strangers. It seems that the distinctive feature of these human categorisation terms is that the speaker wants to relate to the addressee as someone of a certain age and of a certain sex.

One piece of evidence in support of this claim is the development in Ghanaian and, for that matter, African English of a set of English phrases referring to these human categories as terms of address, for instance, *old man*, *old lady*, *young man*, and *young woman*. In the Ewe context, it could be argued that these English calques have a further social meaning. Here as elsewhere the choice of an English address term adds a further element of prestige, i.e. I think of you as someone to whom one can speak English. This, it must be stressed, is the conveyed attitude which may be different from the reality. Indeed some people who may be addressed with these terms may not be able to speak English at all, but they do understand these terms. It is an in-group solidarity creating strategy of address.

Above all, these Ewe terms based on human categorisation constitute another strategy that may be used to avoid the use of personal names. Each of the terms will now be described.

13.6.1 *amega*⁹

This word is used to refer primarily to someone who is an old man and has a connotation of dignity, respect and perhaps wealth. It has been extended to refer to an influential person, a leader or a boss, a 'foreman' or head of or person in authority in an institution etc. As Pazzi (1980: 261) observes, 'l'adulte, l'ancien qui détient la responsabilité de la famille ou d'une entreprise'⁹ is called an *amega*⁹. Consider the following expressions in which *amega*⁹ occurs:

[54a]	dɔ-	me-	ga ⁹	[54b]	nu-	srɔ̃-	me-	ga ⁹
	work	person	big		thing	learn	person	big
	'boss'				'professor'			

[54b]	nu-	fia-	la-	wo'	φe'	ame-	ga ⁹
	thing	teach	NER PL	poss	person	big	
					'headteacher/headmaster/principal'		

⁹ An adult, an elder who holds responsibility in the family or a business.

In address *amega* by itself or in combination with another address term may be used for respected old men and people who have leadership or headship positions. Thus people who are young but have positions of responsibility may also be addressed with this term. An English calque for this term is 'big boss' and it is not uncommon to hear this English form being used in address.

The attitude being conveyed here is that people who occupy certain positions are considered to be old. The rationale behind this assumption is that responsibility is associated with old age. Thus someone who is responsible but not necessarily advanced in age is thought of as an old person. For this reason, part of the meaning of *amega* in address is stated in terms of 'people who are thought of as old' rather than as 'people who are old'.

A deferential attitude towards an addressee is also conveyed by a speaker who uses this term. Roughly speaking, the speaker expresses the following estimation of the addressee: 'you are someone I should obey and respect'. Very instructive here is Westermann's (1905) glosses of *amega* as 'master' and 'sir'. These English glosses would appear to embody both elements of authority and respect which I have indicated are associated with the term *amega*. Consider the use of the term in the following example:

- [55] mensa: ama, nɔ anyi' ɔɛ'zikpui ɸoɔɔi sia dzi'
 A. sit down on chair dirty DEMtop
 mia' va'
 1PL come
 ama: yoo, ame-ga'
 OK person big
 Mensa: Ama, take a seat on this dirty chair,
 we will be back in a jiffy.
 Ama: OK, sir (Setsoafia 1982: 85)

With these considerations in mind I propose the following explication for the pragmatic meaning of ***amega*** in address:

I want to speak to you
 the way people speak to a kind of man who they think of as old
 and who they think know much about many things
 because of that
 and the way people speak to men who can say what other people
 should do in some places or about some things

I want to show I feel something good towards you of the kind people
 show they feel towards old people who they think know much
 about many things

I want to show that I think of you like this:

I have to do what you want me to do

One other attribute of old and/or responsible people reflected in the explication is that they are thought of as people who are experienced or wise and full of counsel; as the saying goes: old age is wisdom. Some support for the connotation of wisdom associated with *amega* comes from the term *amegaḱpui* which is the counsellor whom arbiters consult during arbitrations. Concerning this item, Pazzi (1980: 245) writes:

Chez les Ewes, on appelle *amegaḱpui* (le petit vieux) la Puissance invisible du tribunal, chez laquelle les juges se retiraient pour qu'elle leur dicte, croit-on, la sentence à emettre.¹⁰

This component of wisdom and experience is shared by the terms for old women -- *nyága* and *ablewó* -- which are discussed next.

13.6.2 nyága

nyága is like *amega* in all respects except sex. It is used to address old women and can also be used to address female bosses who are not necessarily old people. Thus an explication similar to that of *amega* is proposed:

I want to speak to you

the way people speak to a kind of women who they think of as old
 and who they think know much about many things

because of that

and the way people speak to women who can say what other people
 should do in some places or about some things

I want to show I feel something good towards you of the kind people
 show they feel towards old people who they think know much
 about many things

I want to show that I think of you like this:

I have to do what you want me to do

¹⁰ Among the Ewes, the invisible power of the court to which the judges retire so that it could dictate to them, so they believe, the sentence to be passed is called *amegaḱpui* (an old man).

13.6.3 *ablewɔ́*

ablewɔ́ is another address term for old women. It also has connotations of wisdom and respect. It differs from *nyaǵa* in terms of authority. It appears that it does not have any reference to the person having authority as a result of a position. However it also has to do with wisdom. It should be noted that *ablewɔ́* is an alternative word for *amegākpu*, the invisible counsellor to whom arbiters retire during arbitrations. Thus an *ablewɔ́* is also a repository of wisdom who can be consulted. An *ablewɔ́* also has got to be respected. I propose the following explication for the illocutionary meaning of *ablewɔ́* as an address term:

I want to speak to you

the way people speak to a kind of women who they think of as old
and who they think know much about many things
because of that

I want to show I feel something good towards you of the kind people
show they feel towards old women who they think know much
about many things

I want to show that I think of you as someone to whom I couldn't say
'I don't want to do what you want me to do'

ablewɔ́ differs from ***nyaǵa*** in terms of the absence of the connotation of authority in the former. This is reflected in the different formulae proposed for them. In particular, the deference associated with ***ablewɔ́*** is not one of an obligation to do what the old woman says but rather an inability to refuse to do what she wants because she is old and old people have to be obeyed. This is the motivation for the way the last component in the formula is phrased.

13.6.4 *ametsitsia*

ametsitsia is another address term for old people in general. Note that the term literally means the old person. Like the other terms for old people it can be used to address young people who are thought of as old. However, unlike the other terms, ***ametsitsia*** does not carry any connotations of authority or wisdom. It is used purely to express the attitude and the desire of a speaker to relate to his/her interlocutor as someone who is old. At public community gatherings as well as family gatherings, there is a distinction drawn in general between old people and the youth. In such a setting the old people could be addressed as a group as ***ametsitsiwo***. The youth are also addressed as ***sɔ́hewo*** (or as ***asafo*** borrowed from Akan).

There is an element of deference associated with the use of this term. Its use tends to be a display of the social injunction that old people should be respected. This is captured in the formula below in terms of the speaker presenting him/herself as not being able to disobey the addressee.

One could define the pragmatic meaning of **ametsitsia** as an address term as follows:

I want to speak to you
 the way people speak to people who are thought of as old
 I feel something towards you
 of the kind people show they feel towards old people
 I want to show I think of you as someone to whom I couldn't say
 I don't want to do what you want me to do

13.6.5 nʉtsu and nyɔ́nu

The terms **nʉtsu** and **nyɔ́nu** denote 'man' and 'woman' respectively. As modes of address they are used to address adults who one doesn't know very well and therefore has no address term readily available for them. However it could be considered rude if it is used by younger interlocutors to senior addressees. One piece of evidence in partial support of the non-familiarity of the addressee is that these terms are never used in combination with other address terms. Consider the usage of the term **nyɔ́nu** in the examples below. The context of the examples is this: a woman married to a polygamous man went to a herbalist to ask for a love potion which she could use to make her husband love her more than her rivals. During their conversation, the herbalist addresses her as follows:

- [56] nyɔ́nú, me- ga- vɔ̃ o (...) m-a xlẽ
 womanNEG REP fear NEG 1SG IRR count
 nu- si- wo' na- di' la' na'wo'
 thing REL PL 2SG:SBJV search TP to 2SG
 'Woman, do not be afraid, let me enumerate to you the things
 you should look for ' (Gadzekpo 1982: 20)

On a different occasion, during another visit the herbalist addresses the woman again as follows:

- [57] nyɔ́nú se nye gbe,
 womanhear 1SG voice
 eye na- ɔɔ' e' dzo dzi' ne' ko
 and 2SG:SJV put 3SG fire top to:3SGonly
 'Woman listen to me and heat up the water for him'
 (Gadzekpo 1982: 26)

For the second usage in example [57] one couldn't really say that the herbalist did not know the woman. It is more appropriate to say that even though he knows her, he does not know her well or that he wants to maintain social distance. This may partly account for the use of the address term on the second occasion for the woman. However, it seems that the over-riding principle for the use of these terms is that the speaker wants to relate to the addressee as a man or a woman. Indeed these terms can sometimes be used between family members and between couples. People in such relationships can be said to know each other well. Hence familiarity does not seem to be that crucial for the use or non-use of these terms in address.

Thus in addition to the non-familiarity that may be associated with these terms, there is also a definite expression and recognition of the masculinity or femininity of the addressee. In support of this claim, I adduce evidence from the area of speech acts. When adults challenge or defy each other to do certain things, the following are the characteristic prefatory formulae used in such a context. The appropriate one for the sex of the addressee is chosen in each case:

- [58a] ne'e- nye' ɲɔ́nsu la'wɔ ...
 if 2SG beman TP do
 'If you are a man, do ... (i.e. do X and lets see)'

- [58b] ne'e- dzo nyɔ́nú la'wɔ ...
 if 2SG happen womanTP do
 'If you were born a woman, do ...'

Sometimes **ɲʉ́ʑsu** and **nyɔ́nu** in the formulae are substituted for by the respective names for male and female genitalia.¹¹ Furthermore, **ɲʉ́ʑsu** has a secondary meaning of bravery or courage as in:

[59] eː wɔ ɲʉ́ʑsu
 3SG do man
 ‘He is brave.’

These pieces of evidence suggest that the words **ɲʉ́ʑsu** and **nyɔ́nu** when used in address evoke or convey something more than just ‘man’ or ‘woman’. **ɲʉ́ʑsu** evokes an image of a masculine, tough and brave person. And associated with **nyɔ́nu** is the image of a cool, calm and loving mother. The etymology of the word **nyɔ́nu** is instructive in this connection. Pazzi (1980: 263) claims that “Ce nom est formé sur le radical verbal nyɔ́(être bon) et le nom nɔ́ qui s’est changé en nu. Cela signifie donc: ‘Mère de la bonté’.”¹²

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following illocutionary meanings for the use of the terms **ɲʉ́ʑsu** and **nyɔ́nu** in address:

ɲʉ́ʑsu

I want to speak to you the way people speak to men
 because I think you are a man
 I want to show that I feel something good towards you
 of the kind people show they feel towards men

nyɔ́nu

I want to speak to you the way people speak to women
 because I think you are a woman
 I want to show that I feel something good towards you
 of the kind people show they feel towards women

13.6.6 Terms for the category of youth

kaɲkua / **ɔ́kakaɲui** / **ɔ́kakaɲze** are dialect variants which denote a young man. Similarly, **ɔ́tugbui** and **tugbedze** are variants for a young woman. These terms refer to an adult male or female who is not old enough to be considered an elder, that is, to be of grand-parent generation. In address a

¹¹ There is homonymy between the name for the male genital organ **ava**, and the word for war, **ava** (cf. Adzomada). This could be explained in terms of metaphorical extension of the notion that it is people who have the male genital organ who go to war. Hence war was named after it.

¹² This noun is based on the verbal root **nyɔ́**(be good) and the noun **nɔ́** which has changed into **nu**. It thus means ‘Mother of kindness’.

speaker may use these terms to signal that s/he wants to relate to the addressee as a youth.

It is perhaps instructive to observe that people who fall into this category form a salient cultural group in Ewe society. At traditional meetings, jobs, food and drink are allocated to them as a group separate from the elders. In fact they do the work and the elders supervise. This group has a lexical name too: **sɔ̃hɛ** 'youth'.

The essential thing about the use of these terms in address is that the speaker wants to relate to the addressee as a young person who is thought of as strong, vigorous and vivacious.

The illocutionary meanings of these terms as modes of address may be stated as follows:

kaŋkua/ɔ̃kəkəpui/ɔ̃kəkəɖze

I want to speak to you the way people speak to young men
because I think you are a young man

I want to show I feel something good towards you of the kind
people show they feel towards young men

ɔ̃təgɔ̃bui and tɔ̃gɔ̃bedze

I want to speak to you the way people speak to young men
because I think you are a young man

I want to show I feel something good towards you of the kind
people show they feel towards young men

13.6.7 Terms for boys and girls- ɲutsugã and nyɔ̃ɲugã

These forms are used to address people who are not thought of as adults. That is, they are not categorised as **ɲutsu** 'man' or **nyɔ̃ɲu** 'woman'. They are quite commonly used to address strangers who are boys or girls and for whom no other address term is readily available to the speaker. They can also be used by people who know the addressee but who want to relate to the addressee as either a 'big boy' or a 'big girl'. Such terms may also be used to address people if it is not appropriate to use specific address terms.

It is interesting to note that in reference, boys and girls are talked about using the following forms:

[60]	ɲutsu- vi'	nyɔ̃ɲu- vi'
	man DIM	woman DIM
	'boy'	'girl'

In other words, the reference terms for ‘boy’ and ‘girl’ are derived from those of ‘man’ and ‘woman’ respectively with the addition of the diminutive marker *ví* (which has evolved historically from *vi* ‘child’ (cf. Heine et al 1988)).

By contrast, the address forms are derived using the augmentative form *ga*. This suggests that the speaker does not want to interact with the addressee the way people do with boys and girls or with children. However the fact that the bare adult forms of *ɲufsu* and *nyɔ́nu* are not used also indicates that the speaker does not want to relate to the addressee as a ‘man’ or a ‘woman’. Thus it appears that the augmentative form is used to signal both an anti-adult, i.e. ‘not an adult’ and an anti-child, i.e. ‘not a child’ categorisation. The members of such a category are mainly adolescents, and these terms are indeed used to address adolescents. But they may also be used to address young people as well as adults, especially the unmarried ones.

The force of these terms could be paraphrased as follows:

ɲufsuga

I don’t want to speak to you the way people speak
to men who are not children

I don’t want to speak to you the way people speak to children

I want to show I feel something good towards you
not of the kind people show they feel towards children

I want to show I don’t think of you as a child or as a man

I think you are a big boy
and I want to speak to you the way people speak
to people like you

nyɔ́nuga

I don’t want to speak to you the way people speak
to women who are not children

I don’t want to speak to you the way people speak to children

I want to show I feel something good towards you
not of the kind people show they feel towards children

I want to show I don’t think of you as a child or as a woman

I think you are a big girl
and I want to speak to you the way people speak
to people like you

13.7 Pronouns

Pronouns may be used in address either by themselves or in combination with other address terms. The independent and pronominal series of the pronouns are used (see Part 1 on overview grammar). Apart from the use of personal pronouns, Ewe also makes use of a pronominal possessed form to address a group of people. These are described in this section.

A typical context of use of especially second person pronouns in address is when someone is calling another person over a distance. Furthermore, this form is used during night time. These contexts are those in which there is a constraint on using a form that would uniquely identify the individual. For example, it is forbidden to call out to people at night using a form that would uniquely identify them. The reason for this is that it is believed that evil spirits move around at night and if they hear someone's name etc. something bad can happen to that person. Thus at night people may be called out as:

[61] wò e
2SG aFOC
'You'

But one can add some natural category term like *ɔ̃vi* 'child', *ɲtsu* 'man' etc to single out the speaker s/he has in mind.

[62] wò ɔ̃vi ma'
2SG child DEM
'You that child'

However, such pronominal forms can also be used in face-to-face interactions. For instance, the following was used to address a child as the speaker held his hands:

[63] wò ɔ̃vi' vloé sia...
2SG child bad DEM
'You this bad child ...' (Setsoafia 1982: 21)

The second person pronoun can also be used in conjunction with an appellation:

[64] woò tre me' do' a' yli'
2SG bachelor NEG cause HAB shout
wo' nya- a aɸa ne o
3PL chase HAB shout to:3SG NEG
'You a bachelor who nobody comes to help when he raises an
alarm' (Setsoafia 1982: 8)

The second singular pronoun address forms are at least formally comparable to 'You X' expressions in English (see Wierzbicka 1990 for a discussion of the English expression). In semantic terms, however, the two expressions are different. The Ewe forms unlike the English construction do not imply that the speaker has any bad feelings towards the addressee. The X variable is filled in Ewe by any term which can be used in address to specify how the speaker wants to interact with the addressee.

The first person singular pronoun can be used in self address especially when the speaker invokes his own appellation. For example,

- [65] nye, klo- kpa me' si' a' u u o
 1SG tortoiseshin NEG escape HAB blood NEG
 'I, tortoise skin which does not run away from blood'
 (Setsoafia 1982: 7)

A common pronominal construction that is used in address consists of the possessed pronominal form t_2 in the plural and a first person pronoun in the appropriate order. Such constructions are used to address colleagues and people with whom the speaker identifies in some way. Consider the following examples, in the first one [66a], a fellow village-man enjoins his colleagues to catch someone else. In the second example [66b], the speaker calls the people who were gathered at a village meeting to pass on some information to them:

- [66a] ... t_2- nye - wo' mi- le' e'
 POSSPRO 1SG PL 2SG catch 3SG
 '... my friends/people, catch him' (Setsoafia 1982: 32)

- [66b] mia' t_2 - wo'...
 1PL POSSPRO PL
 'Our people ...' (Setsoafia 1982: 11)

These forms are social in orientation and are perhaps related to those that are based on social relations.

It seems reasonable to say that the use of pronouns in some cases such as at night is another strategy employed to avoid the use of personal names in Ewe.

13.8 Vocative particles

In this section, the meanings of three particles that are used in conjunction with other terms of address are investigated. These items by themselves are not address terms but they are used, so to speak, to mark vocatives - hence their

inclusion at this point. They belong to the class of addressive particles described in chapter 3 of Ameka (1986). The vocative initial form **o** (§ 13.8.1) and the vocative final **-oo** (§ 13.8.2.2) are described here for the first time. The analysis of the vocative final **-ee** (§13.8.2.1) is an extensive revision of the description presented earlier in Ameka (1986: 251 -258).

13.8.1 Vocative initial **o**

Sometimes address terms may be prefaced by a particle **o** as illustrated in the following examples:

[67] *o, mawu- gaɹ mie' da' akpe' na'wo.*
 Oh God big 1PL throw applause to 2SG
 'Oh, Supreme God, we give you thanks.'

[68] *o, ama, nye lɔlɔɔ!*
 Oh A 1SG:poss lover
 'Oh, my dear Ama!'

[69] *o, tɔgbui fia, tsɔ- e ke mi'*
 Oh grandfather chief take it open 1PL
 'Oh, Honourable Chief, forgive us!' (Setsoafia 1982: 24)

This form should be distinguished from a homophonous interjectional form **o!** which, roughly speaking, is used for the expression of relief and surprise (see §15.2.2). The main difference between the two forms is that between an interjection and a particle: the former can stand on its own as an utterance but the latter cannot. On occasion, it is possible to interpret a form **o** as having a vocative use and an associated meaning of surprise and relief and it may not be entirely clear whether it is the vocative particle or the interjection that is involved. Consider the following utterance produced by a victim of an extortionist who is seeking help. The victim notices some people in the distance and calls to them for help. As the people approach them, he recognises one of them and addresses him with an appellation:

[70] *o, wo`fuɔ dze anyi' dɔmetɔ be'*
 Oh 2SG pregnant one fall ground stomach one say
 agoo! wo` e' a?
 'agoo' 2SG aFOC Q
 'Oh, you the pregnant one falls down and the foetus says 'agoo'!
 Is it you?' (Setsoafia 1982: 25)

Is the form in this example an interjection of relief followed by an address term or is it the pre-vocative particle? In answering such questions, I assume that

whenever *o* is followed by an address term it is the vocative particle and the relief reading comes from the context, otherwise we are dealing with an interjection.

Be that as it may, the particle is described by Westermann (1930: 113) as follows:

When someone is addressed solemnly, *o*'s placed at the beginning:

*o*ˆmawu sodza oh! goddess Sodza.

*o*ˆxɔ̃nye oh! my friend.

This statement, it seems, provides the correct insight on this particle, although it may need to be clarified further.

The prototypical use of this particle (on which other uses seem to be modelled) is in prayer, or address to supernatural beings. The opening lines of a typical prayer in Ewe are:

[71] *o!* *o!* *o!* *etɔ̃ e' nye' agbe!* *mawu- gã...*
 oh oh oh three aFOC belife god big
 'Oh! Oh! Oh! Three beings make life! Supreme God ...'

Two things should be noted about this example: first, the particle can be repeated; second, it is used in a situation where one is showing respect and reverence to God and other supernatural beings. (I think this is the source of Westermann's idea of solemn address (cf. his first example in the quote above)). Some support for the contention that the particle is used in situations where one is showing reverence comes from the gesture of humility that is made during prayer viz: people have to take off their sandals, partially at least, while the prayer is being said (see Motte 1964 and Obianim 1956 for further observations on prayer and see Idowu 1973 on prayer in traditional African religion).

Part of the illocutionary force of this pre-vocative particle when used in address to supernatural beings seems to include the idea that the speaker thinks that s/he has to call them with respect. Perhaps in addition, the speaker feels that something bad could happen (to him/her) if s/he doesn't do so. Loosely speaking, the particle seems to encapsulate the sentence: 'I revere you (because of your religious character)'.

It appears also that when the particle is prefaced to the address term of a non-religious being - humans or other personified entities - the speaker courteously ascribes a religious character to the addressee and shows respect to them as if they were supernatural beings. Put in other words, the speaker

shows respect of the kind that one should show to religious entities towards their addressee through the use of this particle.

With these considerations in mind, the following formula is proposed, tentatively, to account for the illocutionary force of the pre-vocative particle:

o, [address term]

I feel something towards you of the kind

people should show they feel towards God

Because of this I want to speak to you

the way people should speak to people/entities

towards whom they feel something of the kind

people should show they feel towards God

This formula, it is hoped, reflects the view canvassed earlier on the prototypical use of the particle. It is implied in the formula that the speaker shows or expresses some respect towards the addressee similar to the reverence one should show towards God (and other supernatural beings) when speaking to them. It should be pointed out that the respectful feeling does not necessarily entail affection. In the example below, the speaker is angry with the addressee, his idol, for not protecting him from someone who wants to take his daughter away and berates him, as it were, for it; nonetheless, he prefaces the idol's vocative and appellation with the particle:

- [72] o, wo` legbatagbolo me´ tso´ a´ hliha o,
 Oh 2SG idol head:bare NEG take HAB meadow-ore NEG
 hliha le tsihe bia´ m´
 meadow-orebe:PRES pad ask PROG
 e` dji gbõ va´va´.
 2SG resemble goat indeed
 Oh, idol, a bare head does not carry meadow-ore (spiky stone),
 meadow-ore requires a pad, you are indeed useless. (Setsoafia 1982: 63)

As the glosses suggest, this particle would appear to be functionally and perhaps semantically equivalent to the particle oh! in English. Oh!, it appears today only in religious and literary texts, for instance in the opening line of the hymn:

Oh God our help in ages past ...

The semantics of this particle needs to be investigated in order to make more specific statements about its relationship to the Ewe **o**. But it should be noted that it is different from the oh! of surprise (see e.g. Schiffrin 1987, Schourup 1985 and especially Bolinger 1989 for a discussion of the surprise form).

13.8.2 Vocative final -éé

The particle/clitic **-éé'** which has a dialect variant **-leé'** is described by Westermann (1930: 113) as follows:

When calling some one [sic] one adds a long drawn out é
to his name **Kofi éee!** (italic and bold type in original)

It should be pointed out that one does not add this particle to names alone. It can be added to any address term. Furthermore, one does not have to attach this particle every time when calling somebody. When someone is calling to another who is in very close proximity and the caller is sure of the location and also sure that the addressee can hear the call, one does not need to add the particle. The particle is primarily used in situations where people are communicating over some distance. It is also used in situations where a speaker wants to locate his/her interlocutor. For instance, one of two people in a room could attach **-éé'** to the address term should some disaster strike and they are calling to each other. In such situations the interpretation of the whole calling game would be: where are you? I want you to do something at once.

A very common and more natural situation in which a speaker attaches **-éé'** to the addressee's vocative term is where the two people are separated by some distance, but within which one can hear another's shout. The address term and particle are in point of fact shouted out. A child may have stepped out of their house and the mother assumes that she is in the neighbourhood playing. The mother could call out to her by uttering [73a]:

[73a] ama- éé!

A. ADD

'Ama!'

[73b] ama!

A

'Ama!'

It seems that there are two reasons for the shouting out of the forms marked by **-éé'**: firstly, it is to ensure that the addressee would hear it; secondly, it is symptomatic of the speaker's mood. Loudness and pitch of voice in communication tend to be a signal of emotivity (see Volek 1987). This suggests that an emotive aspect is associated with this particle or at least with the utterance in which it occurs. This claim can be supported by the verb that is used to report an utterance in which **-éé'** occurs. [73a] above would normally be reported with the verb **gboŋi** 'shout out' while [73b] will be reported with **yo'** 'call'. The emotive component of the particle's meaning, which comes from the manner in which the act is performed, may be formulated as follows: 'I say it this way because of the way I feel.'

Obviously, someone who calls someone else wants a response, an acknowledgement of the call. This response could be vocal or linguistic or just some physical action. Thus the child addressed with [73a] above could respond with [74] below or she could just move back into the house immediately. The elicitation of an immediate response - verbal or non-verbal - aspect of the particle can be represented with the component: 'I want you to do something now that will cause me to know you can hear me'.

[74] mami'
'Yes, Mum!'

The particle **-eé'**, however, is used in certain contexts where it would seem that one may not get the desired vocal feedback. In particular, **-eé'** may be used in addressing God, as in [75] below, supernatural beings and the dead - ancestors:

[75] maʷu' ŋuʃe~kafa~ to~(l)eé!
 God power all por ADD
 yehowa- (l)eé!ve' nu- nye.
 Yahweh ADDpardon mouth 1SG
 'Almighty God, Yahweh! Have mercy on me.'

One has to understand the cultural conception of, and beliefs about God to appreciate the fact that even in this usage of the particle, the speaker expects a response from God. In Ewe traditional religion as well as Christian thought (and other religions), it is believed that God is invisible but He is near to and can hear people who speak to Him (i.e. pray to Him). It is also believed that God would respond (in a non-vocal way) to the call of His people. It can also be argued that there is an emotive aspect involved when people call God: they may be full of praise or gratitude or they may be in dire need of something. All these states can be reasonably described as affective ones. It appears that the emotive feature associated with prayer is heightened when the speaker adds the particle **-eé'** to the address term for God. It emerges that the use of the particle in addressing God and supernatural beings is compatible with the beliefs and attitudes expressed towards these beings.

Similarly, one needs to enter the psycho-socio-cultural world of the Ewes to appreciate the game that is being played when **-eé'** is used in lamentations to address the dead. The following utterances are frequently heard at funerals:

[76] ao! papa' eé!
 Ao! Father ADD
 'Father'

[77] na- eé! na- eé!

Mother ADDMother ADD

'Mother, mother'

In Ewe philosophy, the dead are believed to be very near and especially if they were relatives, to be attentive to the call of the living. In the traditional religious system, the dead belong to the realm of spirits who can cause and allow things to happen to people living on earth, hence ancestor veneration. "The ancestor is a departed spirit who stands in peculiarly close relation to the ... family: the life of the latter has been derived from him and because he is still in a sense one with it; his favour or disfavour has therefore a sharply focused relation to it and is more urgently to be sought..." (Farmer in Idowu 1973: 179). Thus if someone is dead it is believed that s/he can hear the call of the living, and because of the belief that they are superintendents and custodians of the living, it is believed that when the dead are called upon they would respond. In this context too it is clear that the particle has the same significance as when it is used to address the living.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following representation for the illocutionary force of **-eé!**

X - eé [where X is an address term]

[I can't see you here]

I think you are in a place where you can hear me

I want to say something to you

I want you to do something

that will cause me to know you can hear me

I say it this way because of the way I feel

13.8.3 Vocative final -oo.

The vocative final particle **-oo** in Ewe has affinities with an utterance final or illocutionary particle which is quite widespread in southern Ghana (and perhaps across West Africa, see Singler 1988 for a cross-linguistic survey of the particle **o** in West African and other languages).

Some of the languages from Singler's survey which would appear to relate to the vocative use of **o** are the following:

Mende [Mande] Niger Congo:

... in commands, calls **o** 'softens' the command or call. (Innes 1969)

Sango, pidgin of Central African Republic:

o is said to have "the meaning of politeness, supplication, endearment and the like".

In Seychellois pidgin, it would appear that there is a vocative **o**, but no comment is offered. Consider the use of **o** in this example from Valdiman (1978: 233):

Mimi o, ékout sa ki mon pou di ou
 'Mimi, écoute ce que j'ai à te dire'¹³

Notice that in this example the particle occurs on a name, hence could be thought of as a vocative particle.

It should be noted that I don't accept these descriptions as characterisations of the function and meaning of the particle **o**. Nor do I share the analysis Singler presents of the particle in terms of a perfect marker. I don't think that terms like 'intensive', 'polite' or even 'attenuator' capture the illocutionary significance of the particle adequately. A cross-linguistic investigation of the semantics of this particle is urgently called for.

In Ewe, **-oo** is used to convey a warm and affectionate feeling as well as respect/deference towards one's interlocutor. It is an endearment marker. It is used typically when people are in a happy mood. It may also be used in a manipulative way when the speaker wants something from the addressee. A very common use of **-oo** by children is in the welcoming ritual. When someone who has been away for some time is noticed in the distance coming back, children may ecstatically run towards him/her calling out to him/her with the appropriate address term marked by the form **-oo**, until they can physically embrace him/her. Some examples :

[78] fo kɔmla- oo fo kɔmla- oo!
 elder brother K ADD elder brother K ADD
 'Elder brother Komla, elder brother Komla! ...

The use of **-oo** on vocative forms would appear to have diffused from Akan. In this language, Christaller (1933) observes that **-oo** is 'an enclitic sound after an expression containing a salutation or after an exclamation or after a sentence to a person from some distance or with emphasis'. In Ewe the particle is restricted to vocatives (of course there is a sentence final negative marker **o**, as well as a disjunctive marker which is usually followed by something else), but the element of distance is present in some of its uses. 'Emphasis' is usually used as a vague term to imply very many things. It would appear that the affectionate feeling sense that was mentioned for the Ewe use of the particle may very well be subsumed under the cover term of emphasis - an emotive component.

¹³Mimi, listen to what I've got to tell you.'

From the description so far one can propose the following formula for the meaning of this particle:

X - oo ! where X is an address term.

I want to speak to you the way people speak to someone
towards whom they feel something good

I feel something good towards you

I think you feel something of the same kind
towards me

I want you to do something that will cause me to know
that you feel the same

A comparison of this formula with the one proposed for **-eé'** earlier reveals that the two particles differ in some respects: **-oo** does not necessarily encode the sense of urgency that the speaker feels when **-eé'** is used; it would appear that **-oo** has a sense of mutual good feelings between the speaker and the addressee which is absent from **-eé'**. This is built in part into the expectation that the speaker has. The speaker who uses **-oo** in addressing his interlocutor expects the addressee to respond in the same enthusiastic manner as he utters the call. Beyond this, the speaker would want to establish and maintain good feelings between him/her and the interlocutor at least for the period of the encounter.

The vocative particles described in this section may be used in conjunction with any other address term except perhaps the exclamatory summonses.

13.9 Exclamatory/ interjectional summonses

The forms discussed thus far can be used to call people in addition to being used to address them. There are other linguistic signs - interjections - which are primarily used as summonses or as attention getters. Summonses and addresses can both be thought of as vocatives (cf. Levinson 1983: 71, Zwicky 1974). This is the reason for including these forms in the discussion at this point.

The use of the exclamations discussed here can be viewed as another strategy in Ewe for the avoidance of personal names and other address forms under certain conditions. The taboo on these forms may come about because of the time or place where the communication is taking place. It may also be imposed by the physical distance between the interlocutors.

Two forms used to communicate across a distance in the bush are discussed first. This is followed by a description of two other forms used to get people's attention. Variants of an interjection used to raise an alarm are examined next. Finally, various vocalizations for calling different animals are briefly described.

13.9.1 u:ru! and u:wui!

These two forms could be considered as allo-lexemes, although one can note slight differences in their use and meaning. Basically, these two forms are used to call people across a distance in the bush or on the farm. For both forms, the addressee is not visible to the speaker. The speaker may use the form to locate the addressee in the bush. They may also be used as prefatory summonses to giving information. For instance, on the farm, one could call out to someone who is working in another part of the farm using either of the forms, when say food is ready or s/he wants to pass on some information. Consider the following exchange:

- [79] A: u:ru (u:ru)
 B: u:ru
 A: me- *du ŋgɔ* lo!
 1SG eat frontADD
 'I am taking the lead! (I advise you)
 (i.e. I am going home ahead of you)
 B: yoo, m'- a- va *fifia!*
 OK 1SG IRR come now
 'OK, I'll come soon.'

Notice that the interlocutor responds to the call with an identical form. This form appears to be similar to the Australian English **cooee** (see below). However it seems that **cooee** is primarily used to locate people in the bush, while the Ewe forms may be used in circumstances where the speaker knows where the interlocutor is. These Ewe forms are used in such situations because there is a constraint on addressing people in the normal way in the bush for fear of evil spirits, for instance.

With these considerations in mind, the following explication is proposed for the meaning of u:ru!

- u:ru!
 I want to say something to you
 I can't see you (here)
 I think you are in a place where you can hear me
 I want you to say the same kind of thing to me if you can hear me
 I say: [u:ru] because of this

By and large, the same formula would account for u:wui! Intuitively, however, one feels that u:wui! has a warning sense enshrined in it which is absent from u:ru!. Some support for this claim comes from the tendency of

u:wuĩ to be used when there is some impending or imminent activity that the speaker wants someone to be aware of. For instance, if some people were in a dark forest and were not aware of the thick clouds forming which signify that it is about to rain, the speaker may call out to them using u:wuĩ.

Besides u:wuĩ can just be used by itself without being directed at anybody in particular when clouds are forming and it is thundering. In this usage the form is an ejaculatory expressive which could be explicated as follows:

I now know something is about to happen
 I feel something because of that
 I say this: [u:wuĩ] because I want to show what I feel

As a summons, I suggest that u:wuĩ has the component: I want you to know something is about to happen. This component is absent from the formula for u:ru. The full meaning of u:wuĩ as a call in the bush may be represented as follows:

u:wuĩ!
 I want to say something to you
 I can't see you
 I think you are in a place where you can hear me
 I want you to say the same kind of thing to me
 if you can hear me
 I say this: [u:wuĩ] this way because
 I want you to know that something is about to happen
 I think you should know about it

The two uses of u:wuĩ explicated here correspond to two classes of interjections: the expressive, those that are symptomatic of a speaker's mental state, and the conative, those that are directed at an interlocutor (see the chapter on interjections). Apart from showing that the same form can have different uses which relate to two classes, the situation described here provides a clue to the semantic basis of the classification of interjections according to the functions they perform. Essentially the two uses differ in their communicative purpose: the expressive is to show what the speaker feels or knows at the time of the utterance without necessarily being directed at anybody; and the conative is to seek the attention of the one to whom the form is directed.

In sum, u:ru and u:wuĩ are exclamatory summonses, but u:wuĩ may also be used in a way which is not directed at another person - as an expression of the speaker's mental state. These forms are not formulae, but rather interjections because they do not have addressees. They cannot occur with an addressee phrase as one word formulae can. Thus the following is unacceptable:

[80] *u:ru/ u:wui na'wo`
to you

But they have an intended interpreter which is represented in the explications with 'you' who is not conceptualised as an addressee. These forms may occur with the verb do'say' in delocutive function. This is the reason for having 'say' in the explications. Consider the following example:

[81] ne'e- va' do' agble- a' la,
if 2SG come arrive farm DEF TP
na do' u:ru' na'm
2SG:IRR say to 1SG
'When you reach the farm, say uru to me' (i.e. give me a yell)

It is interesting to compare the meanings of these forms that are used to communicate in the bush with that of a similar expression in Australian English, namely, **cooe**. The Macquarie dictionary defines it as 'a clear call, the second syllable of which rises rapidly in pitch, used most frequently in the bush as a signal to attract attention'. Its content has been more fully described by Wierzbicka (1990 chapter 8) as follows:

cooe

I know we are now in a kind of place where people can't see
one another (if they are not in the same part of that place)
I can't see you
I think you are far away
I want to know where you are
I want you to know where I am
I say this in this way because I want you to hear me

Perhaps one should add to this a component that relates to the response. The person being located also says **cooe** back to the caller. To account for this I propose that the following component be added to Wierzbicka's formula:

I want you to say the same kind of thing to me
if you can hear me

The crucial difference between **cooe** and the Ewe forms lies in the fact that the former is used to locate people in the bush. In the explication above, this aspect of its meaning is represented by the components: 'I want to know where you

are' and 'I want you to know where I am'. None of these components are part of the meaning of the Ewe forms. This difference shows the culture-specific and language-specific nature of interjections which would otherwise appear to be functionally equivalent. It may well be that such forms for communicating over a distance are found in many languages but their specific meanings, I contend, will tend to be different. The value of detailed semantic descriptions of these forms is that they allow us to reveal such minute differences between seemingly equivalent forms across languages and cultures.

13.9.2 (k)ss..!

kss..!, like he! (described below in §13.9.3), is used to call someone's attention over a distance (but not necessarily in the bush). The addressee is usually visible to the speaker, but the addressee may not be aware of the presence of the speaker. kss..! may be used just to draw someone's attention to something. It is thus not necessarily a summons although it can be, and it is not necessarily a conversation initiation marker. Thus if someone unknowingly dropped his/her handkerchief, an onlooker could draw his/her attention to it with kss..! Hawkers at lorry stations and along the streets use this form frequently (not only in Ewe country, but across Ghana) to draw the attention of passers-by to their wares.

kss..! may be accompanied by a clap. (Incidentally, a clap alone, without a vocalisation may be used as an attention-getter). The one to whom kss..! is directed need not respond verbally. An action such as turning around or even a startled jump could be a sufficient reaction to kss..!. In this respect, kss..! is different from u'ru' and u:wu' which elicit a verbal response. To account for this difference, I have proposed for kss..! a component: 'I want you to do something ...' instead of 'I want you to say the same kind of thing ...' which was proposed for u'ru' and u:wu'.

kss..! may be perceived as rude if a young person uses it to get the attention of an older person. This feature is not necessarily part of the meaning of kss..! The impoliteness stems, I think, from a violation of the 'social placedness' or appropriateness condition on such forms (cf. Evans to appear). For kss..! and also for he! (§13.9.3) one could state the following condition of use:

A young person should not use this form to an older person

More broadly this generalisation could be stated as follows:

People lower in social status should not use this form to their

superiors

When this condition is violated, it triggers an inference, namely, impoliteness. In the explication of these forms there is no explicit statement on politeness because it is not discourteous to use them between equals.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following semantic formula for kss..!:

kss...!

I think you do not know I am here

I want you to know I am here

I want you to hear me

I want you to do something to cause me to know
that you can hear me

I say [kss] because of that

13.9.3 he!

The form he! is used in much the same way as kss..! to call people's attention. The addressee can be seen by the speaker and there need not be much distance between them. Typically some further communication takes place after this initial call. It can thus be said that he! may be used as a conversation initiator. Tentatively, one can propose the following explication for he!. (Compare it with the formula for kss..! above):

he!

I want you to know I am here

I want to say something to you

I want you to do something to cause me to know you can hear me

I say [fiε] because of that

There are two main noticeable differences between the semantic formulae for kss..! and he!. First, for he! there is no assumption on the part of the speaker that the addressee is not aware of his presence as is the case for kss..! (cf. the first component in the formula for kss..!). In fact he! may be used to alert an addressee who is in the same place as the speaker and with whom the speaker may have had prior interaction. Consider the following use of the form by a pacifist at a village meeting where a fight broke out between two other people:

[82] ... he, mi- tɔ!

1PL stop

'Hey, stop it!'

(Setsoafia 1982: 114)

In this example, the interlocutors had been communicating at the same place for some time and the form is used here to get their attention before further information is passed on.

Second, one expects some conversation to follow he. This expectation is not associated with kss..!. In example [83] below, a father who had driven away a suitor of his daughter a few minutes earlier notices that he is coming back and confronts him with the following:

[83] he´ de ne` ga- tró gbó- na loo?

Q 2SG REP turn come HAB Q

‘Hey! Are you coming back or what?’ (Setsoafia 1982: 41)

As the glosses suggest he! is functionally and perhaps semantically equivalent to English **hey**. Phonetically the two forms are different: English **hey** is pronounced [hei] while Ewe he! is [fiɛ]. The two forms are similar in that they can be used in conjunction with address terms to perform the summoning function. Compare the following forms:

Ewe: He Kofi!

English: Hey Fred!

He Ama!

Hey you!

kss..! cannot be used in this way: ?? Kss... Kofi!

Thus although kss..! and he may be used to get people’s attention they have slightly different meanings.

kss..! and he! are also different in the range of verbs that can be used to report them. kss..! can be reported either with do ‘say’ or wó ‘do’, but he! can only be reported with do ‘say’. From this point of view, kss..! may be conceptualised either as a verbalization or as a vocalisation while he! is only viewed as a verbalisation. Thus if someone wanted to inquire as to whether kss..! or he! were directed at him/her, s/he could use one of the following questions:

[84] nye- e´ ne` le kss do-/ wó- m´ na´ a?

1SG aFOC 2SG be:PRES say/ do PROG to Q

Is it me you are saying/doing kss to?

[85] nye- e´ ne` le he do-/ *wó- m´ na´ a?

1SG aFOC 2SG be:PRES say/ do PROG to Q

Is it me you are saying/*doing he to?

Furthermore, kss..! and he! cannot take addressee phrases by themselves which suggests that they are prototypical interjections as opposed to formulae (see the discussion of the distinction between interjections and formulae in chapters 14 and 15). The following are unacceptable expressions:

[86a] *kss na'wo`
to you

[86b] *he na'wo`
to you

13.9.4 búbúbúi!

A phonological variant of this form is boboboé. This variation comes about in terms of the stricture created in the mouth for its production. The sound is made by striking one's palm against one's mouth with rounded lips and a stricture for the production of a non low back vowel a number of times. This vocalisation is described in delocutive terms with the expression:

[87] φu' asi' nu
hit handmouth
(idiomatically: to raise an alarm)

Its nominalised form is asiφuúu as used in the following example. The context of example [88] is this: it was discovered that a young male guest of the chief of the village had eloped with one of the wives of the chief of the village, the alarm that was raised and its response are described as follows:

[88] asiφuúu d̩i bobobo' be'sala fia- srɔ̃ bu.
cry sound that S. chief spouse lost
du bliɓo la' kafã φo zi
village whole DEF all gather pile
'An alarm was raised that Sala, the wife of the chief was
missing. The whole town gathered to help (find her).'

(Akpatsi 1980: 13)

The principal use of this form is that of raising an alarm to alert people to something bad that has happened or is happening and to get them to help in doing something to ameliorate the situation. Observe that in the above example, the whole town gathered to give help. This form is functionally equivalent to English cries of the form **Help!** (and in certain contexts to **Fire!**).

The Ewe cry may be produced as a reaction to a number of situations. For instance, it may be used when someone faints and people are needed to help resuscitate them. It may also be used to summon people when the news of someone's death has been brought into the village. Consider the occurrence of boboboí in example [89] where it is attributed to the wife of one of two men who were fighting:

[89] boboboé! mi- nya aʔe- a' na'm loo,
 1PL chase home DEF for 1SG ADD
 e- le srɔ̃ nye la' wu ge!
 3SG be:PRES spouse 1SG DEF kill INGR
 'Help! Come and assist me! He is going to kill my
 husband! (Gadzekpo 1982: 14)

It should be observed that in this example, the exclamatory or interjective summons is followed by an explicit invitation to come and help. Westermann (1973) glosses nya aʔe-a'na'ame as 'to assist a person in danger, distress or need'.

This call is different from the previous ones discussed in that it is not necessarily directed at an individual. Rather it is directed to members of a group - all people in the village or neighbourhood. It is usually very loud and sharp to produce the desired effect (to make your heart jump, so to speak). The utterer of this call would seem to be helpless because s/he feels that s/he cannot do anything alone or cannot do much about the situation alone - hence the call for help.

I propose the following explication for boboboí!

boboboí/bubuúí'

I know something bad has happened
 I cannot do anything much about it
 I feel something (bad) because of that
 I think other people could do something about it
 I want people to know that something bad has happened
 I want people to come here and do something about it now
 I say this: [boboboí/bubuúí'] because of that
 I say it this way because I want people to hear me
 I think people will do something that will cause me to know
 if they can hear me

The use of 'now' in various components of the formula is meant to reflect the urgency of the situation. Some of the time, some expertise is needed in handling the situation to which people have been called. For instance, it is medicine-men more than any other person who can help in resuscitating a person who has fainted. This is the reason for the use of 'other people' instead of just 'people'. It is hoped that such a phrase would be vague enough to cover

situations in which there is no expertise required and those in which some special skills are necessary.¹⁴

13.9.5 Summonses for animals

In the preceding sections, various interjections used to summon humans in Ewe were explored. This section presents an outline of the various ways in which one can call domestic animals: chickens, turkeys, ducks, goats, sheep, dogs, and cats. One can divide the summons forms into lexical and phonation types. The phonation ones are the interjections, but to appreciate their significance it is useful to understand the lexical ones since both types may co-occur in one summons.

13.9.5.1 Lexical summonses for animals

All the different domestic animals may be called by their natural kind label and the diminutive suffix:

chickens:	koklo'	vi!
	fowl	DIM
sheep:	ale~	vi!
	sheep	DIM
goats:	gbɔ-	vi!
	goat	DIM
cats:	dadi-	vi!
	cat	DIM
dogs:	avu-	vi!
	dog	DIM

Turkeys and ducks are usually called by their bare label without the diminutive suffix:

turkeys:	dɔgu!
	turkey
ducks:	kpakpa(xe)!
	duck

¹⁴A shorter form of this summons is used as a response cry to pain or fright viz: búbúi! (see §16.2.4.2). The same segmental form with low tone is also used to scare children: búbù! The relationships between the forms are quite evident: they all have to do with something bad happening or that can happen and the speaker has some feeling, presumably a bad feeling because of it. This is perhaps an indirect piece of evidence for the feeling component included in the formula.

It is possible that turkeys are not summoned with the diminutive form because of their size. They are not very easy to handle either. There is an appellation based on the comparison between the size of turkeys and cattle which is sometimes used to summon them:

[90] dɔgu, nyi lolo wu' wo!
 turkey, cow big surpass 2SG
 'Turkey, the cow is bigger than you!'

As for ducks, it seems that they are not called with the diminutive form because people think of them as dirty birds.

Animals that have 'personal' names may be summoned by their names. Names are usually given to dogs and less frequently to cats. Sheep, goats, ducks, turkeys and fowls do not get personal names. Examples of dog-names comparable to Fido in English are:

nyaśá~ 'Wisdom' dođzi 'Perseverance'

13.9.5.2 Phonation summonses for animals

The lexical summonses may be accompanied by phonations or the phonations may be used by themselves to call the animals. For sheep and goats one can imitate their bleating: mbhe....! mbhe...! A lateral click [ɟ] produced several times may also be used to call these animals. Summoning goats and sheep is invariably effected by a combination of the lexical call and one of the phonations. Food is sometimes used as a bait for them when they are being called. Hence the summons forms may be followed by an invitation such as

[91] va xɔ!
 come receive!
 'Come and get!'

A typical call of sheep may have the following form:

[92] ale~ vi! (ale~ vi)! ɟ ɟ ɟ (va xɔ) (va xɔ)
 sheep DIM sheep DIM clicks come receive come get
 'Sheep! Sheep! Come and get, come and get!'

Cats are usually summoned by the form:

pu...s! pus, pus, pus!

Variants, or rather forms identical to this one seem to be rather widespread for calling cats. It is found in Europe, for example, in the UK, and Bynon (1976: 59 - 60) reports its use in Morocco by the Berber.

And domestic birds, fowls, turkeys and ducks are called by the form:

krú! krú! krú! ...

There does not seem to be any special phonation for calling dogs. The form leś! leś! may be used to urge them to chase animals in the bush.¹⁵

The conative function of all the phonation forms for summoning animals may be represented as follows:

I want you (this animal) here!

I do this: [phonation] because of that

13.9.5.3 Forms for sending animals away

Just as there are forms for calling animals to oneself, so are there forms for sending them away. For sheep and goats the form kaǐ! is used. Dogs and cats are sent away by the form saǎ!. Domestic birds are driven away by the form suǐ! Each of these may be accompanied by a gesture, usually the use of a whip. One can explicate these forms as follows:

kaǐ!

I don't want you (sheep/goat) here

I want you (sheep/goat) to go away from here

I say this: [kaǐ] because of that

saǎ!

I don't want you (cat/dog) here

I want you (cat/dog) to go away from here

I say this: [saǎ] because of that

suǐ!

I don't want you (bird) here

I want you (bird) to go away from here

I say this: [suǐ] because of that

Alternatively, these forms could be defined as follows:

kaǐ!

I don't want this sheep/ this goat here

I want this sheep /this goat to go away from here

I say this: [kai] because of that

saǎ!

¹⁵ The form léś seems to be based on the verb lé 'catch'. The source of the 's' on the end is not entirely clear to me although one can think that it comes from English. léś may be glossed, I think, as 'catch it'.

I don't want this cat/ this dog here
 I want this cat/ this dog to go away from here
 I say this: [sa] because of that

sui!

I don't want this bird here
 I want this bird to go away from here
 I say this: [sui] because of that

The alternatives represent two different theoretical positions on animal address. For the first set, it is assumed that the animals are the intended interpreters of the communication event or auditors to whom humans direct their speech. Hence the use of 'you' in the formulae. For the second set, by contrast, the animals are not presented as direct addressees. The emphasis is more on the wants of the speaker. The choice of one set or the other depends on the position one takes as to "whether addressing animals can be considered as a linguistic manifestation in the full sense of the word, i.e. as 'glottic' phenomenon in O. Jespersen's terminology" (Isacenko 1964: 95). As Isacenko goes on to point out "Utterances made to animals differ from those in a normal linguistic situation in that the 'addressee' is not in command of the linguistic system. But since we have to do with utterances in which phonemic material is used we may affirm that calls to animals still belong to glottic phenomena. These calls ... have the status of collective conventional signals." (Isacenko *ibid*).

The first set of formulae in which the animals are presented as addressees may be preferred, because it could be argued that the animals whose calls are described here are reared as free-range domestic animals; hence they perhaps have some command of the forms that are directed at them. Indeed, one can ask someone to say these forms to the animals as in the following examples:

[93] do kai na'gbo la'
 say to goat DEF
 'Say 'kai' to the goat.'

[94] do'sui na'koklo- a'
 say to hen DEF
 'Say 'sui' to the hen.'

These examples show that the forms are reported with the verb *do* 'say' and also that they are directed at the animals.

The calls could be thought of as constituting a register of the language with its special features such as the interlocutors being animals. Bynon (1976: 63) has compared this kind of language with nursery language and observes that in both registers it is not essential that the utterance as a whole be comprehensible to the interlocutor. It could be assumed that the animals respond to the acoustic signals rather than to the content of the utterance.

13.10 Conclusion - Ewe address terms and 'universals' of address

This chapter has been concerned with the meanings of Ewe terms and titles of address. It has been claimed that the attitudinal and pragmatic meanings conveyed by the speaker when these terms of address are used can be explicated in a way that reveals not only the interpersonal relations being invoked, but also the wider socio-cultural aspects of the relationships. The chapter has thus focused on the differences in meaning between the use of personal names, or appellations or allonymous terms etc. in address. As Wierzbicka (1989c: 740) points out, questions about the meanings of titles etc. 'have hardly ever been raised in semantic literature presumably because it is usually taken for granted that differences of this kind are 'sociolinguistic' or 'pragmatic' rather than 'semantic' and 'sociolinguistic' or 'pragmatic' differences can be TALKED ABOUT but cannot be DEFINED' (emphasis in original). I hope the analysis presented in this chapter demonstrates that the 'pragmatic' meanings of address terms cannot just be talked about, they can also be defined in a precise and illuminating way.

In the discussion of the Ewe address terms, it has been argued that the attitudes conveyed by contextual use of the terms are based on prototypical kin relationships, social relations, socio-economic, political, or religious roles and natural or existential categories. Since these are the dominant patterns of address in Ewe, it can be inferred that people interact with each other as if they were kin, especially elder sibling or parent or grandparent. People are also related to in terms of their relationship with someone else either as a parent, a spouse, or a child. If the modes of address in a society mirror the modes of social interaction in that culture, then one can infer from this array of address terms that interpersonal relationships in Ewe are viewed as kin-based relationships. One can also deduce from the use of status terms that there is a fair amount of interest in and respect for the rank and role of people in the society. The importance of parenthood in Ewe culture, as in many other African cultures, is reflected in the widespread use of teknonymic titles in address.

One of the major findings of the chapter is that in spite of the symbolic nature of personal names in Ewe, they are sparingly used in addressing adults.

They are used to address children, but if they are used to address adults, they carry the connotation that the adult is irresponsible. Apart from this, they carry an attitudinal meaning that the speaker wants to relate to the addressee as if s/he were a child.

In the rest of this concluding section, I want to put the Ewe data in a universal perspective. I want to explore the applicability and relevance of a sociolinguistic universal of address that has been proposed in the literature. I will also outline some of the issues that need further investigation from a sociolinguistic point of view in order to obtain a fuller picture of the Ewe address system.

In research on address systems and their general patterns, Roger Brown and his colleagues have noted that there is a link between forms in personal address among intimates and those that are used by inferiors to superiors. This has been referred to as the Invariant Norm of Address (Brown 1965). This rule states that the linguistic form used to an inferior in dyads of unequal status is used in dyads of equal status among intimates, and that the linguistic form used to a superior in dyads of unequal status is used in dyads of equal status among strangers. This generalisation is stated elsewhere as follows:

The form used mutually between intimates could be used upward to superiors and the form used between distant acquaintances could be directed downwards to subordinates.

(Brown and Ford 1964: 239)

The authors further surmise that : 'It may be that the abstract linkage in personal address of intimacy and condescension, distance and deference is a linguistic universal.' (Brown and Ford 1964: 239). It is this claim of the universality of the invariant norm of address that I want to examine in the context of the Ewe address terms.

If the analysis presented in this chapter is accepted, then the use of address terms in Ewe seems to violate this norm and thus one can call its universality into question. The claim as outlined above seems to have been supported in a number of empirical studies of address patterns from different cultures (see e.g. Befu and Norbeck 1958, Lambert 1967, Slobin 1963, Roger et al 1979 but see also Braun 1988 for counter examples). However, it seems that the invariant norm of address is best regarded as a tendency which needs further verification.

It seems that for Ewe the situation is a bit complex. Inferiors in age, for instance, that is children may be addressed by personal names, but these personal names are not used among intimates. Recall that marriage partners for example and adults in general may address each other using sibling terms

but not personal names. Similarly family members use kin-based address terms rather than personal names. In the same way, it does not seem to hold for Ewe that terms used for distant acquaintances are directed at subordinates. Distant acquaintances are addressed using various kin-based terms. Subordinates in general may be addressed by personal names or some allonymous terms. Furthermore, the dimension of acquaintance as such, that is someone who one knows well or does not know well, does not seem to play a crucial role in the address system.

These issues along with a host of other sociolinguistic matters deserve further investigation. We need to know what determines the choice of an address term over another when there is the possibility in a particular context to use different forms. For example, what is the motivating factor for using either a tekronym or a socio-economic status based title to address someone in a specific context and vice versa. It will be interesting also to find out what contrasts might exist between address behaviour in urban centres and address behaviour in rural areas. Furthermore, one can also examine the extent to which dialect background affects the use of specific address terms. In addition it will be worthwhile to investigate the new ways of address that are developing among evangelical and charismatic Christian groups and how these interact with the traditional address system.

All these issues however, are sociolinguistic matters and I believe that they cannot be fully understood until we have a grasp of what the terms involved in the system mean. It is the meanings of the various terms that constitute the modes of address in Ewe that this chapter has attempted to elucidate.

Chapter 14

INTERACTIONAL SPEECH FORMULAE

By and large, bound utterances (i.e. speech formulae) remain a challenge to the 'theoretical linguist' who has yet to adequately explain this significant (both quantitatively and qualitatively) portion of language.
(Kiefer 1983:746)

14.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we take up the challenge that formulaic expressions pose to linguists noted in the above quote, not so much from a theoretical point of view, but from a descriptive point of view. This is because the comments of Kiefer apply equally to descriptive linguists as well. Some researchers argue that one way to confront this challenge is to focus our investigations on capturing the native speaker's knowledge of formulaic expressions. As Haggio and Kuiper (1983: 534) put it: ' ... we need to know what a native speaker of a language who knows its formulae, routines and speech acts actually knows.' This much most, if not all, linguists would agree with. Where they may differ is in how to achieve it (see Chapter 12 for a survey of different approaches to routines).

The aim of this chapter is to account for the knowledge of an Ewe native speaker of various speech formulae - relatively fixed expressions which are conventionally associated with particular interactive situations (cf. definition in chapter 13) - that are used in diverse situations in that language. Consistent with the general methodology of this study, a decompositional approach is taken to the illocutionary semantics of these formulaic expressions. It is thus assumed that their meanings are made up of amalgams of the wants, feelings, attitudes, thoughts and intentions of the interlocutors in a communicative act; in addition to the expressed social conventions, functions and shared cultural beliefs that are associated with the linguistic item in question. Furthermore, it is assumed that since these expressions are speech acts qua speech acts they have at least a dictum - propositional content - and an illocutionary purpose component (cf Searle 1976, Wierzbicka 1980). In the NSM framework the illocutionary dictum is of the form 'I say:' and the illocutionary purpose is of the form 'I say it because ...'.

In the course of the description especially of those formulae which are potentially single words, an attempt will be made to show that they are distinct from interjections which are typically monomorphemic words. It can be argued that one-word formulae and prototypical interjections belong to a form

class of words which can constitute utterances on their own. Beyond this, it is desirable to separate formulae from interjections at least on semantic grounds. In this connection, it will be argued throughout this chapter and the next that formulae, especially one-word formulae, are different from interjections in at least two respects. First, formulae are speech acts but interjections are not. Interjections have illocutionary forces but they are not full-fledged speech acts. Second, and in support of the first difference interjections do not have addressees while formulae do. A language internal diagnostic test for this is that all one-word formulae in Ewe can occur in a frame with an addressee phrase **ná wò** 'to you'. Interjections cannot. A simple example is the two words **atúù** and **dzáà** which are used to welcome people. **atúù** cannot occur in this frame while **dzáà** can (see below).

compare: * **atúù ná wò**
to 2SG

dzáà ná wò
to 2SG
'Welcome to you'

Hence **atúù** is an interjection while **dzáà** is a formulaic word. This behaviour is consistent with other aspects of these words (see §14.4 below).

In previous descriptions of Ewe (and of other languages) such a distinction is not drawn and one-word formulae are listed with other interjections as interjections or exclamations. Furthermore, the previous descriptions do not go beyond translation equivalents or a few statements on the use of the items. In this chapter an attempt is made to go beyond itemising the formulae and to provide "more than just an anecdotal account of the pragmatics of formulae" (Haggo and Kuiper 1983:534).

This chapter is organised around various identifiable situations in Ewe society. It begins with expressions for greeting (§14.2). This is followed by a description of salutations used during meal time (§14.3), for welcoming people (§14.4) and for someone at work (§14.5). Formulae for expressing gratitude and felicitations are described next (§14.6); followed by expressions of sympathy and apology (§14.7) and those used as disclaimers and deferential markers (§14.8). Finally parting expressions are described (§14.9). The chapter concludes with an attempt to locate the Ewe data in a contrastive pragmatics context.

14.2 Greeting formulae

14.2.1 Preliminaries

There appears to be a tendency in the studies of greetings to treat them as a natural and universal phenomenon.¹ That is, it is assumed that human beings would acknowledge each other with some form of greeting instinctively when they come in contact (cf e.g. Kendon & Feber 1973; Goody 1972; Firth 1972; Goffman 1971; Youssuff et al 1976). Other studies point however to differences across cultures in the strategies associated with greetings (e.g. Irvine 1974, Naden 1980, 1986). The social significance, form and function of greetings in various societies have also been reported on. Many of these studies, however, do not investigate the illocutionary meanings encoded by the various forms used in greetings. The view taken here is that even if greeting behaviour is universal (or near universal), the forms and strategies employed in acting out this behaviour are language and culture-specific. This section is concerned with the linguistic formulae that are used in greeting and similar acts in Ewe.

The sociological functions of greetings in Ewe have been identified by the sociologist Agblemagnon as follows:

la salutation a chez les Ewe un rôle sociologique bien précis, celui de renforcer la communauté du groupe, de développer la bonne entente, de réaliser l'intégration du nouveau venu et de défendre la communauté contre l'inconnu qui aurait des intentions malveillantes.² (Agblemagnon 1969:56)

He further notes in comparison to French for instance that:

A chaque circonstance de la vie sociale, correspond une forme déterminée de salutation. Au lieu du 'bonjour' et du 'bonsoir' impersonnels et non circonstanciels, l'Ewe emploie des formules spécialisées.³ (Agblemagnon 1969: 59)

It is perhaps needless to say that the same comment can be applied to many African linguistic groups. In spite of the pervasive nature of greeting formulae in Ewe, not much attention has been paid to their linguistic semantics and pragmatics. The accounts that exist do not go beyond itemising a few expressions. In this section, an attempt will be made to describe the pragmatic meanings encapsulated in the various specialised formulae for the general purposes of greeting and saluting people on specific occasions.

¹ Youssuff et al (1976) report that Dell Hymes (in private communication) challenges the universality of greetings with examples from Wasao and other American Indian languages.

² 'Among the Ewes, greetings have a precise sociological role, that of reinforcing the sense of community, developing harmony, integrating a new arrival and protecting the community against a stranger who could have malevolent intentions.'

³ 'Each occasion in social life has a specific corresponding form of greeting. Instead of the impersonal and non-circumstantial 'bonjour' and 'bonsoir' Ewe uses specialised formulas.'

In the present section, those greeting formulae based on the time of day and various 'how-are-you' type formulae are analysed. In other sections in this chapter other formulae used in other circumstances are also investigated such as salutations to someone eating and formulae for welcoming people etc.

In general there is no restriction on who should initiate greetings determined by status based on age or office. All things being equal, a young person can greet an elder first or vice versa, a chief can greet a commoner first or vice versa. In this respect Ewe is different from other groups in which the status of interlocutors determines who initiates greetings e.g. the Gonja (cf. Goody 1972). However, there is a tendency for a visitor to initiate greetings during social visits. There seems also to be a constraint on the form of greeting used if it is initiated by a younger person. It would be odd for a young person to greet an elder with the form: **e - le - a?** 'literally: are you there?' (see §14.2.3 below for its analysis).

One general constraint which operates is that the person who is going to the toilet or the rubbish tip should not initiate greetings. It is considered to be rude and to be an insult to the interlocutor. (Perhaps it should be pointed out that in the traditional setting of villages toilets, which are pit latrines, and rubbish tips are usually a few metres out of the village. A busy time for people to visit these places is in the morning). It is believed that if one greets another when on the way to the toilet or the rubbish dump, it is equivalent to saying 'shit on you!' to that person. This is considered one of the rudest things someone can say to another person. It could lead to litigation and the guilty person may be fined a goat to appease the injured plaintiff.

It is also considered inappropriate to interrupt people and greet them. To be sure that the time is right for you to proffer greetings, one can use a pre-greeting question such as: **ma - do gbe na wo a?** 'may I greet you?' (see discussion of this form in §12.3).

14.2.2 Greeting formulae based on the time of day

In this section, the greeting formulae that pertain to the time of day are discussed. A day is segmented linguistically into four parts:

ɲdɪ me
 morning in
 'morning (including dawn) till about noon'

ɲdɔ- me
 afternoon in

'afternoon; from noon to about 3 or 4 pm'

ye- tró me

sun turn in

'late afternoon; from about 3 or 4 pm'

fiě me

evening in

'evening'

Each of these periods has a particular greeting associated with it. Thus in the morning, one can be greeted with **ɲdí** or **móni** - a borrowing based on English 'morning' - by themselves or in combination with other expressions (see below). Similarly, for noon and early afternoon, the formula involves **ɲdɔ** and for late afternoon, the routine is **wólé**. In fact **wólé** can be used generally for any time whose category the speaker is not sure about. It just means 'this time' and thus could be the greeting used for late morning (11.00am). The greeting for evening employs the word **fiě** 'evening'.

A simple greeting form can be made of just each of these words. Consider the following greeting - response pairs, for instance. The questions that form part of the response turn are varied in content to demonstrate the different sorts of contexts in which the interlocutors may use these forms:

[1a] A: ɲdí

morning

B: ɲdí aḥé a- me ɖé?

morning house DEF in Q

A: 'Good morning'

B: 'Morning, how is the home?'

[2b] A: ɲdɔ

afternoon

B: ɲdɔ, asi- á me ɖé?

afternoon market DEF in Q

A: 'Good afternoon'

B: 'Afternoon, how is the market?'

[2c] A: wólé

this time

B: wólé agble- tó wó?

this time farm POSSPRO PL

A: 'Good day'

B: 'Good day, how are the farm people?'

[2d] A: fiẽ

evening

B: fiẽ mǒdzí tó- wó?
evening roadtop POSSPRO PL

A: 'Good evening'

B: 'Evening, how are the people there?'

The greeting formula can vary in length and slightly in content. Addressive particles and prepositional phrases encoding the addressee may be added to the 'time of day' words. For example:

[3] A: ɲdí ná wò loo!
morning to 2SG ADD
'Good morning to you'

B: ɲdí
morning
'Good morning'

The speaker could also make explicit the fact that s/he was offering greetings to the addressee by using the verb *xɔ* 'receive' in an imperative. This is the situation in the following excerpt from a GBC T.V. drama⁴:

[4] A: xɔ ɲdí loo!
receive morning ADD
B: yoo, me- xɔ ɲdí ..
OK 1SG receive morning
A: 'Good morning to you'
(lit: receive good morning)
B: OK, I accept morning.

In addition, a greeting formula, like many other interactional routines could be prefaced with an appropriate address term (see Chapter 13 on address) and/or

⁴ This excerpt is taken from the Ewe TV drama entitled: *tó dǒko médzea lǎxóá ɲu o.* 'A poor son-in law is not pleasing to his mother-in-law.'

a deferential marker such as **meḍe kúkú** literally: 'I take off my hat' or **taflátsé** 'please' (see §14.6). Thus a first turn in a greeting exchange could be:

- [5] (tógbe, (me- ḍe kúkú(xɔ))) ḡḍ (loo!)
 grandfather 1SG remove hat receive afternoon ADD
 'Grandfather, please accept afternoon!'

All that has been said so far relates to the four expressions based on the time of the day. When the simple forms of these greetings are used, that is, the bare words, they could be repeated for emphasis or for showing interest or enthusiasm on the part of the speaker, as in the following example:

- [6] A: fiḗ fiḗ fiḗ!
 evening evening evening
 'Good evening' (with enthusiastic intonation)
 B: fiḗ.....
 evening
 'Good evening'

The vowel of the words may also be lengthened to produce an emotive effect. For instance,

- [7] A: ḡdíííí ..!
 morning
 'Good mor....ning!'
 B: ḡdí goo
 morning ADD
 'Good morning (respectfully)'

The essential elements of these 'time of the day' greetings are first, that the interlocutors are in close proximity. These greetings could be exchanged across some distance but the interlocutors would have to be able to hear each other and also be visible to each other. All this can be thought of as the interlocutors being in the same place. A second element is that the addressee responds in similar fashion (as the examples above show). The interaction between people who exchange greetings could stop there or they could go on to do other things. For this reason, I suggest that the main point of this act is just to maintain social contact with someone whom one finds oneself to be in the same place with. The interlocutors thus convey their good feelings towards each other.

If one neglects to greet, or to respond to the greeting of another when they are in the same place, it may be interpreted as a sign of either of them harbouring some malice for the other. It could be that the misunderstanding would not be between the individuals who are now involved in the encounter, but rather between people associated with them. For example, it could be that a relative of one of them has wronged the relative of the other. This could be the trigger for people refusing to greet or to respond to other people's greeting. If this happens an attempt is made to arbitrate between the parties and iron out the differences and make the social relations between them smooth again.

It is perhaps instructive to observe that people who have enmity between them are described as people who are not on speaking terms (that is, they are not on greeting terms). To hate a person in Ewe folk linguistic terms is not to be on speaking or greeting terms. The following is a description that a character offers for the hate relationship between him and another character in a novel:

[8] míkpí í mié le nu dó mí o
 1PL CONJ 3SG 1PL be:PRES mouth speak PROG NEG
 'He and I are not on speaking terms.' (Gadzekpo 1982:20)

This suggests that when people exchange greetings they are perceived to show that they have good feelings towards one another.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication for the 'time of day' greetings. (To avoid repeating the same formula for the four items, I have included all of them as alternatives in the dictum. This is the component in which it is relevant to make explicit the time of day).

'Time of day' greetings:

ɛdɛ́ 'morning' ɛdɔ, 'afternoon'

wɔɛ, 'this time of day' fiě 'evening'

I know we have come to be in the same place

I want to say something to you because of that

I want to say the kind of thing that one should say to another
 when they are in the same place at this time of the day

I say: I want something good to happen to you

this morning/this afternoon/this time of day/this evening

I say it because: I want you to feel something good

I want you to know I feel something good towards you

I think you will say something of the same kind to me
because of it.

The last component in the explication indicates that the addressee is expected to return the greeting in the same kind of way. Typically, these time of day greetings are responded to with reference to the time of day (see the responses in the examples above). The respondent of the greeting continues the turn with another move inquiring about the well-being of the interlocutor and their relatives etc. (see §14.2.2 on well-being inquiry formulae below).

The response indicates an acceptance of the greeting that has been offered. This turn is reported either as **X xɔ gbe ná Y** 'X receives Y's greeting' or **X lɔ gbe ná Y** 'X accepts Y's greeting'. Two things should be noted about these report utterances. The first one makes use of the verb **xɔ** 'get, receive' which can also be used in offering the greeting (see example [4] above). The second response makes use of the verb **lɔ** 'agree, accept; weave'. If this verb is interpreted as weave then the greeting interaction may be viewed as an exchange of wishes (see Chapter 12). Thus it would appear that the response of greetings is conceptualised as an acceptance of the greeting or an interweaving of voices. The social meaning of the response to these 'time of day' greeting formulae could be paraphrased as follows:

I know you have said something good to me
I feel something good because of that
I want to say something of the same kind that one should say
to another because of that
I say: I want the same kind of good things to happen to you
this morning/afternoon/time of day/evening
I say it because: I want you to know I have heard you
I want you to feel something
[I want to say something more]

The last component is added to signal the fact that the recipient of the greeting has to initiate the next move by asking a 'how are you' question.

14.2.3 'Well-being inquiry' expressions.

The concern in this section is with expressions that are used in 'how-are-you' sequences. I borrow this term from Ferrara (1980), but the use here is more extended. Unlike Ferrara's usage, it includes questions that ask about the well-being of the relatives etc. of the interlocutors. Ferrara considers such questions to be non-typical 'how-are-you' sequences, but they cannot be ignored in a description of the Ewe system where such questions may constitute the only greeting turn. Thus in this study 'how-are-you' sequences or 'well-being

inquiries' are those turns during a greeting exchange where the well-being of the interlocutors and their relatives are asked about.

Formally, there are two types of interrogative structures that are used in these sequences. The questions may be propositional ones signalled by the question particle/clitic **á**. 'Topic-only' questions marked by the particle **dé** may be used to inquire about the well-being and state of affairs of people and places associated with the addressee, but not of the well-being of the addressee himself/herself (See Ameka 1986 for a description of these types of questions and see also Part I for a summary).

These questions may occur in two positions in the greeting exchange. They may occur either at the beginning of the greeting event or they may occur in the 'how-are-you' sequence slot. That is they may function either as conversation openers or they may occur after the initial time of day greetings or welcoming routines. In fact, where the interaction involves welcoming one of the interlocutors, these expressions do not occur as the initiators of the contact. The 'how-are-you' questions may only occur initially if it is appropriate to initiate the greetings with time of day expressions. In that case the time of day formula is skipped and the interaction proceeds to the 'how-are-you' sequence stage. The stereotyped questions of both types will be discussed in turn.

14.2.3.1 Propositional 'how-are-you' questions

The propositional questions are formed with one of three verbs: **le** 'be, exist'; **fɔ** 'awake'; and **dɔ** 'sleep'. These may be modified with the adverbial **nyuie** 'good, well'. The skeletal forms of such questions are:

- [9a] X le (nyuie) a?
 be:PRES well Q
 'Is X (well)?'
- [9b] X fɔ (nyuie) a?
 awake well Q
 lit: 'Has X woken up (well)?'
- [9c] X dɔ (nyuie) a?
 sleepwell Q
 lit: 'Did X sleep well?'

The realisation of X depends on who the question is about. If the question is about someone other than the addressee the X slot is filled by an appropriate referential nominal. For instance:

[10a] ɖeví á wó fɔ́ a?
 child DEF PL awake Q
 lit: Have the children woken up?
 'Are the children well?'

[10b] kofi le nyuiea?
 K.be:PRES well Q
 'Is Kofi well?'

[10c] srã wò dɔ-´ a?
 spouse 2SG sleepQ
 lit: 'Did your spouse sleep?'
 'Is your spouse well?'

If the question is about the addressee, X is filled by the appropriate pronoun: (n)è for singular and mi(e) for a group of addressees:

[11a] è - le nyuié a?
 2SG be:PRES well Q
 'Are you well?'

[11b] mi- dɔ́ a?
 2PL sleepQ
 lit: 'Did you sleep?'
 'Are you (PL) well?'

The complement of the locative/existential verb 'to be', that is, **le** could be the nominal **agbe** 'life'.⁵ Thus a functionally equivalent question to [11a] above is the following:

[12] è le agbe-a?
 2SG be:PRES life Q
 lit: 'Are you alive?'

This question will be treated as a variant of [11a] above under the general scheme of **X le a?** 'Is X there/existing?' However, one can state the following

⁵ Note that when **agbe** is the complement of the verb **dɔ́** it is used as a good night expression and not in the context of a 'how are you' inquiry (see §15.8.2). In some Gbe varieties, the questions involving the verb **fɔ́** can also occur with a prepositional phrase and the whole question means something like 'Have you risen to life?':

e- fɔ́ ɖé agbe-a?
 2SG wake to life Q
 lit: Have you woken up to life?

I assume that this question is a variant of [9b] and so it will not be discussed any further.

generalization: If there is no complement or modifier to the existential verb *le* 'be' then X can only be filled by a pronominal appropriate to the addressee. It also appears that *X le agbe a?* is also appropriate only when X is the addressee. Apart from these restrictions X can be filled with any nominal that refers to a human who is being asked about.

Each of these questions conveys a specific message which needs to be spelled out. One thing they all have in common is that they tend to be used between equals and people who are familiar with each other. It sounds (a bit) rude if a younger person were to inquire about the well-being of an elder using these questions. This is a case in which the status of the interlocutors may determine the choice of the linguistic form used in the interaction.

The *X le a?* questions are general questions in which the speaker assumes that the addressee can confirm or deny whether or not literally speaking 'X is existing (well)...' In this respect it is not very different from other propositional questions. What makes it different is its context of use. This adds a further component to the general meaning, namely, the interest of the speaker in the well-being of X.

It must be stressed that these questions unlike the English 'How are you?' or 'How do you do?', for example, are genuine questions. Leech (1983:132) quotes Arthur Guilerman approvingly on this point:

Don't tell your friends about your indigestion:
'How are you' is a greeting not a question.

The English questions do not have to be answered faithfully; one is expected to answer them positively. Note for example that the response to 'How do you do?' is 'How do you do!'. These questions are Pollyana questions (cf Leech 1983:147, on the Pollyana Principle, and Wierzbicka 1990 on the meaning of 'How are you' in English).

Some doubts have been expressed about the contention that the Ewe 'how-are-you' questions are genuine ones. One of the critics suggested that this would only be true if these questions could be used by a doctor during a medical consultation. This does not seem to me to be an adequate test because in the context of a medical examination, the medical doctor is seeking information and therefore must pose content questions.

Be that as it may, it seems the fact that the 'how-are-you' questions can be faithfully answered either in a positive or negative way would support the view that they are real questions. For instance, if a parent asked or greeted the child with the following question:

[13a] è le nyuie- a?
 2SG be:PRES well Q
 'Are you well?' i.e. How are you?

The child could respond as follows:

[13b] ao, ta le vé ye- m̄
 no head be:PRES pain 1SG PROG
 'No, I have a headache'

Similarly, if the father of the addressee were sick and the interlocutor asked about the well-being of the father as follows:

[14a] è tó dó a?
 2SG father sleepQ
 'Is your father well?'
 (lit: did your father sleep?)

s/he could respond:

[14b] oo, é φé lā me gblẽ
 no 3SG poss flesh-in spoil
 'No, he is unwell.'

Contrast these responses with the situation in English where such negative responses are unexpected. Although it is possible to respond to 'how are you?' in English with a negative response, this occurs in contexts where the speaker indicates that s/he is aware that the negative response is not what is expected. For instance, although one can say 'Lousy' or 'I feel terrible' etc. in response to 'how are you?' these are usually said in a kind of jocular manner to show that the norm is being violated.

One can conclude from all this that the Ewe questions are not only for courtesy, they are genuine inquiries about the well-being of others. One could speculate about the cultural motivation for such a behaviour. The genuine nature of the questions would appear to be a reflection of the communality that has been noted to be a feature of the Ewe society and of African societies in general (see the quote from Agblemagnon in §14.2.1, see also Dzobo 1975, Dickson 1977, Gyekye 1987 among others).

This is not just based on a myth, as some philosophers would like us to think, about African cultural ideas (see for example Houtondji 1983). There

appears to be a real awareness of the genuine nature of these questions among speakers of languages in which it happens. Thus Van Jaarsveld (1988) reports on an experiment conducted in South Africa to test the perception among Afrikaans students, on the one hand, and black African students, on the other, of responses to 'how-are-you' questions. The students were asked what they would think if someone answered a 'how-are-you' inquiry with 'I have a headache and have no medicine'. The reactions were as set out in the diagram below:

	Afrikaans students	Black African students
looking for sympathy	37/74	8/59
honest:	13/74	51/59

The statistics are quite interesting. For the majority of black African students, these questions and the answers are sincere and should be viewed seriously. The author quotes a Sesotho informant's reaction to the purpose of these questions as follows: 'it gives people the opportunity to indicate their true feelings and circumstances for example, illness, wanting help etc.' (Van Jaarsveld 1988: 100). This represents, to my mind, the folk logic that underlies the faithful answers given to 'how-are-you' questions in various African societies. The cultural logic that controls the Anglo-Saxon use of these questions is different: in this culture disclosure of personal matters runs counter to the respect for people's privacy and autonomy.

Be that as it may, one can state the illocutionary significance of the core propositional 'how-are-you' questions as follows. Note that the main difference between the three typical questions is in the illocutionary dictum:

X le (nyui/e-/agbe-) a? 'Is X (well/alive)?'

I say: X is well/alive

I don't know if this is true

I want to know it

I think you might know

I say this because I want you to say something

that would cause me to know it

I want you to know that I feel something good towards X

X f3 (nyuíe-) a? 'Did X wake up (well)'

I say: X got up well

I don't know if this is true

I want to know it

I think you might know
 I say this because I want you to say something
 that would cause me to know it
 I want you to know that I feel something good towards X

X dó (nyuíe-) a? 'Did X sleep (well)?'

I say: X slept well
 I don't know if this is true
 I want to know it
 I think you might know
 I say this because I want you to say something
 that would cause me to know it
 I want you to know that I feel something good towards X

One should perhaps add another component to the explication for this last expression to account for its social placedness condition along the following lines: I think I can say this about X (to you)

The justification for this component is that there is a constraint on who can use this expression to whom. In general, it is perceived to be rude for a younger person to say this to an older person. It is more felicitous between familiar people. Part of the reason is that the verb *dó* has connotations of 'sleeping with someone' in the idiomatic sense. This becomes evident from the response that people in a joking relationship give to each other when this is addressed to them. Such people can ignore the standard response and pose a rhetorical question. Consider the following exchange:

[15] A: è dó a?
 2SG sleepQ
 'Did you sleep well? i.e. 'How are you?'

B: gbó wò a?
 side 2SG Q
 'With you?'

Notice that B teases A by suggesting that A should not have asked such a question. The implication is that if s/he had slept well s/he would have had to sleep with his/her interlocutor. The participants in this dialogue must belong to opposite sexes and should be in a joking relationship.

Apart from the social placedness component for the X **dá nyuíe-) a?** expression, the rest of the components except the propositional content

component are essentially the same. The last component in the explications accounts for their use in a greeting context. By asking these questions about X (who is either the addressee or someone related to the addressee), the speaker expresses his/her good feelings towards X. It should be recalled that neglecting to greet or to respond to a greeting in Ewe may be perceived as the absence of harmony, between the interactants themselves, or between the people related to them. This suggests that when people greet they at least show that they have good feelings towards the people involved. This is the idea that I have attempted to capture in the last component of the explications.

The rest of the components account for the general function of the expressions as propositional questions. The first components in each explication represents the hypotheses that are put forward by the speaker for confirmation, denial or modification by the addressee. The second, third, fourth and fifth components in each explication relate to the assumptions and purpose of the speaker concerning the question function. Thus the second component captures the idea that the speaker is uncertain about the proposition s/he has advanced. The third component expresses the speaker's desire to be made aware of the status of his/her proposition. The fourth component represents the speaker's belief that the addressee has the necessary knowledge that s/he is interested in. Finally the fifth component spells out the illocutionary purpose, namely, eliciting a response from the addressee concerning the initial hypothesis put forward.

14.2.3.2 'Topic-only' greeting questions

These questions are asked about a place or a group of people with whom the addressee is associated. Typically, these questions are made up of a noun phrase and they end in the question particle *dé*. However, in some contexts, which are discussed below, the particle may be elided (see Ameka (1986:128-136) for an explication of this particle). For example, a common form of greeting used in daily interaction is a question about the well-being of the members of the household of the addressee, and it is posed in one of the following ways:

[16a] *aφé me tó (wó) dé*
 house in POR PL Q
 'How are the people at home?'

[16b] *aφé á me dé*
 house DEF in Q
 'How is the home?'

Note that in [16a] the form *tó* a possessor suffix which marks ownership, group membership or origin (which has also been described as a personalising pronoun by Duthie in press, see Chapter 7 for details) is used to indicate that the question is about the people who belong to the household of the addressee. In [16b], however, the question is explicitly about the house of the addressee and the members of the household are implied in this reference to the house. The plural marker could be left out in [16a] but the interpretation would still be people (plural).

Similarly, when someone is coming back from the farm, s/he could be greeted with either of the following which are parallel to the forms in [16]:

[17a] *agble- tó (wó) dɛ²*
 farm POR PL Q
 ‘How are the people in the farm?’

[17b] *agble- á me dɛ²*
 farm DEF in Q
 ‘How is the farm?’

The interpretation of [17b] does not seem to imply a question about the people on the farm but rather about the place and the things that happen or have happened in there while the interlocutor was there. Alternatively, it could be argued that this question is also about people since it could be about the people whom the interlocutor went to the farm with. This would be consistent with the traditional practice where people went to farm in groups with members of their (extended) family. It seems reasonable to say that questions [16b] and [17b] and similar ones are ambiguous and their interpretation is based on the contextual assumptions that the interlocutor makes.

Someone who has returned home from somewhere such as a farm, school, market or a journey could draw attention to his/her arrival by greeting the people who were at home before s/he arrived with one of the following:

[18a] *megbé tó (wó) dɛ²*
 back POR PL Q
 ‘How are the people who stayed behind?’

[18b] *megbé á dɛ²*
 back DEF Q
 ‘How is back?’

The examples discussed so far involve places and people associated with these places. These questions can occur as the first utterance in a greeting exchange. In this context they may function as conversation openers. They can also occur after some other greeting utterance. In this case they occur in the slot of the 'how-are-you' sequences. Note that when they occur initially they may substitute either for time of day greetings (e.g. [16a] and [16b]), or welcome routines (e.g. [17a] and [17b]) or attention getters (e.g. the forms in [18]). However, questions in which the well being of only people is asked about and no associated place is explicitly mentioned occur only greeting internally, that is after some other greeting expressions. Thus it is odd to start a greeting sequence with the following question:

- [19] ɖɛví á wó ɖɛ̃
 child DEF PL Q
 'How are the children?'

Such a question can occur in the second turn in the greeting exchange as illustrated in the following dialogue:

- [20] A: ɲdí
 morning
 B: ɲdí aɸé á me ɖɛ̃
 morning house DEF in Q
 A: wó dǎ ɖɛví á wó ɖɛ̃ ...
 3PL sleep child DEF PL Q
 A: Good morning
 B: Morning, how is home?
 A: They are fine. And how are the children?

There seems to be a further constraint on the topic only questions involving people: they are not used to ask about the well being of specific individuals. As was mentioned earlier, these questions are never used to enquire about the well-being of the addressee. In addition questions like the following whose topics are single individuals are seldom if ever used in a greeting context:

- [21a] kofí ɖɛ̃
 K. Q
 ? 'How is Kofi?' (Where is Kofi?)

- [21b] srɛ̃ wò ɖɛ̃

spouse 2SG Q
 ? 'How is your husband/wife?' (Where is your spouse?)

[21c] *ḍeví á ḍɛ*
 child DEF Q
 ? 'How is the child?' (Where is the child?)

The motivation for the non-use of such questions in a greeting context may be to avoid ambiguity. The default interpretation of these questions outside a greeting context as indicated is 'Where is X?'. Since there is room for misunderstanding these questions in a greeting context, they are avoided and propositional questions are used instead to ask about specific individuals.

The responses to these questions are varied. They are not responded to with the agreement or disagreement markers for yes and no as is the case for the propositional questions. Their answers are full propositions in themselves. We have already seen one such response in example [20] above. The following are the typical responses to these topic-only questions:

[22a] *wó li*
 3PL be:PRES:3SG
 'They are there.' (as response to [19] for example above)

[22b] *é nyó*
 3SG good
 'It is OK' (as response to [18b] for example above)

[22c] *wó biá wò*
 3PL ask 2SG
 'They ask after you'

(in response especially to questions about people in a place where the interlocutor is arriving from, for example [24a] below. [22d] is used in similar contexts)

[22d] *wó dógbe ná wò*
 3PL say voice to 2SG
 'They greet you'

It should be noted that some of the responses, especially [22c] and [22d], do not make any explicit reference to the well being of the people asked about. Rather they are statements from which one can infer that the people are fine. For instance, if the people in the place that the interlocutor was coming from were

not fine they could not have asked after the addressee. This is the reason why in the explication below there is only a vague reference to the well being of the topic. These questions perhaps seek to know something about the topic and it need not be his/her well-being. This latter interpretation of the questions is imposed by the greeting context in which they are used.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication for topic only greeting questions, that is X *dé* questions where X is an NP headed by a human nominal or a locative nominal:

I am thinking about X
 I want you to know I feel something good towards X
 I don't know some things about X
 I think you might know some things about X (because you
 have been in the same place as X)
 I say: I want to know something about X
 I say it because I want to cause you to say something that
 would cause me to know it

The second component in the above formula is meant to capture the contextual use of these questions in greetings. Apart from this, the rest of the explication accounts for the interrogative function as indicated by the question particle at the end of the phrases.

It has been indicated earlier on that it is possible to elide the particle *dé* in some of these questions under certain conditions. I will now state and exemplify the generalisation and propose a discourse placedness condition which might account for the interpretation of the elliptical questions in the greeting context. When the question is about people, it is possible to elide the question particle. This happens especially when different groups of people are asked about during the greeting exchange. However, when the topic of the question makes explicit reference only to a place, *dé* particle elipsis is not possible. Compare the obligatoriness or otherwise of the particle in the following pairs of questions:

[23a] *dó* *me- tó (wó) (dɛʔ)*
 work in POR PL Q
 How are the people at work?

[23b] *dó* *á me *(dɛʔ)?*
 work DEF in Q
 'How is work?'

[24a] *tso- ɸé tó (wó) (dɛʔ)?*

origin placePOR PL Q

‘How are the people at the place where you have come from?’

[24b] tso- ϕ é á *($\text{d}\acute{\text{e}}$)?

origin placeDEF Q

How is the place where you have come from?

Note that in [23b] and [24b] the utterances are unacceptable if the question particle is omitted. These questions are explicitly about places. The question particle is optional in [23a] and [24a]. These questions are about people. These examples confirm the generalisation stated above. As a final illustration, consider the following extract in which the questions do not have particles:

[25] T.: mia- ϕ é megbé tó wó

2PL poss back POR PL

R: wó d́ mia- ϕ é núgbé tó wó

3PL slept 2PL poss journey POR PL

T: wó li.

3PL be:PRES:3SG

T.:How are the people who stayed behind?

R: They are fine (lit: they have slept); how about the people on your journey?

T: They are fine. (Nyaku in press :3)

It can be suggested that the interpretation of these particle-less questions involves a process of discourse-based inference. The discourse placedness conditions of such questions may be stated roughly as follows:

In this context I think you will know that I want to know something about the well being of people X

The ellipsis is controlled by the greeting context in which it occurs, apart from the constraint that it happens only with respect to people.

In this section the illocutionary significance of various greeting formulae and ‘how-are-you’ questions have been discussed. The emphasis has been on the interactional meanings that are encoded in various sets of formulae that serve the same communicative function. If these expressions are properly placed in the speech event frame discussed in Chapter 12, then one can get a fair picture of the interactional style of the Ewes with respect to greetings at least.

14.3 Interactional formulae between a visitor and someone eating

It has already been noted that the Ewes have specialised expressions for almost every aspect of social life (see the quote from Agblemagnon in §14.2.1). In this section, the formulae used to greet someone who is found eating and those that the one eating may use to invite his/her interlocutors are examined.

14.3.1 Salutation to a diner

When one notices another having a meal, one should acknowledge this fact. The usual form of salutation in such a situation is:

[26] *así* *le* *agba-me loo!*
 handbe:PRES bowlin ADD
 ‘Hand in bowl!’

The response turn to this salutation is in two parts: first, an acceptance of the salutation by saying *yoo* ‘OK’; and second, an invitation to the interlocutor to join in the meal. The conventional expressions used to effect this invitation are discussed below.

One could speculate that part of the motivation for this special form of greeting during meals is due to the constraint or traditional prohibition on talking during meals in Ewe society. As the proverb says:

[27] *koklómé* *nɔ-* *a* *nú* *ka-* *ń*
 hen NEG be:PRES HAB thing scatter PROG
 ɖe- *a* *gbe* *o*
 issue HAB voice NEG
 ‘A hen does not crow when it is feeding.’

My guess is that because of this constraint, the normal greeting ritual (in its length) would have been suspended, and in its place a short exchange of expressions appropriate to the context was developed. Indeed, a visitor who meets someone having a meal would have to wait after the initial salutation until the meal is over before any further transaction can take place.

On the other hand, the convention of saluting someone having a meal is consistent with the routine of acknowledging people who are in the middle of doing something (cf. §14.5). Indeed, instead of *así le agba me loo!* one could use *ayikoo!*, for example.

Essentially, the expression **así le agba me loo!** is uttered to indicate that the speaker notices that his/her addressee is busy eating. And because of this, there might be some restriction on the kind of communication they can have. The expression used for this provides a hint to a cultural practice associated with eating in Ewe, namely, that people traditionally eat with their hands. This speech formula thus indirectly encodes some information about cultural practice of the speakers of the language. The content of the formula now appears to be transparent once we link eating with the hands with the expression 'hand in bowl'.

The pragmatic meaning of this expression could be explicated as follows:

- (a) I want to say something to you
because we have come to be in the same place
- (b) I can see you are doing something
- (c) I want to say the kind of thing one should say to another
when they see them doing this kind of thing
- (d) I say: I know you are eating
- (e) I say it because I want you to know I am here
- (f) I think you would want to say something to me because of it

Component (a) captures the fact that this speech formula is used as a conversation or communication opener. It cannot be used for example by the visitor in response to an initial invitation by the one who is eating. Component (c) indicates that the speaker recognises or is aware that the addressee is doing something which calls for the use of a conventional expression. Component (c) spells out the social convention embodied in the speech formula. The illocutionary dictum is a paraphrase of the non-literal meaning of the expression as shown in component (d). The illocutionary purpose of this speech formula (represented in component (e) in the explication) is just to notify the presence of the interlocutor in the same place. It serves in some way to draw the attention of the diner to the presence of the visitor. Some evidence for the fact that this is the illocutionary purpose of the utterance is partly provided by the response that it evokes in the addressee. The response is **yoo** 'OK' which simply means 'I accept it', roughly speaking (see §16.4.2 for a more precise explication).

The one who is eating continues the turn with another speech act, that of inviting the initiator of the exchange to join in the meal. It may be added here that depending on the relationship between the interlocutors, the invitation can be accepted and the 'visitor' shares in the meal.

The invitation may be effected through one of the following:

[28a] è tu - m nyuiéló
2SG meet1SG well ADD
'You have met me well!'

[28b] vá miá gbó!
come 1PL side
'Come and join us.'

[28c] va míḍu nú á
come 1PL eat thing DEF
'Come and let's eat the meal.'

The conventional response to each of these is **yoo**, however, if the invitation is not accepted then one adds another word to urge the interlocutor to continue the meal. The rejection response is the following:

[29] yoo, né tsɔ
 OK 3SG:IMP hurry
 OK, go ahead!

Each of these expressions will be discussed in turn.

14.3.2 Invitations

14.3.2.1 è-tu-m nyuie ló

è tu-m nyuie ló! is the form which is tied to the specific context of being used as an invitation after an interlocutor had initiated the verbal interaction. Incidentally, in this and other formulae for inviting people to join in a meal, the addressees could be plural. In this case the 2SG pronoun **è** as in the above formula becomes **mì** 2PL. Similarly the 2SG imperative form, for example, **và mí-ɖu nú** ‘come (2SG) and let’s eat’ becomes a 2PL imperative: **mì-vá mí-ɖu nu** ‘you (PL) come and let’s eat.’ In the course of this discussion, the singular forms will continue to be used but the essential arguments apply to the plural forms as well.

The literal meaning of **è-tu-m nyuie ló!**, which is ‘you have met me well’, is instructive for an understanding of its illocutionary force. It suggests that the speaker expresses the view that it is a good thing for the addressee to have come to be in this place at this very moment. In addition, this speech formula is an indirect speech act: it has a declarative syntax but has the force of an imperative utterance.

The following explication is proposed to account for the illocutionary meaning of **è-tu m nyuie ló!**

- (a) I think you know I am doing something good
- (b) I think it will be good if you do this thing with me
- (c) I want to say something to you because of that
- (d) I want to say the kind of thing one should say to another
 when they want them to do things of this kind
- (e) I say: you have come here at a good time
- (f) I say it because I want to cause you to do this good thing
 with me if you want to
- (g) I think you will say something to me because of it

Component (a) indicates that the addressee is aware that what the speaker is doing is something that people would think of as good. Thus ‘eating’ is a good thing. It is expressed in general terms because the same expression can be used

to invite someone to join in social drinking with the speaker which is also a pleasurable thing. Component (b) signals that the expression is partly an invitation and components (c) and (d) account for its conventional and routine nature. Component (e) spells out the propositional content of the expression. It is more or less a paraphrase of the literal meaning of the formula. The illocutionary purpose is represented in component (f). It is an invitation and the addressee has an option to accept or decline, hence the phrase ‘if you want to’ in this component of the explication. The last component shows that the speaker expects a response from the addressee. The addressive particle *ló* ‘I advise you’ at the end of the utterance provides a clue to both the open invitation and the response-eliciting aspects of the expression which are captured in the last two components.

14.3.2.2 *è kle afɔ nyuíé*

Another expression used in the context of inviting someone, who finds the speaker eating or drinking, to join in is:

- [30] *è - kle afɔ nyuíé*
 2SG strike foot well
 ‘You have stumbled properly’

This expression is similar to *è tu-m nyuíé* in embodying the idea that something good is happening at the time that the addressee has arrived. There is a belief among the Ewes that one can stumble in a good or a bad way. One can hit a good foot or a bad foot against a stone. If one stumbles in the right way, it is believed that it is a sign of good things to come, either in the place where one is or in the place where one is going to. To stumble in the bad way is a bad omen. Against this background one can appreciate the significance of the speech formula *è kle afɔ nyuíé* used in the context of someone meeting someone during a meal. In fact, the visitor can also affirm that he has stumbled well when he meets people eating as a kind of salutation. Thus a visitor can just say the following as the first utterance:

- [31] *me kle afɔ nyuíé*
 1SG strike foot well
 ‘I have stumbled properly’

Similarly, the person who meets someone having a meal can make use of a question form of the same expression to salute the one who is eating. Thus one could say:

- [32] me- kle afɔ nyuié a?
 1SG strike foot well Q
 ‘Did I stumble properly (on the way)?’

The implication is that the speaker wants to know if s/he has come at a good time and if good fortune is awaiting him/her. This tends to be jocular and is also used among relatives, friends and colleagues who are close.

To return to the expression **è kle afɔ nyuié** as an invitation to a visitor who meets someone eating or drinking, it can be said that one of the essential elements of the construction is that the addressee has the good fortune of meeting the speaker while s/he is doing something good. Furthermore, the literal meaning suggests that the speaker thinks the addressee has come in a good manner. Like the other expressions discussed in this section, this form has the effect of inviting the addressee to join in a meal or whatever the speaker is engaged in.

The illocutionary meaning of the formula **è kle afɔ nyuié** may be explicated as follows:

- (a) I can see you are in the same place as me
- (b) I think you have come here at a good time
 because of what I am doing
- (c) I want to say the kind of thing that one should say to another
 when this happens
- (d) I say: you have come at a good time
- (e) I say it because:
 - I want you to know it
 - I want you to do this good thing with me
- (f) I think you will say something to me because of this

Component (a) is included in the explication to capture the fact that this expression may be the first linguistic interaction between the interlocutors. That is to say, the addressee need not have acknowledged the fact that the speaker was engaged in a meal at the time of his/her arrival. The propositional content, component (d), is just a paraphrase of what is considered to be the literal meaning of the construction. Component (e), the illocutionary purpose, has two parts. First, the speaker is informing the addressee that s/he has come in a good way and at a good time; and second, the speaker invites the addressee to join in what is being done. Finally there is a component that signals that the expression elicits a response from the addressee.

14.3.2.3 *vá miá gbó*

The other two expressions which are used to invite people to join in a meal when they come to meet someone who is engaged in a meal are quite direct in the match between their form and their force. *vá miá gbó* 'come to our side' is less transparent than *vá mí òu nú* 'come and let's eat'.

vá miá gbó is used in response to an acknowledgement of someone who is eating. The essential message is that the speaker expresses the desire for the addressee to come near and partake in what s/he is doing. It should be noted that *miá* in this speech formula is the 1PL form, but the form can be used without any change even if there is only one person eating. In fact, the first person singular form *nye* is out of place here: ?? *vá gbó-nye* 'come to my side'. The plural form is maintained in such contexts perhaps for reasons of politeness. The usage is however consistent with the use of plural form of pronouns for singular referents in co-ordinate structures (see Part I).

Be that as it may, the message of *vá miá gbó* may be explicated as follows:

I think you know I am doing something (i.e. eating)
 I think it will be good if you do it with me
 I want to say something to you because of that
 I want to say the kind of thing one should say to another
 when they want them to do something of this kind
 I say: I want you to come here
 I want you to do this thing I am doing with me
 I say it because I want to cause you to do it if you want to
 I think you will say something to me because of this

The illocutionary dictum is expressed the way it is because of the imperative structure of the utterance. Similarly the purpose of the expression is to make the addressee take up the invitation. The other components attempt to capture the conventions and contextual features associated with the speech formula. For instance, the first component just reiterates the fact that the addressee is aware of what the speaker is doing at the time. The last component represents the fact that the speaker expects some verbal response from the addressee.

14.3.2.3 và mí ðu nú

As stated earlier, **va mí ðu nú** has a more transparent meaning than **va mía gbó** which is specific to an eating context. As hinted at in the discussion of the other forms, they could also be used to invite people to join in drinking. However **va mí ðu nú** cannot be used for such a purpose. Furthermore, it can be used not only in response to a greeting during a meal, but also to invite people at the start of a meal. Thus when the table is laid, a host could use this speech formula to invite guests to go to the table and eat. In addition, this formula has an explicit reference to eating. Like the other expressions, it has a response (see below) either of acceptance or rejection.

With these considerations in mind, one could explicate the pragmatic significance of this expression as:

I say: I want you to come and eat
 I think it would be good if you do it
 I say it because I want to cause you to do it
 I think you will say something to me because of this.

It should be noted that the major difference between this explication and the previous ones is that there is no reference to the fact that the addressee has found the speaker during a meal. This is to account for the possibility of using the speech formula to invite people at the start of a meal. There is also an explicit mention in the explication of 'eating', while in the previous ones there was only an indirect reference to eating. This is consistent with the literal propositional content of the form being explicated here.

14.3.2.4 Response to the invitations

As indicated earlier, each of the inviting formulae is responded to by **yoo**, 'I accept it', if the invitation is accepted by the addressee. If it is rejected however, the response has an added phrase: **yoo, nétso** 'OK, let it be fast'. Essentially, with this response the speaker conveys the message that s/he does not want to eat with the interlocutor. In addition, the speaker seems to be urging the addressee to continue to eat without further delay. He does this by talking to him/her, or by waiting for him/her to join in, or even by making arrangements for him/her to participate in it.

Of course, there is an implied appreciation on the part of the speaker for the invitation. It is, however, not an expression of gratitude. This feature is captured in the explication below by the component of 'good feelings' (component b). More rigorously then, the message of the rejection response can be paraphrased as follows:

yoo, nétsɔ ‘OK, let it be quick’

- (a) I know you want me to do something with you
- (b) I feel something good towards you because of that
- (c) I want you to know this: I don’t want to do it
not because I feel something bad towards you
- (d) I want to say something to you because of that
- (e) I say: I want more of what you are doing to happen quickly
- (f) I say it because I want to cause you to be able to do it.

The presence of the permissive imperative **né** ‘let X happen’ in the response provides a clue to the way some of the components are phrased. For example, the use of ‘I want you to...’ in the dictum captures the imperative nature of the expression. And the way the illocutionary purpose is expressed reflects the view that the speaker allows the addressee to continue eating and not take any notice of him/her.

14.3.3 Concluding remark

Two comments may be made here by way of concluding this section. First, it must be stressed that as in any standardised situation, new phrases can be produced in this situation to meet the communicative needs of a speaker instead of using these speech formulae. Second, it should be noted that there is a speech act verbal expression in the language to describe ‘invitation to a meal’ in this and similar contexts. The expression is **da ga ná ame**, which perhaps literally means ‘throw jaw to a person’. That is, to say something to someone to asking them to join you in eating. This is evidence perhaps of the salience in the language of the routine strategies that have been discussed in this section.

14.4 Expressions for welcoming people

In this section the routines that are used to welcome people who have either travelled somewhere and returned, or who are just coming back home from their place of work are described. The routines are **a..túù dzáá** **PRO 2 -é zɔ** ‘YOU walked’⁶, **PRO 2 -é de** ‘YOU have been and back’, and **ɔɔ aɔé** ‘reach home’. It will become evident that **atúù** is different from the rest because it is an interjection, while the rest are formulaic words and expressions. However, **atúù** is described here because it is functionally equivalent to these other expressions. These expressions may be used to initiate contact or they may

⁶ I have adopted capital PRO 2 to stand for both singular and plural second person pronouns to avoid repeating those forms.

follow an attention seeking and attention ‘receipt’ turn depending on the location of the encounter between the arriving person and the welcomer. Generally they may be used to initiate contact when the interlocutors are just passing by each other or when the welcomer is the first to offer the salutation. The welcoming expressions may be used following other turns when the encounter takes place at the regular abode of one of the interlocutors.

14.4.1 atúù!

As stated earlier, **atúù!** is an expression used to welcome people. It is used not only in Ewe but also in other languages of southern Ghana such as Ga-Dangme and Akan. It may be glossed as ‘I embrace you’ because it is said by both the welcomer and the arriving person, that is the one who is being welcomed as they embrace each other. Typically one of the interlocutors initiates the encounter by stretching out his/her arms and uttering the first vowel [a] in a long drawn out manner until the two people come together and hug each other, and they both finish off with the rest of the expression [-túù]. This action is usually followed by another welcoming expression addressed to the one who is arriving from some place. This implies that **atúù** by itself is not complete as a welcoming act. Consider the following extract from a children’s play:

- [33] Av.: agoo! agoo!
 ‘knock’ ‘knock’
 G. : Al., ame aɖé le agoo dó mí
 Al. person INDEF be:PRES ‘knock’ say PROG
 yi na- kpɔ- e ɖá bé ameka- é máhã
 go 2SG:IRR see 3SG VS COMP who aFOC Q
 Al.: ... Av. a...tuu!
 Av. EMBRACE
 wò é zɔ! wò é zɔ! wò é zɔ!
 2SG aFOC walk2SG aFOC walk2SG aFOC walk
 Av. Knock, knock (lit)
 G. : Al. Someone is knocking (is saying ‘knock’), go and
 investigate and see who it is
 Al.: Av. a...tuu! Welcome! Welcome! Welcome!

(Nunyamɔ p. 13)

The context of this extract is this: Av. came from another village to visit Al. and G. He first calls attention to himself with the repeated use of the word agoo! outside their house (see §14.6 for a description of this item). G. draws Al.’s attention to this and asks him to go and investigate. Al. comes out of the house and finds G. there and first embraces him and then adds other expressions of

welcome. It should be noted that the initial [a] of **atúù** is drawn out indicated in writing by a series of dots. It should be pointed out also that the [u] vowel is lengthened (indicated by an additional 'u' in the writing in the extract). The lengthening of the vowels signals, I suggest, an emotive aspect of this expression. In this particular example this is reinforced by the repetition of the subsequent welcoming formula.

It can be said that **atúù** is used as an acknowledgement of the fact that the interlocutors who had not been in the same location previously are now in contact with each other. Through the mutual embrace and the simultaneous uttering of **a...túùu**, both interlocutors express their pleasure to be in contact once more. This expression can be used by a child welcoming his/her parent home when the parent is coming back from the day's work, for example from the farm or the market. And it can also be used by parents to children when they are coming back from school for instance. Thus there is no constraint on the status of the one who initiates this activity. Between adults, however, it tends to be used for an arriving person who has been away for a fairly long time. It is therefore unlikely that a husband and a wife would exchange **atúù** when they return home after the day's work (in separate places). But they would if one of them had been away for a few days on a trip and comes back home. It seems therefore that when **atúù** is used it can be assumed or it could be said that it feels like the participants have not been in contact for a long time. But the interpretation of 'long time' would appear to be different for children and for adults.

With these considerations in mind, the following explication is proposed for the meaning of this interjection:

atúù

I know this: you and I are now in the same place
 Before this time, you and I were not in the same place
 I feel something good because we are now in the same place
 I think you feel the same
 I think we have not been in the same place for a long time
 I want us to put our arms around each other because of this
 I think you want us to do the same
 We do this [embrace] at the same time as this: [túù]
 because we want to show how we feel

There are a number of features of this formula which are significant. One of them is the use of 'you and I' and 'we' in many places in the formula. This is meant to capture the simultaneous performance of the act. This indicates that this communicative act is a co-operative one. Observe that there is no separate

response turn, but the summons and the response, so to speak, are embodied in one move.

Another feature of the formula worthy of note is that it does not have any reference to saying. The linguistic evidence for this is that **atúù** cannot be reported with the verb **dó** 'say' as other expressions which have a saying component can. To report the action of **atúù** one has to use the verb **wɔ** 'do'. Thus one cannot ***dó atúù** 'say atuu' but one has to **wɔ atúù** 'do atuu'. (Note that in the above extract G. reports the attention calling signal **agoo** of Av. with **dó** 'say' (see G.'s first line in example [33] above).) From this one can only infer that **atúù** is construed as an acting out and not a saying. The activity consists of a vocal gesture accompanied by a physical gesture, but it is not viewed as a speech act.

It should also be noted that there is no sense in which one can talk of an addressee. One can talk of the target of the initiator's action or the intended interpreter of the communicative act but not an addressee. Thus in example [33] above, one can think of Av. as the target of the **atúù** activity initiated by Al. Indeed that encounter could be reported as follows:

- [34] Al. wɔ atúù ná Av.
 Al. do embrace to Av.
 (literally: Al. did atuu to Av.)
 'Al. embraced or hugged Av. (to welcome him).'

Note that the target of the action is coded as a dative prepositional object. Some support for the contention that there is no addressee for the activity comes from the fact that **atúù** cannot occur in the frame: " ná wò" that is, ' to you' where the blank is filled by a linguistic expression which can stand on its own as an utterance and be addressed to someone else. The addressee is expressed as the object of the dative preposition. Thus one can have an addressee phrase with the form **agoo** in the first line of the extract from the play above as occurs in the following example:

- [35] agoo ná wò
 to 2SG
 'Agoo to you!' (Dogoe 1964:44)

However, **atúù** cannot occur with such a phrase. Thus the following is unacceptable:

- [36] * atúù ná wò
 to 2SG

We shall see in the next sub-section that an expression **dzáà** which is functionally equivalent to **atúù** can occur with such an addressee phrase. This test provides justification for the claim that **atúù** is an interjection while **dzáà** is a formulaic word. Nevertheless, there is a ‘you’ in the explication of **atúù**. It represents the person together with whom the initiator of **atúù** acts out the rest of the gesture, the target of the initial action.

It is instructive to note that the form **atúù** can also be used adverbially to mean ‘with open arms, cordially, kindly’ (Westermann 1973). For instance,

- [37] é xɔ- awu lá atúù
 3SG get dress DEF cordially
 ‘S/he received the dress gladly.’

This perhaps lends some support to the intuition captured in the explication that the initiator of the **atúù** activity has some good feelings towards the target and they both share in the pleasure of being in the same place again after a period of separation. That is to say that the encounter is a cordial one.

It is very interesting that the polysemy of **atúù** in Ewe described so far is also present in the other languages of southern Ghana where this form is used. For example, Kropp Dakubu (1973) has the following entry for **atúù** in Ga, another Kwa language spoken to the immediate west of Ewe:

1. interjection: exclamation of welcome
2. adverb: gladly

It is hard to tell what the origin and path of diffusion of the form is within the linguistic area where it occurs. An investigation of the socio-historical spread of this and other items such as **agoo** that are used widely across language boundaries in southern Ghana might shed some light on the cultural history of the linguistic groups in this area.

14.4.2 **dzáà!**

dzáà! is another expression which may be exclaimed, usually repeatedly (at least twice or thrice), to signal the welcoming of someone. This expression is different from **atúù** in a number of respects. The principal difference is that **atúù** is an interjection while **dzáà** is a formulaic word. I claim that this difference accounts for the difference in semantic structure between the two forms. Other differences tend to support this main contrast. Thus unlike **atúù** **dzáà** does not require a physical gesture, although it may be accompanied or

followed by a hand shake. In addition, unlike **atúù** there is a distinct response turn for **dzáà**

The **dzáà** formula is a kind of general purpose welcoming salutation. It shows the pleasure of the speaker to have noticed the arrival or presence of the addressee. It is an enthusiastic acknowledgement from the speaker that the addressee is in the place where s/he is. In some cases, the speaker proffers this either because s/he is the first to notice the addressee or perhaps because s/he arrived at the place before the addressee. For instance, when two people from different villages are visiting a festival ground in a different locality meet, one can salute the other with **dzáà!** The repetition of the form in the performance of the act is symptomatic, I suggest, of the good feelings that the speaker has towards the addressee.

One of the contexts in which this form is used is at public performances. Consider the opening words of a song that drama troupes typically sing as a curtain raiser to welcome their audiences:

[38] dzáà dzáà mié le dzáà dó mí ná mi
welcome welcome 1PL be:PRES welcome say PROG to 2PL

dzáà dzáà nú kpó la-´ wó ...
welcome welcome thing see NER PL

'Welcome! Welcome! We bid you welcome!

Welcome! Welcome! the audience/spectators ...'

Note that the form is repeated in both instances in the example. It should also be noted that the delocutive form of the expression used makes use of the verb **dó** 'say' in the first line.

dzáà is normally used in conjunction with another welcoming expression, typically **wò é zɔ** literally: 'you have travelled/walked'(see §14.4.3 below). It could precede or follow **wò é zɔ** as is evident from the examples below:

[39] A: dadaví dzáà dzáà wò é zɔ
madam, welcome welcome 2SG aFOC walk
Madam, Welcome! Welcome! You have travelled.
(Setsoafia 1982:100)

[40] Y.: mia-wó é zɔ, dzáà dzáà
2PL PL aFOC walk welcome welcome
You have travelled, Welcome! Welcome!
(Setsoafia 1982:100)

The inference to be drawn from this collocation of the form **dzáà** with **wò é zɔ** is that it is used to welcome someone who is construed as a ‘visitor’ or who has travelled to some other place rather than just for someone who is returning home after the day’s work, for example.

It has already been stated that there is a response turn to the **dzáà** formula. The addressee typically responds with **dzáà**. An addressive particle such as **goo** ‘I revere you’ may be added to this response. Thus the following constitutes a typical adjacency pair (cf. Westermann 1930:114):

- [41] S.: dzáà dzáà dzáà
 welcome welcome welcome
 A.: dzáà goo
 welcome ADD
 S.: ‘Welcome! Welcome! Welcome!’
 A.: ‘Thank you.’

Sometimes when **dzáà** is used with **wò é zɔ**, it may be answered with **yoo** ‘OK’ which is just a signal of acceptance of what has been said. For example, the response to [39] above was **yoo**.

On the basis of these features of the use of **dzáà!**, I propose the following explication to account for its use as a salutation:

dzáà
 I know this: you and I are now in the same place
 I know you have come from some other place
 I want to say something to you because of that
 I say: I feel something very good because you are here
 I say it because I want to show how I feel
 I think you feel the same
 I think you will say something of the same kind to me
 if you feel the same

The response of **dzáà!** conveys the message that the addressee is also pleased to be where s/he is. It is a return of the same kind of good wishes proffered by the speaker. This response may be paraphrased as follows:

dzáà (as response)
 I know you have said something very good to me
 because I am in this place
 I feel something good towards you because of that

I want to say the same kind of thing to you

I say: I feel something good because you and I are in the same place

I say it because I want you to know I feel the same as you

14.4.3 X - é zɔ

Depending on the number of addressees involved, X in this formula may be filled by either wò 'you (sg)' or miawó 'you (pl)' yielding the following variants of what may be considered to be one routine expression:

[42a] wò é zɔ
 2SG aFOC walk
 'You have travelled/walked'

[42b] mia-wó é zɔ
 2PL PL aFOC walk
 'You have travelled/walked'

In the discussion, I will just refer to the formula/expression, without paying much attention to the variants.

One should note the literal meaning of the formula. It suggests that the addressee has made a movement from one place to the present one. Although the literal meaning also suggests that the formula would have originated with respect to someone who has moved somewhere on foot, today it is a general expression used to salute anyone on his/her arrival from some place irrespective of the means of transport. Reference has already been made to the cultural historical fact that in the days before motor vehicles, the main means of vehicular movement within Ewe country was by foot (see Chapter 12 on ethnography). It is thus not surprising that the language has a formula for welcoming people which involves the verb zɔ 'to walk'. There is some evidence that speakers of Ewe are conscious of the literal meaning of the formula and of the association between travel and walking. A jocular response is sometimes used among friends to say that they have not walked but they came by car. The following may be an exchange between friends:

[43] A: wò é zɔ
 2SG aFOC walk
 'You have walked' i.e. Welcome!

B: nye mé zɔ o, vu me dɔ
 1SG NEG walk NEG car 1SG enter

‘I did not walk, by car I came’

Typically, the expression **wò é zò** tends to be used to welcome someone who has travelled from a far away place. However, it may also be addressed to a neighbour who has come to visit their next door neighbour without it sounding humorous. It may not be used for someone who is coming back to their home at the end of their normal day’s work. For instance, it would be odd to say **wò é zò** to a farmer or a teacher who is coming back from his/her work. The appropriate expression for such a situation is described in the next section (§14.4.4).

Thus while distance does not seem to be a crucial factor in determining the appropriateness of the expression, the circumstance of the arrival seems to be important. The expression seems to signal an acknowledgement that the addressee has arrived in the place which has not been his/her place of abode for some time. It has already been noted that this form can be used in conjunction with **atúù** and **dzáà** but it can also be used by itself as well.

Unlike **atúù** and **dzáà** the expression **wò é zò** is not emotive. That is to say it can be proffered in a disinterested way. In this respect it is like any other greeting. For this reason, there is no component of good feelings on the part of the speaker in the explication below. The form just seems to imply a willingness on the part of the speaker to interact (and it can be exchanged between complete strangers).

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication to account for the uses of the formula **X -é zò**:

I know you are now in the same place as me
 I want you to feel something good when you are here
 I want to say something to you because of that
 I say: I know you have come from somewhere to this place
 I say this because I want to cause you to feel something good
 when you are here

The response to this formula (when used by itself) is **yoo** ‘OK’. This reply is just an indication of acceptance of the salutation. This is usually followed by further enquiring questions. The meaning of this form is the same as when it is used in response to other formulae. It does have an added component of the speaker expressing the desire to say something more when used in this context.

It should be pointed out that there are syntactic variants of this formula which relate to temporal and aspectual differences. Instead of the aorist form which we have been citing throughout the discussion, one could use the present progressive form:

- [44] wò é le zɔ- zɔ- ḿ
 2SG aFOC be:PRES walk RED PROG
 ‘YOU are walking/travelling’ (i.e. ‘YOU are landing’)

Recall that the present progressive is used in Ewe to express actions that are concurrent with the moment of speech. It appears that the form with the progressive is used to create a vivid effect. Apart from this, there does not seem to be any difference between the aorist and the progressive in the message of welcome conveyed when either of them is used.

14.4.4 X - é de

This expression, like the one discussed in the previous section, also has a variable slot which may be filled by a 2SG pronoun or a 2PL pronoun:

- [45a] wò é de
 2SG aFOC been to
 ‘You have been somewhere and back’

- [45b] mia- wó é de
 2PL PL aFOC been to
 ‘You (pl) have been somewhere and back’

The meaning of the verb **de** in this formula has considerable bearing on how the expression is used. The verb is an interesting one. It may be described as a bidirectional resultative verb which expresses the meaning ‘to have been to a place and returned’. The formula thus implies that the addressee went to some other place and has returned. It also implies that the person was not away for too long a time, nor does the person have to have been to a far away place. For instance, when the present writer went to Ghana on fieldwork from Australia, he was greeted with the forms **atúù dzáà** and **wò é zɔ**, but not **wò é de**.

The expression **wò é de** is used mainly to salute someone who has come back home after having gone somewhere else on some mission usually to perform some customary activity. Thus someone coming back home from the farm, the market, school or a carpenter’s workshop etc. in the neighbourhood after some period of work can be greeted with this formula.

One implication of the formula is that the addressee had gone elsewhere to engage in some purposeful activity. It is odd to greet someone who went out to visit a relative in the village for a short time on their return with **wò é de**. However, if the same person went to the neighbour’s place to take part in

some activity such as an arbitration or a funeral or a meeting etc., it is felicitous to salute them with **wò é de** on their return home. It is also felicitous to say **wò é de** to someone coming back from the river side.

It is also instructive that a person coming back from any of these places may be greeted with an enquiry question of the form: **X - tó wó dè** 'How are the people at X' (see §14.2.3.2) where X may be filled by **dóme** 'work' **suku** 'school' **agble** 'farm' etc. The fact that these expressions may be used instead of **wò é de** suggests an indirect association between this formula and place of work.

Essentially, it can be said that the formula is used to signal that the addressee has come back home from somewhere (not far away) and s/he had gone there to do something s/he wanted to do. Like **wò é zo**, **wò é de** is not as emotion-loaded as **atúù** or **dzáà**

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication:

X -é de (where X = addressee(s))

I think you have come from a place not far away

I think you went there because you wanted to do something

I know you are now in this place

I want to say something to you because of that

I say: you have been to some place (not far from here)

I say it because: I want you to know what I think

I want to cause you to feel something good

The response is **yoo** followed by the addressee continuing the interaction. It has the same message as when it is used in response to **wò é zo** as explained in the previous section (and see §16.4.2 for a full explication of this response signal)..

14.4.5 *ɔ́ aɸé*

This expression literally means ‘to reach home’. The use of this formula as a ‘salutation to one arriving’ (Westermann 1973) seems to be losing ground to other more specialised usages which do not have to do with someone literally arriving. Westermann (*ibid*) provides a hint to one of these when he observes that the expression is ‘also used in beginning a speech’. I will examine this usage from a different perspective and suggest that it is consistent with the original function of welcoming people. In particular, I would argue that the formula is exploited for discourse organisational purposes, but this function is consistent with the primary function of the form as an expression of welcome.

In fast speech, the form *ɔ́ aɸé* is pronounced [ɔ́aɸé] or [ɔ́aɸe]. For either pronunciation, the vowel of the verb *ɔ́* is elided. For the second pronunciation, there is a further change of the place of articulation of the consonant of the verb. This is perhaps just a process of simplification.

The link between the use of the expression to welcome an arriving person and its literal meaning is quite transparent. Someone who travelled away from home arrives at a human dwelling and s/he is greeted with the obvious message: you have now arrived at home. This need not be the traveller’s home. It is to indicate to the addressee that this is home, make yourself comfortable. It thus has overtones of the English expression ‘Feel at home’.

Perhaps the original use of this expression should be put in the context of the socio-economic environment of the Ewes in earlier times. In the pre-technological era, people used to walk long distances, for trading purposes, for example, carrying different sizes of baggage. People relied on the hospitality of villagers along these routes for rest and stop-over services. At such places of rest these travellers could be greeted with *ɔ́ aɸé*. One of the implications of this form in this context is that the traveller is in friendly country and should not worry.

Indeed, there is a proverb whose content is instructive in this respect. The proverb is this (cf. Dzobo 1973):

[46] *mó zɔ- lá é se- a ɔ́- aɸé*
 road walk NER aFOC hear HAB arrive home
 ‘A traveller who is greeted with *ɔ́ aɸé*’
 (lit.: ‘The traveller hears *ɔ́ aɸé*’)

This usage is now archaic. The essential thing about it is that it is a wish or an invitation to the addressee to make him/her self comfortable and feel at home.

The current usages of *ɔ́ aɸé* which, I would argue, are systematically linked to the archaic one are all related to signalling the end of a speech event. In one

usage, it is addressed to the person who has offered the traditional prayer after he has signalled that the prayer is finished (with the implication that it has been received by God and the ancestors). Typically the signal for the end of the prayer is that the person would take a bit of the drink that has been used for the prayer and spurt it out three times after which the other participants say: **ḍo aḥé**, to which the one who made the prayer replies: **yagoo!**

The rationale of this usage with respect to the meaning of reaching home is this: when one is praying, it is assumed that he has made a journey metaphorically speaking to the world of the spirits and ancestors because he invokes these entities or beings during the prayer. Hence at the end he has to be welcomed back to the world of the living which is viewed as home. In fact, on some occasions prayers have to be offered outside the house or the room or compound in a place separate from where the other people are. In this case, the use of **ḍo aḥé** is addressed to the prayer-giver when he returns to resume his seat. Thus in a limited sense, it has its original and literal meaning in this context.

Similar to the use of **ḍo aḥé** at the end of a prayer is its use to indicate the end of a turn in a conversational interaction. Thus a current speaker may end his/her speech (and turn) and signal that s/he is giving up the floor with an appropriate formula such as **nye gbe dze anyi** 'my voice has fallen' and then a linguist, that is a staff bearer or spokesperson, who passes on the message to the rest of the audience first says to this person: **ḍo aḥé** (loo)! The speaker who wants to give up the floor can sometimes specifically invite the spokesperson to say **ḍo aḥé** to him/her as a cue that the current turn is ended. Such an exchange may look like this:

[47] S: na ḍo aḥé m
 give arrive home 1SG
 'Say ḍo aḥé to me'

A: ḍo aḥé!
 arrive home

It should be noted that after this **ḍo aḥé**, there may not be a response from the speaker who is giving up the floor, the spokesperson can just continue to speak. I suspect that this is what led Westermann to assume that the expression is used in beginning a speech. I suggest that although **ḍo aḥé** may be said at the beginning of a speech, it is really used to acknowledge the end of the speech of the previous speaker and to ask him/her to make him/her - self comfortable. This becomes more plausible when one considers the fact that at public meetings one has to stand up (except elders) when giving a speech. So in

another respect, **ᄑᄑ ᄑᄑᄑ** is used in the speech giving context to invite the previous speaker to resume his/her seat.

The connection between resuming one's seat, for example, at the end of a speech, ending a prayer and arriving at home after travelling seems to be that the person has come to stop doing something and is about to be in a state of rest etc. In this way, the speaker of **ᄑᄑ ᄑᄑᄑ** seems to be inviting the addressee to make him/her self comfortable.

In terms of its use in sequential organization in verbal interaction, one can say that **ᄑᄑ ᄑᄑᄑ** functions as a bracket marker in Goffman's (1981:49) terms or boundary exchange signal in Coulthard and Sinclair's (1975:49) terms. That is, it is an item that demarcates the boundary of a frame or event spatially or temporally. As explained earlier it can be used to signal the end of a speaker's turn and by default the beginning of the turn of the other interlocutor. It should be stressed however that these are functional characterisations of the form which are consistent with the observations made by Westermann. The argument I have been advancing here is that the discourse organisational function is consistent with the primary function that the expression serves, namely, that of welcoming travellers. In a sense a welcoming act is a boundary marker since it can be said that it marks the end of the journey of the addressee and the beginning of interaction between the interlocutors.

To account for all these usages, I propose the following paraphrase:

ᄑᄑ ᄑᄑᄑ

I know you have been doing something for some time

I know you will do no more of this (for some time)

I think you feel something good because of it

I want to say something to you because of this

I say: I want you to feel something good at this place
and at this time

I say this because I want to cause you to think that I feel
something good towards you.

This explication, I believe, is vague enough to account for the various uses of the formula. In the first component for instance there is no reference to travelling or speaking or praying but just that the addressee is not doing whatever s/he has been doing. The context would supply the appropriate interpretation. The dictum, that is the 'I say:...' component, also entails the idea that the addressee is invited to feel at home or to feel comfortable. The syntactic clue for the way it is framed is the imperative structure of the expression. That is, it implies that the speaker wants something to happen or rather wants someone to do something.

The response to this speech formula is **yoo** which roughly speaking just encodes the idea of the acceptance of the wishes that have been proffered by the speaker. Its significance in this context is not different from that of its use as response to other speech formulae we have seen (see §16.4.2 for its full explication).

14.5 Expressions addressed to someone at work

Another situation in Ewe which calls for routine interaction is when someone finds another at work - any kind of work, house work such as doing dishes or physical labour or even some mental activity. There are a number of speech formulas which may be used in this context. They are:

[48a] wò/ mia- wó é le dzi (loo)!
 2SG 2PL PL aFOC be:PRES top ADD
 lit: 'You (sg/pl) are on top!'

[48b] kpasi (loo)!
 watch hand ADD
 lit: 'Watch your hands!'

[48c] ayikóó!

[48d] dónɔ dónɔ!

[48e] mbó (mbó)

The last three forms are untranslatable in a way into English. Each of these expressions will now be described in turn.

14.5.1 X - é le dzi (loo)!

The X slot in this formula may be filled by a 2SG or 2PL pronoun depending on the number of addressees as shown in [48a] above. It may optionally terminate in the addressive particle **loo!**: 'I want you to pay attention to what I am saying'.

This expression is used to salute someone who is working. It can be any form of work, physical or mental. The person does not have to be practically involved in the activity at the time that this expression is addressed to him/her. Once there is evidence that there is some work in progress and s/he is engaged in it, then the expression is appropriate. It is important that the person must be doing the work: s/he, as it were, should be in the middle of it.

The use of the locative/existential verb **le** 'be' and the postposition **dzí** 'top' in this expression provides some clues to the constraint that it is used to salute someone involved in some work which is in progress at the moment of speech. It should be recalled that **le** 'be' is a marker of present time and **dzí** 'top' in combination with other verbs signals continuative aspect. (see Chapter 6 on aspect). In fact non-present time is expressed by **nɔ**. But one does not have an expression or cannot vary this formula with **nɔ** to acknowledge some work that someone may have done some time ago. Thus there is no expression of the following form as a speech formula:

[49] ?? wò é nɔ dzí
 2SG aFOC be:NPRES top
 'You were on top'

There is a further feature of this formula which points to its semi-frozenness. Typically **dzí** being a postposition requires a dependent nominal which may be realised as a pronominal. However in this formula there is no such dependent nominal. One could speculate that there was a pronominal which is elided:

[50] wò é le é dzí
 2SG aFOC be:PRES 3SG top
 'You are on its top'

If this speculation turns out to be correct, the pronoun could be thought of as referring to the work that is being done.

Putting these pieces of evidence together one can say that the speech formula is used as an acknowledgement of someone at work. The speaker expects the work to be continued after the moment of the speech formula. This is signalled in a way by the aspectual meaning of the elements in the formula.

The illocutionary significance of this formula may be paraphrased as follows:

X - é le dzí (where X is addressee(s))

I know you are doing something

I think you want to do more of it

I want to say the kind of thing one should say to another
 when they are doing things of this kind

I say: you are doing something

I think you will do more after this time

I say it because I want to cause you to feel something good

I think you would say something to me because of this.

This is one of those formulaic expressions which is quite transparent and whose content is fairly well in the consciousness of speakers. This is the reason for the dictum component in the explication which is more or less a literal rendition of the expression. There is a jocular response to this expression which is exchanged between young and familiar interlocutors. Thus the following may be an interaction between two familiar interlocutors:

[51] A: wò é le dzí
 2SG aFOC be:PRES top
 'You are on top'

B: wò é le ðome
 2SG aFOC be:PRES under
 'You are under'

This jocular response plays upon the meaning of **dzí** 'top'. Notice that the response entails its opposite **ðome** 'under'. This suggests that the literal meaning of the formula is active in the minds of speakers.⁷ Furthermore, there is an English calque based on the literal meaning of this expression, namely, 'you are on top' or its sub-standard variety: 'you dey for top'⁸. All these pieces of evidence indicate the psychological reality of the literal meaning of the formula.

The standard response to **X - é le dzí** is **yoo** 'OK'. The respondent goes on to enquire about the state of affairs of their interlocutors. This aspect of the usage of the form is accounted for in the last component of the formula. An example of the sequence of utterances may be:

[52] A: wò é le dzí
 2SG aFOC be:PRES top
 'You are on top'

B: yoo, tɔ - wò me ðé?
 OK POSSPRO 2SG in Q
 'OK, how about yours (i.e. your work)?'

A: é dɔ

⁷ It has been suggested to me by some informants that when the jocular pair of forms is exchanged between males and females who are in a joking relationship, there are implied allusions to standard (or missionary) position for copulation. This is still consistent with the view that the joke is based on the literal meaning of the linguistic items.

⁸ The word 'dey' is a West African Pidgin English word which is equivalent to 'be' (locative) in standard English.

3SG sleep
'It is good.'

Basically the message of **yoo** as a response to **X - é le dzí** and similar formulae is that the speaker accepts the salutation. As a turn-initial element it also has the added contextual meaning component that the speaker wants to return the greeting. It would be odd if the response to these formulae stopped just at **yoo** (see §16.4.2 for an explication of this item). Incidentally, the same message is conveyed by **yoo** when it is used in response to **kpasí loo** which is a functionally equivalent formula to **X - é le dzí**. This formula is described in the next section.

14.5.2 *kpasí* (loo)!

This formula is addressed to someone who is at work. Characteristically, the type of work is physical and manual. It tends to be used to address people engaged in jobs other than household chores. Thus it may be used to address farmers, teachers, carpenters, fisherfolk, hawkers, traders etc. It does not seem to be used to salute someone engaged in a mental activity.

It appears that **kpasí** is a fusion of **kpó** 'see, look, watch' and **así** 'hand'. Hence it probably means literally 'watch your hands!'. **kpasí** tends to be used with the addressive particle **loo** 'I want you to pay attention to what I am saying'. This implies that the formula could be used as an attention getter. The imperative structure of the form also suggests that the formula may be a mild warning to the addressee to be careful with his/her hands and tools and to be mindful of the work they are doing.

An important constraint on the use of **kpasí** is that the addressee should be in the middle of the work. It does not seem to be appropriate when the addressee is not going to do more of the work. Part of the support for this contention comes from the use of the formula in one folk tale. The following exchange ensued between a passer-by and a farmer:

[53] Passer-by: ame-gã kpasí loo!
 person big watch hand ADD
 'Sir, watch your hands!'

Farmer: tsihé hé mí me- le
 pad make PROG 1SG be:PRES
 'I am (just) making a pad'

This pair was repeated several times, perhaps because the passer-by thought the farmer did not hear him properly and hence did not give the appropriate response of **yoo**. However, the farmer's insistence on the same response which is odd and unexpected seems to carry the message that he was no longer working but just making a pad for carrying his stuff home. It could be inferred that he has finished the day's work and does not need the good wishes of doing more work as the message of the formula entails.

With these considerations in mind, the meaning of **kpasí** (**loo**) can be explicated, tentatively, as follows:

I can see you are doing something
 I think you have been doing it for some time
 I think you would want to do more of it
 I want to say the kind of thing that one should say to another
 when they are doing things of this kind
 I say: I want you to do more of this thing in a way that will not
 cause something bad to happen to you
 I say it because I want to cause you to feel something good
 I think you would say something to me because of this.

It has already been indicated that the expected response to **kpasí** is **yoo**. In this context **yoo** has the same meaning as it does when used in response to **X - e le dzí** discussed in the previous section and other formulaic expressions (see §16.4.2 on the meaning of **yoo**).

14.5.3 dóno

In its performance, this form is usually repeated, at least twice. Westermann (1973) has the following entry for the item:

1. an approving, praising acclamation to people working
2. thank you

I think there is only one meaning of this expression and the first meaning accorded to it by Westermann sums up its core. It is true that in certain instances it functions as an equivalent of 'thank you', or it could be interpreted as such. But this is consistent with its being used to show appreciation for some work that is being done. Thus someone who has asked a group of people to do something for him/her, such as help on the farm or help build a house, may occasionally in the course of the work shout out: **dóno!** **dóno!**. In this context

it could be interpreted as ‘thank you’. It does not seem to have any stereotyped response.

Literally, **dóno** probably comes from **dó** ‘work’ and the possessive suffix **no** which comes from the word for ‘mother’ (see §7.4.7). If this speculation is correct, then the speaker would appear to be saying that s/he notices that the addressee is in control of what is being done, that is the possessor of the work. It can be said to people who are performing in a public display, for example, a group of dancers to show one’s appreciation for their effort and to urge them to do more. Thus one could say the purpose of this expression is to urge the addressee to do more of the good work that they are doing.

dóno! dóno! may be used in combination with other expressions addressed to people at work. Thus it could be combined with **X - é le dzí** (see §14.5.1) or **ayikoo** (see §14.5.4). In this case, **dóno!** tends to be the second turn. This co-occurrence is perhaps possible because **dóno** unlike the other expressions, has an emotive component. Westermann’s suggestion that it is an approving and praising acclamation is very instructive. The other expressions do not seem to have a ‘praising’ component. Nevertheless, this expression can be used in an ironic way where the speaker is not really praising the addressee but rather scolding them. Consider the following example which illustrates some of the points that have been made. Note in particular that the speaker uses these forms in a rebuke:

[54] D.: mikátã é no nu vǒḍi
 2PL all aFOC be:NPRES mouth bad

ϕo- mí tsó ḡú nye
 strike PROG fromside 1SG

ayekóo ná mi, dóno dóno ná mi
 ‘ayekoo’ to 2PL ‘work on’ ‘work on’ to 2PL

‘You all have been speaking evil of me ... go on doing it, go on doing, is what I say to you. (Nyaku in press:13)

Notice that the formula has an added addressee phrase. This shows that it is a one-word formula and not an interjection since it satisfies one of the language internal criteria for deciding between the two classes. This expression, like most of the formulae discussed in this section, does not have an English equivalent and is thus very hard to render in English.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication for the speech formula **dóno dóno**.

I know you are doing something very good
 I think you want to do more of it
 I want to say something to you because of this
 I say: I feel something very good towards you
 because of what you are doing
 I say it because I want you to feel something good
 I think you would want to do more of it because of this.

The major difference between this expression and the others discussed in this section is that it does not have a conventional response. Another difference is that it explicitly conveys some good wishes from the speaker to the addressee. These differences are discernible if the above explication is compared with the explications of the forms that are functionally equivalent to **dóno**.

14.5.4 ayíkóó!- yaayé!

ayíkóó! and its response **yaaye!** constitute a common interactional routine set used not only in Ewe, but across the languages of Ghana. **ayíkóó!** has even found its way into Ghanaian English (see examples below). It is similar to **agoo** in this respect (see §14.6). Because of its wide usage across language boundaries, there are variations on its spelling. One can find it spelt as **aekoo** as in the Gã dictionary (Kropp Dakabu 1973) or as **ayekoo** in other places. The spelling adopted in this study is a phonetic one, namely **ayíkóó**. This is the pronunciation most commonly used in Ewe. The illocutionary significance of **ayíkóó** will be described first. This is followed by a description of the meaning of its response **yaayé**. Finally, some speculations are made on the possible diachrony of these items.

14.5.4.1 *ayíkóó*

ayikoo is mainly used as a salutation to someone who is in the midst of working, or has completed part of a task and one expects that s/he will do more. This is the only usage of the form in Ewe, and it is a usage which is pan-Ghanaian, that is, it is found in other languages in Ghana as well.⁹ It is one of the things one can say to a trader in the market, to a farmer on the farm, to a teacher in the classroom, to a builder at a building site etc. as an acknowledgement by a passer-by or a visitor. It can even be said to someone who is doing household chores such as cooking, washing up or cleaning the house or doing the laundry as a conversation opener. In this respect it is different from *kpasí* which would not normally be addressed to someone engaged in household chores (see §14.5.2).

In all these cases, the addressee is in the middle of doing something. The salutation serves in a way to draw the attention of the addressee to the speaker or to notify the addressee of the presence of the speaker. In other situations, **ayíkóó** may be said to someone who has just completed part of a large project and will be expected to continue the rest. So, for example, during lunch break when a day labourer on the farm will not be literally working, **ayíkóó** may be said to him. It may be addressed to a soccer player during half-time break as well.

In all the uses of **ayíkóó** there is an element of the speaker urging the addressee to do more of the work being done. The speaker does not have to approve of the work as is implied in the use of **dóno** (see §14.5.3) although there is an element of appreciation of the work being done. The work does not have to be physical. It could be a mental activity. Thus a student or an academic could be greeted with **ayíkóó** after a work-in-progress seminar reporting on their ideas and research findings. It could also be said to someone who is just studying.

Like other one-word formulaic expressions such as **agoo**, **akpé**, **baba** etc., but unlike interjections, **ayíkóó** may be used with an explicit addressee phrase (see also example [54] above):

[55a] *ayíkóó ná wò / mi*
 ayikoo to 2SG / 2PL.
 ‘ayikoo to you(sg)/ you (pl)’

⁹ In some languages other usages are found which are nonetheless closely related to this main one. For instance, in Gã, it is appropriate to use **ayekoo** to congratulate a couple who has had a new baby. It would be odd to use it in such a situation in Ewe.

To summarise thus far, one can say that **ayíkóó** is used as a kind of acknowledgement and appreciation of the work that someone is doing. It may also be used to get the attention of a worker for the start of a conversational exchange. Furthermore, it is used to urge the addressee to go on doing the work.

To account for this range of the uses of **ayíkóó** in Ewe, I propose, tentatively, the following explication:

ayíkóó

I know you are doing something
 I think you have been doing it for some time now
 I think you would want to do more of it
 I feel something good towards you because of that
 I want to say something to you because of this
 I say: you are doing something good
 I say it because I want to cause you to do more of it
 I think you will say something to me because of that

The first and second components are meant to account for the fact that the expression is used to address someone who is in the throes of doing something. This usage is carried over to English. Consider the following GBC TV drama programme in English (8 October 1987).

[55b][A. enters B's house].

A: ayikoo!
 B: yaaye!
 A: I can see you are very busy
 B: Yes...

Observe in this example that after the **ayíkóó** exchange, A goes on to explicitly make the point that she has noticed that B was engaged in some activity before she came in. This goes to reinforce her initial choice of **ayíkóó** as a greeting, since it is the appropriate form for saluting someone at work.

There is also a perception on the part of the speaker that the addressee wants to continue the work and the speaker would like to urge him/her to do so. The work being done is also appreciated by the speaker. This feature is reflected in some of the components by the use of the positive evaluation term good, for example, in the dictum.

The notion that a positive attitude towards the work being done is expressed in the form **ayíkóó** is perhaps one of the aspects of the pragmatic knowledge

about the item that Ghanaians in general share. This readily comes to the fore when they make metastatements about it or use it in English. For example, Steve Obimpeh, an Ewe, Ghana's Secretary for Agriculture was quoted as saying: "... it is Ghanaian to say **ayekoo** to someone who has done something commendable" in a speech justifying the celebration of the Ghana Farmers' Day 1987 (Daily Graphic 4/12/87 page 2). Incidentally, the last sentence in this report was "Ghana akuafo (i.e. farmers F.A.) ayekoo!" Here the writer is using **ayíkóó** not to the farmers on the farm at the moment of writing, but in appreciation of their contribution to the on-going economic recovery programme of the country and urging them to continue the good work.

The perception that the work the addressee is involved in is good can also be deduced from its usage in a letter to the editor of the West Africa magazine in appreciation of the services of Ghana Airways. The letter concludes: "... it was impressive and commendable. Ghana Airways, Ayikoo!" (West Africa 10-16 April 1989 page 558).

Typically, there is a response to **ayíkóó**, hence the last component in the explication. This response, **yaayé**, is described next.

14.5.4.2 yaayé!

yaayé is the pan-Ghanaian response to **ayíkóó**. It can be said that it is used as an acknowledgement of receipt of the preceding salutation - **ayíkóó**. Thus it is a response to what was said before. It is also completive in the sense that it supplements an earlier linguistic utterance (cf Bloomfield 1933:176).

The significance of this formulaic response may be tentatively represented as follows:

- (a) I know you have said something good to me
- (b) I think you have said it because of what I am doing
- (c) I want to say something to you because of it
- (d) I say: I think it is good
- (e) I say it because I know I have to say something to you
because of what you have said.

The essential feature of **yaayé** captured in this explication is that it is a routine response to a salutation offered to someone at work. This response is specific to **ayíkóó** in Ewe and it therefore seems justified to make reference to it in its meaning (see component b). Unlike **kpasí** or **X - é le dzí** which have a general response of **yoo**, **yaayé** is specific to **ayíkóó**. Furthermore, the next turn in the exchange after the **ayíkóó** - **yaayé** pair can be initiated by either the respondent to **ayíkóó** or the issuer of **ayíkóó** (see the excerpt from the TV drama above).

Note that for **kpasí** and **X - é le dzí** the next turn after the response is initiated by the responder to these salutations. In addition there need not be any further interaction between the interlocutors after **yaayé**. This form can thus mark the end of a conversational exchange.

14.5.4.3 Speculations on the diachrony of **ayikóó** - **yaayé**

It is not entirely clear what the diachrony of this adjacency pair - **ayikóó** - **yaayé** - is. It is plausible that it originally came from Ga and then spread to other languages. Some comments can be made in favour of this position. First, as noted earlier, the use of **ayikóó** is wider in Ga than it is in Ewe. For instance, **ayikóó** is not said to a couple who have had a baby in Ewe, but it can be used in this context in Gã. Second, it is obvious from the discussion in this section that Ewe has other indigenous expressions for the same function. Similarly Akan, another Kwa language of the area, has an expression which serves the same function as **ayikóó**. The Akan formula and its response are represented in [56]:

- [56] A: adzú má adzú má!
 work work
 ‘How is work?’
- B: adzú má yɛ
 work be good
 ‘Work is good.’

Note that the Akan form makes explicit reference to work, and also that the response indicates that the work is good. However, Gã does not seem to have any such other expression apart from **ayikóó**. These observations are mere speculations however.

Nevertheless, there is further linguistic evidence which seems to support the Ga origin of **ayikóó** hypothesis. Kropp Dakubu (1981:174) comments on the use of this formula in Ga as follows: “If a person is met at work he (sic) is usually greeted with a blessing ... **Áèkóó** or **áekoo** from **aáye é kóŋŋ** ‘One will eat (or succeed) again’, to which he replies **Yaa éi**.” It is highly probable that this expression started off as a salutation to farmers and fishermen who were working to produce food and became generalised to refer to any worker at all.

It is also possible that **yaayé** originally comes from Ga. It is spelt in the Ga dictionary as **yaa ee** (Kropp Dakubu 1973). There are two possibilities here. One is that it is related to the form **yaa** ‘yes’ in Ga as a response to the proposition that ‘they will eat again’. Some support for this comes from the fact

that **yaa** in Ga is used in conventional responses to salutations. For example, it is used in response to appellatives as in the following exchange:

- [57] V.: Ojekoo
 Good morning
 H.: Yaa, Aja
 Yes Father (Kropp Dakubu 1987:511)

The segment e, at the end of **yaayé** could be related to the emphatic particle e that occurs in Gã in such phrases as **agoo ee!**.

The second possibility is that **yaa** is related to the verb **yá** 'go' in which case **yaayé** probably means something like 'it is going to be'. If these speculations are correct, then what the pair entails from a diachronic point of view can be paraphrased as follows:

- [58] A: They are going to eat again
 B: Yes
 or: It is going to be (i.e. that they are going to eat again).

Contextually one could further speculate that the pair probably meant:

- [59] A: How is the work?
 B: It is going (well)

These speculations do shed some light on the meaning of the pan-Ghanaian conversational routine but more work is needed to establish what its source is and what the direction of spread is.

14.5.5 **mbó**

mbó is another expression which is used to show appreciation to people for something commendable that they are doing or have done. It is also used to urge people to continue to do more of the good work. This form is commonly used in backchanneling, that is, in providing auditor feedback to someone who is speaking. In such a usage, it conveys the message that the person should say more and also that the speaker appreciates the speech. This usage is consistent with the general use of encouraging or urging someone to do more of the commendable work that s/he is doing.

Perhaps an illustration from a biblical story might clarify the usage of this form. In the parable about the three servants who were given different sums of money by their master to invest while he was away (Mathew 25), The

The conclusion to be drawn from this is that **dóno** is a speech formula like the other expressions discussed in this section but **mbó** is an interjection (see discussion of backchannel interjections §16.4.2). It may thus be directed to an auditor, but it may also be used expressively. The intended interpreter of the communicative act involving **mbó** is not viewed as an addressee.

14.5.6 Summary

A number of routine expressions which are used to show appreciation to someone found at work have been discussed. It should be pointed out that all the expressions can be used sarcastically. That is, they can be directed at someone who would have been expected to be doing some particular work but who was found not doing it. They could also be used just to alert someone that s/he is being watched when s/he is doing something bad. In such contexts, the speaker would not necessarily want the addressee to do more of what s/he was doing.

It is striking that there should exist in Ewe several routine expressions tied to the situation of what one should say to someone working. It is also significant that this kind of conversational routine is not restricted to the Ewes but may well be part of the system of African ethno-philosophy. As was pointed out earlier, one of these expressions - **ayíkóó** (which was probably borrowed by Ewe) is also found in other languages of Ghana and has also been adopted into Ghanaian English. As well as this, in some languages of northern Ghana there are language-specific forms used in similar situations and for specific activities or types of work. For instance, Naden (1986:188) cites several greeting forms in Mampruli whose choice is determined by the function of the addressee. One of these functions is when the addressee is at work. In this respect, the expressions for working could be said to be functionally equivalent to **ayíkóó** and others in Ewe. One of these in Mampruli is the following:

[63] A: Ni i tuma (tuma)
 with your work work
 B: Ni i tuma
 with your work
 or: Naa
 yes.

One can only conclude from all this that Ewe culture (as well as Ghanaian culture as a whole) attaches a lot of importance to acknowledging, appreciating and encouraging people who are working. One could speculate further that this is just another manifestation of the cultural theme of 'communality' that is

so much part of African culture (see Dickson 1977, Dzobo 1975, Gyekye 1987 and Wiredu 1980 among others).

In fact initial investigations reveal that there are similar formulaic expressions in other African languages. For instance, in Yoruba **ẹ ku iṣẹ** is the expression that is used as a salutation to someone found at work. It has been reported that Yoruba learners of French tend to use *bon travail*, which in native French is equivalent to *well done*, to address someone found at work (Ajiboye 1987:157). This wrong use of *bon travail* has been attributed to the lack of functionally equivalent expressions in French to Yoruba **ẹ ku iṣẹ** or **ayíkóó**. My investigations however reveal that *bon courage* or *bon continuation* are used in French in a context where someone is expected to go on working. These are perhaps closer to **ayíkóó** etc than *bon travail*. Nevertheless the point remains that the Nigerian learners of French strive to use a routine expression in a context where their native language requires such a form.

This same pressure to say something to someone at work seems to have led to the adoption of **ayíkóó** into Ghanaian English. What is more Ghanaian English seems to have found an English equivalent and extended its use and frequency to cover the range of use of **ayíkóó** in the indigenous languages. The cliché ‘more grease to your elbow’ is used quite extensively in Ghana just like **ayíkóó**. (In fact in Ghanaian English, it is ‘more grease to your elbows’).

As far as I can ascertain, this expression is very rarely used in native varieties of English, but it is quite common in Ghana (and West Africa). One informant who is a native speaker of British English and is aware of the Ghanaian usage of the expression as well as of **ayíkóó** feels that ‘more grease to your elbow’ is ‘stronger’ than **ayíkóó**. This may be true in the sense that ‘more grease to your elbow’ tends to be said to people who are doing very hard physical work. **ayíkóó**, however, is more general and can be used when people are engaged in some light work like washing dishes. The main point is that Ghanaian English seems to have selected a close equivalent to **ayíkóó** and similar expressions in other languages, using it extensively, and making up for the gap when English is used.

Perhaps the use of ‘more grease to your elbow(s)’ in Ghanaian English could be explicated as follows (cf. the explication for **ayíkóó** in § 14.5.4.1):

I know you are doing something
 I would not think this: everyone can do this kind of thing
 I feel something very good towards you because of this
 I want to say something to you because of this
 I say: I want you to do more of it
 I say it because I want to cause you to do it

Notice that the second component captures the praise to the individual in terms of the speaker's assertion that it is not everybody who can do the kind of thing that the addressee is doing. This is the main difference between 'more grease to your elbow' and **ayíkóó**. It appears that even though all these expressions are used in similar contexts they encode specific meanings. The task of the preceding sections has been to attempt to represent these meanings in a manner that would allow their differences and similarities to be evident.

14.6. Formulae for expressing gratitude and felicitation

In this section, the speech formulae that are used to show gratitude to someone who has done something good for the speaker and others which are addressed to people to whom something good has happened are examined. That is the set of expressions which roughly speaking are used in 'thanking' and 'congratulating' people. It must be stressed however that there are significant differences between these expressions and the English folk labels that have been used to characterise them. For example, the Ewe expressions for thanking are used to express gratitude to people for material things or good actions that they have done for the speaker. Unlike English thank you they are not used in situations where intangible things have been offered to the speaker. Note that thank you can be said in response to greetings and compliments etc. That is, it can be used to acknowledge good things that have been said about someone or to someone. The Ewe gratitude expressions are not used in that way (cf. Coulmas 1981b for a typology of thanking strategies and Ameka 1987).

Similarly, the expressions for felicitations differ in their range of use in Ewe from the way equivalent English expressions are used. For example, Congratulations are in order at marriage ceremonies but the Ewe expressions discussed are not used in such a context (see Ameka 1987). For these reasons, the folk labels are only used for convenience with no strict equivalence implied. The gratitude expressions are discussed first followed by those for felicitations.

14.6.1 Gratitude expressions

14.6.1.1 akpé

akpé is a one-word formula that is used to express gratitude to someone who has done something good for the speaker. This word is homophonous with the word for 'thousand' and with that for 'clap'. Pazzi (1980:240) suggests that there is a relationship between clapping and thanking in the Gbe languages. He glosses the report of saying **akpé** as follows:

é dá akpé 'Il a frappé (les mains) pour remercier'
(He clapped his hands in thanksgiving).

Clapping and thanking seem to have been historically associated in these languages. However, in synchronic terms clapping does not seem to be a gesture that is used for thanking. It is rather used as a means for praising people. Language internal evidence seems to support this. Thus the following is ambiguous:

- [64] midá akpé nɛ
 2PL 'give' 'clap'to:3SG
 'Clap for him/her (to praise him/her)
 'Say 'akpe' to him/her (to thank him/her)

The ambiguity of [64] is however absent from [65] where the only interpretation is that of clapping to praise someone.

- [65] miφo akpé nɛ
 2PL beat 'clap'to:3SG
 'Clap for him/her (to praise him/her)

Striking one's hands then seems to be associated with praising people. However, one should not lose sight of the fact that praising and thanking are quite close in meaning and therefore the close association of these two functions in Ewe at some time is not inconceivable. The point to note is that thanking implies that the addressee has done something good for the speaker. However, praising entails that the addressee has done something good and consequently is thought of as a good person. The good thing that the person has done or the good manner s/he has shown does not have to be for the benefit of the one who is lavishing praise on the person, although it may reflect upon him/her.

Be that as it may, in the enactment of the routine of showing gratitude to people, the word **akpé** may be said once or several times. The number of iterations is expressive of the intensity of the gratitude that is felt. Thus when one has been given a wonderful gift s/he could burst out as follows:

- [66] akpé akpé akpé
 thanks thanks thanks
 'Thanks very much.'

Apart from the repetition of **akpé** one can add intensifiers to show the degree of intensity of the gratitude felt. Closely synonymous to [66] is [67] below which people are often heard to say.

- [67] akpé kákáká

thanks much TRIP
 ‘Thanks very very much’

Note that the intensifier is itself triplicated for expressive emphasis.

Gratitude may also be expressed by performative utterances involving **akpé**. Thus one could simply thank another by saying the following:

[68] me- dá akpé
 1SG ‘give’ ‘clap’
 ‘I am grateful.’

But one can also have a truly performative utterance as the author quoted below does in his preface:

[70] me- le akpé dá m ná nɔví veví
 1SG be:PRES ‘clap’ ‘give’ PROG to friend close
 si- wó dó ñúsě m le agbalě á ñɔɲlɔ me
 REL PL cause strength 1SG at book DEF write in
 ‘I thank the close friends who encouraged me in writing this book’
 (adapted from Nyomi 1980:3)

It should be observed that in this example an addressee phrase has been added. In fact, the formulaic word alone can also be used with an addressee phrase as well. For example:

[71a] akpé ná wò
 ‘clap’ to 2SG
 ‘Thank you.’

[71b] akpé ná midzi- lá wó
 ‘clap’ to 2PL bear NZR PL
 ‘Thank you parents.’

The implication of this is that the one-word routine **akpé** is not an interjection, but rather a formulaic word.

To express ‘thanks in advance’, the verbal phrase **dó ñgɔ** ‘send in front’ is adjoined to any of the **akpé** phrases especially with either the word or its performative version. For example:

[72] akpé dó ñgɔ
 ‘clap’ send front
 ‘Thanks in advance.’

(See §14.6.1.7 for discussion of other formulae related to different time frames for the gratitude expression.)

As noted earlier, the expressions involving **akpé** are used in expressing gratitude for some services that have been rendered. For example, when a gift has been received or when someone has made a concession which has material implications for the speaker such as during bargaining. The **akpé** expressions may be used with other gratitude expressions, such as those discussed in §14.6.1.4, just to reinforce the feeling of gratitude.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication to account for the meaning of **akpé**:

I know you have done something good for me
 I know this: all people cannot do things of this kind for me
 I feel something good towards you because of this
 I want to say something to you because of it
 I say: you have done something good for me
 I say it because:
 I want you to know what I feel
 I want to cause you to feel something good

The first component indicates that the utterance of **akpé** is triggered by something good that the addressee has done for the speaker. The second and third components indicate the appreciation and praise of the speaker to the addressee. The fourth component spells out the social convention that the speaker has to say something to the addressee in such a situation. The dictum is simply an acknowledgement that the addressee has done something good for the speaker. The utterance of this formula has a two fold purpose: first, it is expressive of the speaker's feelings and second it is intended to make the addressee feel good. The ideas captured in the explication with respect to the praise and appreciation of the speaker are perhaps in a way supported by the strategies that are employed in the responses to these utterances. These responses are discussed in the next section.

14.6.1.2 Responses to gratitude expressions

All the gratitude expressions can be responded to with one of the following expressions:

[73a] akpé mé le é me o
 'clap' NEG be: PRES 3SG in NEG
 'There is no need for saying thanks.'

[73b] mé sū akpéo
 NEG:3SG suffice 'clap' NEG
 'It is not sufficient to merit thanks.'

[73c] me- ga dá akpéo
 NEG:2SG REP 'give' 'clap' NEG
 'Do not say thanks' i.e. Don't mention it.'

The only expressions which are not responded to with one of the above are discussed in §14.6.1.7.

Note that in each of the above expressions there is the word **akpé** which suggests its central association with the activity of thanking. It should also be noted that all the responses are in the negative. That is, they represent a negation of the propositions implied in the gratitude expressions. They all seem to involve a shift of praise from the speaker, or they deny that the thing for which thanks are being offered are worthy of such gratitude. That is, the speaker downgrades the value of what s/he had done for the addressee.

Thus [73a] suggests that the speaker thinks that whatever s/he has done for the addressee does not require an expression of gratitude. In other words, it is not appropriate for the addressee to have said thanks. The literal translation of the utterance is very instructive. In the context of its use as a response, it can be argued that the speaker's purpose is to acknowledge receipt of what has been said and at the same time express an opinion about what s/he has done. Furthermore the speaker does not expect the addressee to feel anything bad on account of what s/he has said.

On the basis of these observations one can explicate the conversational meaning of **akpé mé le é me o** as follows:

I know you have said something good to me
 because of what I have done for you
 Because of this, I know this: you think
 this thing I have done for you is something good
 I don't want you to think I think about it in the same way
 I want to say something to you because of this
 I say: there is nothing good about it
 I say it because I want you to know what I think about it
 I think you will not feel something bad because of what I say

The declarative syntax of the expression suggests that it is meant to be informative, hence the illocutionary purpose proposed is framed in terms of notifying the addressee of the thoughts of the speaker.

The illocutionary structures of the other expressions are in many ways identical to the one above. The dictum of each expression is however different and the purpose may also be slightly different. Thus for [73b] the speaker expresses the view that the thing s/he has done for the addressee does not merit thanks. It is not up to the standard of things for which one should express one's gratitude to someone else for doing it. The purpose of this expression is also to inform the addressee about the speaker's attitude and thoughts about the situation. The illocutionary meaning of the expression **mé sū akpé o** may be explicated as follows:

I know you have said something good to me
 because of what I have done for you
 Because of this, I know this: you think
 this thing I have done for you is something good
 I don't want you to think I think the same way about it
 I want to say something to you because of this
 I say: it is not as good as you think
 I say it because I want you to know what I think about it
 I think you will not feel something bad because of what I say

It should be noted that the negation of the verb **sū** implies that the thing is not equal to or is not sufficient for it to be appreciated as the addressee has done in the gratitude expression. This provides a clue for the way the dictum is expressed in the explication.

As far as [73c] is concerned, it is different from the other two expressions in that it is prohibitive in structure while the previous ones are declarative. For this reason, in its explication below the dictum is phrased in terms of the speaker not wanting the addressee to say any good thing about what s/he has done for him/her. Similarly, the purpose is to cause the addressee not to say thanks anymore. Apart from these differences, the illocutionary structure of [73c] is fairly similar to those of the other expressions. It may be represented as follows:

me-ga-dá akpé o

I know you have said something good to me
 because of what I have done for you
 Because of this, I know this: you think
 this thing I have done for you is something good
 I don't want you to think the same way about it
 I want to say something to you because of this
 I say: I don't want you to say anything good to me (because of it)

I say it because I want to cause you not to say anything more
about it

I think you will not feel something bad because of what I say

14.6.1.3 *né me-kú lá X*

In this section a characteristic Ewe expression for showing gratitude is discussed. The expression is a grammatically complex sentence in which the preposed conditional sentence is constant and the main clause part of the formula may be varied in a fairly predictable way. Thus when someone does something great for you such as giving you something that you are in dire need of, and you feel very touched by it you could show this feeling to the addressee by saying a variant of this formula:

[74a] *né me- kú lá me- ga- fa aví o!*
if 1SG die TP 1SG:NEG REP shed cry NEG
'When I die, do not cry.' (i.e. do not mourn for me)

[74b] *né me- kú lá na- yi agble!*
if 1SG die TP 2SG:SBJV go farm
'When I die, you should go to the farm.'

[74c] *né me- kú lá*
if 1SG die TP
me- ga- vá kúnú á me o!
1SG:NEG REP come funeral DEF in NEG
'When I die, do not come to the funeral.'

It should be noted that the conditional part of the expressions is constant while the main clause part is varied. However, the variation pertains to the speaker asking the addressee to do something contrary to what one would expect people to do when someone else dies in the community. The literal meanings of these expressions vis-à-vis the situation in which they are used are rather interesting and instructive for capturing their illocutionary significance. One may well pose the question: what is the connection between doing something very good for someone and not crying or going to the farm on the day s/he dies or not attending his/her funeral when s/he dies? To the uninitiated it is not obvious. But the puzzle disappears if the cultural practices associated with mourning for the dead in the Ewe society are understood.

First, it should be noted that the major traditional economic activity of the Ewes, especially those of the inland area, is farming. Second, it should be observed that when a member of the community dies, nobody is expected to

go anywhere; everybody participates in the funeral. There is a communal obligation for people to be present at the funeral of anybody who dies in the village. The greatest thing one can do for his/her fellow human being is to be at his/her funeral when s/he dies. Furthermore, one of the ways of mourning for people who die is to abstain from performing one's regular activities such as going to the farm, and stay home and help with the funeral activities. Another practice associated with deaths is that people are expected to weep and wail to show their sorrow and sympathy because of the death of a member of the community. Anybody who does anything contrary to these things such as going to the farm or absenting oneself from the funeral or not weeping is considered not only as an enemy of the deceased person, but also as someone who wanted and caused his/her death.

With this background, it can be inferred that when a speaker uses this formula with any of the variants s/he is asking the addressee to do something contrary to tradition on the day of his/her death. The speaker is giving up all the things that people expect others to do as a sign of mourning for them when they die just because of a very good thing that the addressee has done for him/her at the moment. The implication is that the speaker believes that if the addressee does not do these things on the day of his/her death it is not because the addressee would want bad things to happen to him/her. This inference or conclusion on the part of the speaker is based on the very good thing that the addressee has just done for him/her.

The formula thus seems to imply an overstatement on the part of the speaker. It appears that its effectiveness lies precisely in it being an overstatement. In this way it can be claimed that the speaker is exploiting the politeness strategy involving hyperbole (Leech 1983:145 ff.) or exaggeration (Brown and Levinson 1987:159). The effect of this is that it lavishes praise on the addressee for the very good thing that s/he has done for the speaker.

With these considerations in mind, I offer the following explication for the general formula of **né me-kú lá X** (where X is a proposition which is said to the addressee to do something different from what one should do on the day people die):

I know you have done some thing very good for me
 I feel something very good because of that
 I want to say something more than what one should say
 when someone does something good for him/her
 I say: when I die I don't want you to do things that people have
 to do when someone dies
 I think we know this:
 people who feel something bad towards others,

people who want bad things to happen to others
 will not do these things on the day they die
 I know if you do not do these things on the day I die
 it is not because you do not feel something good towards me
 I know this because of the very good thing
 you have done for me
 I say it like this because:
 I want you to know I feel something very good towards you
 I want to cause you to feel something very good

Part of the motivation for the way in which the dictum is framed is to allow the freedom of filling in the X slot in the speech formula with any appropriate expression - a proposition which defies the norm about what one should do with respect to the death of another. Some young people may thus be heard filling in the X slot in a jocular way as follows:

[75] né me- kú lá na- xɔ srɛ̃ nye ɖɛ
 if 1SG die TP 2SG:SBJV get spouse 1SG marry
 'When I die, take my spouse and marry him/her.'

In this variant of the formula, the speaker is exploiting the fact that it is not a normal thing for people to take the spouse of a deceased person and marry especially not on the day or immediately after they die. Thus by giving the license to the addressee to do so is meant to suggest that s/he should do something contrary to the norm on the day s/he dies. Thus this also fits in with the general formula. The use of intensifiers like 'very' and the comparative 'more' in the explication are meant to capture the hyperbolic figure of speech that is implied in the speech formula as explained above. This is the dimension in which this expression differs from the other gratitude expressions discussed earlier, and those discussed in the subsequent sections.

14.6.1.4 X - é sɛ̃ ɲú and X - é wɔ dɔ

The X slot in these expressions is filled by 2SG or 2PL pronouns as appropriate according to the number of the addressees involved.

[76] wò / mia- wó é sɛ̃ ɲú
 2SG 2PL PL aFOC strong side
 'YOU (sg/pl) are strong.'

[77] wò / mia- wó é wɔ dɔ!

2SG 2PL PL aFOC do work
 'YOU(sg/pl) have worked.'

These expressions like other expressions of gratitude in Ewe are used to show appreciation for some material thing that someone has done for you. These two expressions are sometimes presented as stylistic variants with little or no substantial difference in their semantics. Warburton et al. (1968:129), for example, have suggested that the difference between them lies in [76] being more colloquial than [77]. Both expressions, to my mind, are used interchangeably, though not synonymously, irrespective of the formality or otherwise of the occasion. It must be conceded though that the preference for one form over the other may have to do with the dialectal background of the speaker.

Briefly, by using [76] the speaker conveys the idea that the addressee has done something good for him/her. S/he recognises or admits that the addressee has strength or power presumably over him/her. This is borne out by the literal translation. Furthermore, the speaker feels glad and demonstrates this by uttering the expression. There is an element of praise in [76] which is not found in [77]. The speaker, as it were, considers him/herself as being incapable of doing the thing that has been done for him/her. This is evident from the jocular, or rather the 'praise shift response' (as ethnomethodologists would put it) that friends use for [76] but not for [77]. The following is a typical exchange between friends:

[78] A: wò é sě ɲú!
 2SG aFOC strong side
 'YOU are strong. (i.e. Thanks.)'

B: nye- é sě wú wò a?
 1SG aFOC strong surpass 2SG Q
 'Am I stronger than you?'

On the other hand, in [77] the speaker expresses an awareness that the addressee has done something good for him/her and shows that s/he feels pleased because of it. If one adopts Leech's (1983:132) idea of politeness maxims, one of which enjoins the speaker to maximise praise of *other* (addressee) and minimise praise of *self* (speaker) - the approbation maxim - then we can say that [76] is more polite than [77], since the former, but not the latter, has an element of praise of the addressee embodied in it. This has implications for the role of politeness maxims in elucidating the significance of linguistic or pragmatic expressions. It should be recalled that the expression **né**

me-kú lá X implies the exploitation of the politeness strategy of overstatement or the Interest Principle (Leech 1983:146). And as far as [76] and [77] are concerned, it has been claimed that [76] embodies the approbation maxim while [77] does not. Thus different degrees of politeness are involved in the same language for seemingly synonymous expressions. This is a pointer, it seems to me, that politeness strategies *are not* enough to make explicit the implicit knowledge of linguistic signs (cp. Staab (1983)).

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explications for the illocutionary meaning of the expressions under discussion in this section:

X -é sě ɲú (where X is addressee, sg/pl)

I know you have done something good for me

I think of this thing as something I couldn't do

I feel something good towards you because of that

I want to say the kind of thing one should say to another when
s/he does things of this kind for him/her

I say: you have done something good for me
which I couldn't do

I say it because I want you to know how I feel

X -é wɔ dɔ́ (where X is addressee, sg/pl)

I know you have done something good for me

I feel something good towards you because of it

I want to say the kind of thing one should say to another when
s/he does things of this kind for him/her

I say: you have done something good for me

I say it because I want you to know how I feel

It should be observed that the essential difference between the two expressions lies in the second component of the explication of **X -é sě ɲú**. This component is absent from the explication of **X -é wɔ dɔ́**. Some support for the claim that the illocutionary purpose is to show the addressee how the speaker feels comes from the fact that these expressions can be terminated with addressive particles like **ló** 'I advise you' or **loo** 'I want you to pay attention to what I am saying'. This suggests that the expressions are informative. Besides they are full declarative sentences.

Finally, it should be pointed out that intensifiers can be added to these expressions to indicate the degree of gratitude felt. For example:

[79] è sě ɲú ká ká ká

2SG strong side much TRIP

‘Thank you very much’

In a later section, the expressions for felicitations will be discussed. It will become apparent then that there is a connection between these expressions for gratitude described in this section and those expressions for felicitations. They share the same predicates. Other expressions for gratitude discussed in the subsequent sections relate in some way to the expression in [77]; they make use of the noun **dɔ́** ‘work’ in one configuration or another.

14.6.1.5 X -é le dɔ́ dzí

To express appreciation and gratitude for something that someone is doing for you, one can use the following expression. Note that the X slot is again filled by the appropriate second person singular pronoun depending on the number of the addressees.

[80] wò / mia- wó é le dɔ́ dzí
 2SG/2PL PL aFOC be:PRES work top
 ‘YOU (sg/pl) are working’ i.e. ‘Thank you’

Essentially, this expression is the continuative aspect variant of **X - é wɔ́ dɔ́**. Some of the time the progressive variant may be used for the same purpose, viz. **X -é le dɔ́ wɔ́-mí**. Apart from the difference in aspect between these two expressions, it can be said that they are by and large synonymous. The discussion will therefore concentrate on the continuative aspect variant although the claims apply mutatis mutandis to the progressive aspect one as well (see Chapter 6 on aspect for the difference between the progressive and the continuative).

One can thus say that the meaning of the expression is a combination of the meaning of the continuative **le X dzí** (or the progressive as the case may be) and the meaning of **X -é wɔ́ dɔ́** (as explicated above). Thus one could represent the meaning of this formulaic expression as:

X -é le dɔ́ dzí

I know you are doing something good for me

I think you will do more of it after now

I feel something good towards you because of it

I want to say the kind of thing one should say to another when
 s/he does things of this kind for him/her

I say: you are doing something good for me

I say it because I want you to know how I feel

Two things are important here. First, there is the indication in the formula that the good thing is being done now. Second, there is the expectation that it will continue after the moment of speech. In other words the good work is not yet completed. This expression can be addressed to someone who is nursing or looking after a sick person or an elderly person, in hospital or at home. The assumption in such a case is that the person is going to continue looking after the sick person, for example, until s/he recovers.

The implication that the good thing being done is going to be continued is also reflected in the usage of this formula by a radio presenter to express appreciation for the good work that Ghanaians are doing. The relevant part of what he said is as follows:

- [81] *mía de ghana- tó wó*
 1PL nation G. POR PL
mia- wó é le do dzi
 2PL PL aFOC be:PRES work top
mia- wó é le ghana dukó lá tu- mí dó
 2PL PL aFOC be:PRES G. nation DEF buildPROG VS
 ‘People of our nation Ghana, you are working, you are building
 the Ghanaian nation.’

It is instructive that the speaker continues to expand on the kind of work that the people of Ghana whom he was addressing are doing, namely, they are building the nation of Ghana. The nation building is not yet completed and the speaker expects the addressees to continue the work after he has said this. This aspect of the speech formula is captured in the second component in the explication above. This formula has general applicability. That is, it can be used to show appreciation for good work being done irrespective of the specific kind of work as the examples cited demonstrate. In the next section another speech formula similar to the one discussed here but specifically addressed to people who look after other people is described.

14.6.1.6 *X-é le ame* { $\frac{dzi}{ta}$ } *kpó mí*

Again the X slot in this formula may be filled by the appropriate second person pronoun depending on the number of addressees. Note also that the postposition can be varied. This formula is used to express appreciation to someone who has been looking after people. Thus it may be said to parents, guardians and teachers in their role as educators and people who look after

children. The interesting thing is that the literal meaning of the expression as shown below is ‘You are looking after someone’.

- [82] wò / mia- wó é le ame ta /dzí kpó mí
 2SG 2PL PL aFOC be:PRES person head/top see PROG
 ‘YOU are looking after people’.

This formula can also be addressed to children who regularly provide for their parents or siblings. Similarly it can be used to show appreciation to someone who has been looking after a sick or elderly person. In general the formula may be addressed to anybody who the speaker acknowledges as someone who has a role of looking after a person or some people. The person being looked after could be the speaker himself/herself.

With these considerations, the illocutionary meaning of this formula could be represented as follows:

X-é le ame { dzí / ta } kpó mí

I know you are doing something good

I know it is not everybody who does things of this kind

I feel something good towards you because of it

I want to say the kind of thing one should say to another
 when s/he does things of this kind

I say: I know you look after people now

I think you will do more of it after this time

I say it because: I want to cause you to feel something good

I want you to know I feel something good towards you

The way the dictum is expressed is meant to reflect the declarative syntax and the progressive aspect of the sentence. It should be recalled that the progressive is used to code activities that are going on concurrently at the moment of speech. There is a further implication associated with the expression in the sense that it has been happening and one expects that it will continue. Indeed there is an aorist version of this expression which is used to express gratitude to someone who has played host to some people. But this is said at the time that the people are leaving and the implication is that the person has looked after the people and it is finished. The progressive version does not carry this implication. Thus a visitor who stayed at someone’s place can thank the host at the time of departure as follows:

- [83] wò / mia- wó é kpó ame ta /dzí
 2SG 2PL PL aFOC see person head/top
 ‘YOU have looked after people’

The illocutionary purpose for these expressions is to make the addressee feel good and to make him/her know that what he has done or is doing is appreciated. This is the view captured in the last component of the explication above.

14.6.1.7 N_{<temporal>} $\phi\acute{e}$ $d\acute{o}$ expressions

Ewe does not just have expressions for showing gratitude when one recognises that someone has done something good for him/her. As was mentioned earlier (§14.6.1.1), there are expressions which are used to express gratitude in anticipation of some services that the speaker expects the addressee to do for him/her in the near future. In this respect, Ewe is not that different from English, where one can say especially in a formal and written context: ‘Thanks in advance’ or ‘Thanks in anticipation (of your services)’.

In addition to such expressions, Ewe has a device that a speaker can use to express gratitude for something that the addressee may have done at some other time before the moment of speech. The device involves the use of a temporal noun that designates the time that the good thing was done and the noun $d\acute{o}$ ‘work’ or sometimes the noun $akp\acute{e}$ ‘clap’ is linked to it by the possessive connective $\phi\acute{e}$. Expressions of this kind are the following:

[84a] $ets\textcircled{\circ}$ $\phi\acute{e}$ $akp\acute{e}$
 yesterday poss ‘clap’
 ‘Thanks for yesterday’

[84b] $nyits\textcircled{\circ}$ $\phi\acute{e}$ $d\acute{o}$
 day before yesterday poss work
 ‘Thanks for the day before yesterday.’
 (lit: ‘the work of the day before yesterday’)

[84c] gb' - $\acute{a}q\acute{e}$ gbe $\phi\acute{e}$ $d\acute{o}$
 day INDEF day poss work
 ‘Thanks for the other day.’

It should be noted that the English glosses provided for these expressions are not formulaic.

There are two main uses of these expressions. First, they may be used in relation to a specific thing that the addressee may have done for the speaker within the time frame designated by the temporal noun. In this case the social and communicative function of these expressions is to express gratitude for something that has been done. In fact, one is obliged in the context of

communal living to go and visit one's benefactor the next day and express one's appreciation for the thing s/he may have done for you the previous day. Pazzi's (1980:340) comment about the expression of gratitude in the Gbe languages is pertinent here. He writes:

Quand on reçoit un cadeau, on se préoccupe d'exprimer sa gratitude. Cela se fait d'abord en communiquant joyeusement aux personnes de l'entourage, l'entité du cadeau reçu ... et on les prie de remercier le donateur. Le jour suivant, à la pointe du jour on se rend chez le donateur pour le remercier personnellement ... et en disant: 'Remerciement d'hier' (etsɔ̀ φé akpé).¹⁰

The only comment to add is that it does not matter whether the benefactor was thanked personally the first time or not, one has the obligation to go to the house of the benefactor the next day and express one's gratitude. Consider the following extract in which A. and his entourage had been well received by T. the previous day. When they go back to T. the next day, A. expresses gratitude for the reception and services of the previous day:

[85] T.:mie- vá ɖó a?
2PL come reach Q
'You are here?'

A.: ɛ̃ etsɔ̀ φé dɔ̀
yes yesterday poss work
'Yes, thanks for yesterday'

T.:mé sũ akpé o
3SG:NEG suffice 'clap' NEG
'It does not merit thanks' (Nyaku in press:29)

It should be noted that the responses to these time related gratitude expressions, are the same as those for the other expressions. The response in the extract above carries the same meaning that has been postulated for it in §14.6.1.2. In the second usage of the time related expressions, they have a different response (see discussion below).

The usage of the time related gratitude expressions discussed so far may be explicated as follows:

¹⁰ When someone receives a gift, s/he has a responsibility to express gratitude. This is done firstly by telling everyone what the gift is ... and asking them to thank the giver (for you).. The next day, first thing in the morning, one goes to the giver's house to thank him/her personally ... by saying "Thank you for yesterday".

N<temporal> ɸé dɔ́/akpé

I know this: at a time N you did something good for me

I feel something good towards you because of it

I want to say something good to you because of it

I say: you did something good for me at time N

I say it because: I want you to know how I feel

I want to cause you to feel something good

There may be the need to add a cultural knowledge component of the form ‘I think you and I know that I have to say this to you now.’ This is meant to capture the idea that irrespective of the time lag, the speaker has to express his/her indebtedness to the addressee. It is a debatable point whether this belongs to the semantic explication or should be specified in the ethnographic description. At this stage I only want to raise the issue without making any firm decision on it. It should however be noted that the essential thing about these time related expressions is that the time when the services or goods were donated is brought in focus.

The second usage of these expressions is for the acknowledgement of the services that people render to each other daily by virtue of their being part of the same community. In this respect the expressions are used as greetings or in greeting contexts. In such circumstances, some variations may occur in the constructions. First of all, the constructions may be truncated and only the temporal noun is used. The context supplies the inference that they relate to thanks. Thus as part of greetings one could hear the following words:

[86a] etsɔ

yesterday

[86b] nyitsɔ

day before yesterday

[86c] gbaɖégbe

the other day

The second variation that may occur in this context is that the expression relating to yesterday as in [85] may be transformed into a single word (especially in the southern dialects) to yield the following form:

[87] dɔ́ tsɔ

work yesterday

‘Yesterday’s work.’ i.e. ‘Thanks for yesterday’

One can speculate that this structure replicates the structure of the inverted possessor (1SG/2SG) pronoun (see §7.4.4). In that case, the noun **tsɔ** ‘yesterday’ is functioning as a kind of pro-form for a temporal noun.

Support for the distinct nature of the usages recognised here for the time related expressions also comes from the different responses that are used in the two contexts. It has already been indicated that when the expressions are used with respect to specific things that have been done for the speaker, the response is the same as for the other gratitude expressions. However when these expressions are used in the general sense the response is different. The response in this case is as follows:

[88] yoo, mia- wó hã
 OK 2PL Pl also
 ‘OK, you too’

This response shows that in the general sense the expression is a mere acknowledgement of receipt of the good thing that has been said and a return of similar good feelings on account of it. The strategy of downgrading and praise shifting are not involved here. This suggests that the expressions are not really used in the general sense to thank people but are more like salutations. The response also shows that the use of these expressions in the greeting context relate to activities which are understood to be communal and reciprocal in some way. Thus on a day after a funeral people greet each other and add the expression **etsɔ** **ɸé dɔ́** ‘thanks for yesterday’. Here the interlocutors may not have done anything specifically for each other but their participation in the communal events of the day before is what is being acknowledged.

These observations are also borne out by the fact that another response strategy employed with respect to the second use of these expressions is that the addressee echoes the salutation of the speaker. Thus the following could constitute a salutation-response pair:

[89] A: dɔ́ tsɔ
 work yesterday
 ‘Yesterday’s work’

 B: etsɔ ɸé dɔ́
 yesterday poss work
 ‘Yesterday’s work’

The echo response does show that the response to the expressions, when they are used in a greeting context, is a kind of return greeting in which the speaker wants to say the same kind of thing back to the addressee.

With these considerations in mind, the meaning conveyed by the time related expressions may be explicated very roughly as follows:

N_{<temporal>} (φέ dó/akpé)

I think you have been doing things for people

I think it is good

I feel something good towards you because of it

I want to say something to you because of it

I say: I think you did something good for people at time N

I say it because I want to cause you to feel something good

The illocutionary purpose of these expressions is to make the addressee feel something good. Notice also that in the explication, there is an evaluation of the kind of thing that the addressee may have done from the speaker's point of view.

14.6.2 Expressions for felicitations

14.6.2.1 X sě ńú and X wó dó

The expressions for felicitations as indicated earlier share some similarity with some gratitude expressions. In particular, the predicates of the felicitations are the same as those of the gratitude expressions discussed in §14.6.1.4. However they differ with regard to two features. First, the subject NP may be focus marked in the gratitude expressions whereas there is no focus marker in the felicitations. Second, and more importantly, the subject NP in the gratitude expressions refers to humans, but the subject NP in the felicitations designate supernatural beings.

Thus when some happy event occurs to someone such as his/her having had a baby, any of the following could be said to him/her:

[90a] máwu sě ńú!

God strong side

'God is strong.'

Response:

[90b] yoo, mia- wó é dó gbe dá

OK 2PL PL aFOC send voice up

'OK, YOU have prayed.'

[[91a] tógbé wó sě ńú!

grandfather PL strong side

'Ancestors are strong.'

Response: Same as [90b], or

[91b] yoo, mia - tɔ- wó hã
 OK 2PL POSSPRO PL also
 'OK, yours too.'

[92] ɲú wò nú wó sě ɲú!
 Side 2SG thing PL strong side
 'Beings (things) around you are strong.'

Response: [91b]

[93] máwú wɔ dɔ!
 God do work
 'God has worked.'

Response: [90b]

[94] tɔgbé wó wɔ dɔ!
 grandfather PL do work
 'Ancestors have worked.'

Response: [90b] or [91b]

[95] ɲú wò nú wó wɔ dɔ!
 side 2SG thing PL do work
 'Beings (things) around you have worked.'

The responses [90b] and [91b] are discussed later in §14.6.2.2. One should note here the identity of the predicates in the first three expressions and the last three and their similarity to those of the gratitude expressions.

The implication of the similarities and the differences between the gratitude expressions and the expressions for felicitation is that when one member of the community does something good for another then s/he is said to have strength or have worked. However, when something good happens to you, which you may or may not be responsible for having brought about, it is God, ancestors or other supernatural beings that are said to have strength or have worked. It is important to note that the English expressions used in similar situations do not encode the idea of the happy event happening to somebody as coming from God or any supernatural powers, rather the English expressions like Congratulations and Well done emphasise the relationship between the speaker and the addressee and concentrate on praising the individual. This should not be surprising to anyone familiar with the Anglo-

Saxon tradition of individuality and personal autonomy (see Ameka 1987 for a full comparison of these forms).

For the Ewes on the other hand, anything that happens to you is the work ultimately of God who may work in diverse ways through the ancestors or other spirits and divinities. So first, we get an idea of how the Ewes conceptualise the source of good (and bad) things that happen to people from these expressions. Second, the expressions viewed in their totality furnish excellent glimpses about the structure of the religion of the Ewes. Needless to say, these views are not unique to the Ewes. They are aspects of the African world-view (see Ameka (1985)).

To capture fully the meanings of the expressions, then, we need to enter the belief system of the Ewes and grasp the assumptions that relate to the concepts of God, ancestors, divinities and spirits. The Ewes, like many other Africans, believe in a Supreme Being called **Máwú** 'God' (Dzobo 1975, Pazzi 1980). All life and activity, material and non-material, derive from him. Besides God, however, there are other forces or powers which aid not only God in the discharge of his duties, but also humans. These forces comprise spirits - good as well as evil, divinities or lesser deities and ancestors. These various entities in the structure of the religion of the Ewes (and of Africans in general) permeate and manifest themselves in all human experiences so that 'at every point in the universe of African reality, the person is in contact with life forces that are expressed by means of God, spirits, ancestors, natural objects, even the universe itself' (Williams 1985:435). It is not surprising then that God, spirits, divinities and ancestors are ascribed the source of good things that happen to humans and are, as it were, praised for it.

But what exactly is the role of these beings in the life of humans? "The divinities", to use the words of Idowu (1973:170-171), "are ministers each with his own definite portfolio in the Deity's monarchical government. Each in his own sphere an administrative head of a department. They are also intermediaries between Deity and man especially with respect to their particular functions." The 'ministers', obviously, should play a part in bringing about good things to people. This is why the Ewes can say that they are strong or have worked in bringing about good things that happen to them.

In addition, "[T]he ancestor is a departed spirit who stands in peculiarly close relation to the tribe or the family: the life of the latter has been derived from him and because he is still in a sense one with it; his favour or disfavour has therefore a sharply focussed relation to it and is more urgently to be sought or avoided" (Farmer quoted in Idowu (1973:179)). The ancestors are considered as moral superintendents of the living. As such they do help to cause good things to happen to the living as the routines indicate. All these issues are crucial

cultural ideas that must be incorporated in an adequate formulation of the meanings of these expressions.

In Ewe then, because of these views, the praise for good things happening to somebody goes to supernatural beings and not to the individual. This contention is important because it exposes the Anglo-centric nature of Leech's comment that '...the Approbation Maxim [i.e. (a) Minimisee dispraise of *other* (b) Maximise praise of *other*, FA] is exemplified in the intrinsic courtesy of congratulations' (Leech (1983:132)). If these Ewe expressions are considered to belong to the family of congratulations then one can say that the praise does not go either to a self or addressee but to a third other. From this point of view, it can be argued that the Ewe expressions do not exemplify the Approbation Maxim.

In addition to the contexts mentioned so far, the Ewe expressions are also said to someone who has come out of hospital or has had an operation or in short, someone who has been in a dangerous situation but did not succumb to it. In such situations, the equivalent English expressions of the Ewe felicitation expressions are inappropriate. Conversely, the English expressions are very appropriate at weddings. An etiquette rule, it is claimed, is that *congratulations* are said to the groom rather than to the bride. However, the Ewe expressions are infelicitous when said to either the groom or the bride or both. Why?

My speculation is that in Ewe society, taking a partner is probably not regarded in itself as a spectacular achievement. Rather, marriage is the beginning of a process aimed at attaining something else (e.g. procreation). What one needs for such tasks is good wishes for prosperity and children etc., and not an adulation of an achievement. On the contrary, in Anglo-Saxon society taking a partner is a great personal achievement and one has to be congratulated for attaining it. Anna Wiezbicka (personal communication) has suggested that *congratulations* and *well done* are said felicitously in such a context in English presumably because in this society an individual has to search for and find a 'matching' and 'desirable' partner. If you succeed in doing this you must be praised for attaining something spectacular and good.

Be that as it may, our primary concern is to explicate the messages conventionally conveyed by a speaker who utters these Ewe expressions. I suggest the following semantic explications for the speech formulae used to express felicitations in Ewe:

Máwú sɛ ɲú!

'God is strong!'

I now know that something good has happened to you

I think you feel something good because of it
 I think we know that things of this kind don't happen if God
 does not cause them to happen
 I think we feel something good towards God because he has
 caused this thing to happen to you
 I want to say the kind of thing that one should say to another
 when things of this kind happen to him/her
 I say: God has done something good for you
 which people couldn't do
 I feel something good because of that
 I say it because I want you to know what I feel

Tógbéwó sě ńú!

'Ancestors are strong!'

I now know that something good has happened to you
 I think you feel something good because of it
 I think we know that it couldn't have happened if the
 ancestors did not want it to happen
 I think we feel something good towards the ancestors
 because of that
 I want to say the kind of thing that one should say to another
 when things of this kind happen to him/her
 I say: the ancestors have done something good for you
 which people couldn't do
 I feel something good because of that
 I say it because I want you to know what I feel

ńú wò ńú wó sě ńú!

'Beings around you are strong.'

I now know that something good has happened to you
 I think you feel something good because of it
 I think we know that it couldn't have happened if the beings
 that could cause things to happen to people
 did not want it to happen
 I think we feel something good towards the beings because of it
 I want to say the kind of thing that one should say to another
 when things of this kind happen to him/her
 I say: the beings have done something good for you
 which people couldn't do
 I feel something good because of that

I say it because I want you to know what I feel

Máwú wɔ dɔ!

'God has worked.'

I now know that something good has happened to you

I think you feel something good because of it

I think we know that it wouldn't have happened if God did not
cause it to happen

I think we feel something good towards God because of that.

I want to say the kind of thing that one should say to another
when things of this kind happen to him/her

I say: God has done something good for you.

I feel something good because of that

I say it because I want you to know what I feel because of it

Tógbéwó wò dó!

‘Ancestors have worked.’

I now know that something good has happened to you.

I think you feel something good because of that

I think we know that it would not have happened if the
ancestors did not cause it to happen

I think we feel something good towards the ancestors
because of it

I want to say the kind of thing that one should say to another
when things of this kind happen to him/her

I say: the ancestors have done something good for you

I feel something good because of that

I say it because I want you to know what I feel

ṣù wò nù wó wò dó!

‘Beings around you have worked’

I now know that something good has happened to you

I think you feel something good because of it

I think we know that it wouldn’t have happened if the
beings that could cause things to happen to people did not do
something to cause it to happen

I think we feel something good towards the beings
because of it

I want to say the kind of thing that one should say to another
when things of this kind happen to him/her

I say: the beings around you have done something good
for you

I feel something good because of that

I say it because I want you to know what I feel

14.6.2.2 The responses

One view that emerges from the discussion of the felicitation expressions is that the good thing that happens to the addressee was brought about by the intervention so to speak of supernatural beings. The responses to these expressions reproduced below as [96] and [97] suggest the view that the happy event is perceived as a communal thing rather than something that happens to an individual.

- [96] yoo, mia- wó é dó gbe dá!
OK 2PL PL aFOC send voice up
‘OK YOU (pl) have prayed.’

[97] yoo, mia - tɔ- wó hǎ!

OK 2PL POSSPRO PL also

'OK yours (pl) too (i.e. your ancestors and divinities etc).'

[96] indicates that the speaker i.e. the experiencer of the happy event conveys the idea that s/he is conscious of the fact that the good thing would not have happened to him/her if the addressee and other members of the community did not wish for it, even if only passively through their solidarity and group membership.

[97] further conveys the recognition on the part of the speaker that the good thing was not brought about only by his/her ancestors or divinities etc. but also by those of the addressee and indeed other members of the community as well. This, in fact, illustrates again the communal nature of the beings. God, ancestors, divinities, spirits are not 'personal' and 'private' preserves of individuals but they belong to the whole community and work together in their various roles for the community.

The responses to the felicitation expressions may be explicated as follows:

yoo, mia-wó é dó gbe dǎ!

I want you to know I have heard what you have said to me

I know that you feel something good towards me because

of something good that has happened to me

I feel something good towards you because of this

I want to say something to you because of this

I say: I think it wouldn't have happened if you and other

people did not want the beings to cause it to happen

I say it because: I want you to know what I think

I want to cause you to feel something good

yoo, mia-tɔ-wó hǎ!

I want you to know I have heard what you have said to me

Because of this, I know that you feel something good towards

me because of something good that has happened to me

I feel something good towards you because of this

I want to say something to you because of this

I say: I think it wouldn't have happened if the beings that

cause these things to happen to us did not want it to happen

I say it because: I want you to know what I think

I want to cause you to feel something good

The explications for the responses are identical in several respects. The main difference between them lies in their dicta. For [96] an attempt was made to capture the idea that it is all the people in the community who prayed to the beings to let the good thing happen. For [97] the idea in the dictum is that the good thing happened because the beings who are the source of good things allowed it. In a sense these responses have two parts: an initial yoo which serves to signal receipt of the addressee's utterance, and a further statement of what the speaker thinks of the situation. In the explications above, the first component is meant to capture the contribution of yoo to the total meaning of the response. The explications also contain deductions that the speaker makes about what the addressee said earlier thus attempting to capture some of the contextual meanings that are associated with the performance of these routines (see the second component, for example, in the explications).

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14.7 Formulae for expressing sympathy and apology

The expressions described in this section form a cline. At one end is the formula **baba** which is used to acknowledge either that the speaker has done something bad to the addressee or that something bad has happened to the addressee (for which the speaker is not responsible). Its use thus covers roughly speaking the situations that elicit sympathy and apology. In the middle are the expressions that are used to acknowledge responsibility for something bad that the speaker has done, or to ask to be pardoned for an offence committed. At the other end is the expression which is used to express sympathy and condolence to someone to whom something bad has happened.

14.7.1 baba

The expression **baba** is a form for apologising for any inconvenience caused by the speaker to the addressee. This inconvenience may be a serious one or a trivial one. Thus if you step on someone's toes or you bump into someone or you cause the slightest hurt to someone you are obliged to say **baba** to him/her. In addition it is very appropriate when someone has experienced something bad which the speaker witnessed but which s/he did not cause in any way. For instance, when someone hurts him/herself or accidentally slips on say a banana skin or stumbles, or is bereaved or grieved you might sympathise with him/her with **baba**. Thus **baba** is used in situations where one would use 'sorry' and 'I'm sorry' in English. Because of the wide range of use of the Ewe form and its equivalents in other African languages, the English word 'sorry' has a much greater range of use in African varieties of English than it does in the native dialects. This fact has been extensively documented in the literature.

Criper (1971:11) compares 'educated Ghanaian English' (EGE) - her Type 1, and presumably the variety used by this writer - with native (British) English and notes that: "At the level of context, Type I speakers will mostly use the same formal items in the same situations as Native English speakers but there are a few exceptions to this. For example, in the situation of someone hurting himself, a witness to this will say 'sorry' whereas a native English speaker would use 'sorry' only when he has been responsible for some damage to another person". Similar views are expressed by Sey (1973:109) for Ghanaian English and by Kirk-Greene (1971:141), Spencer (1971:29) and Trudgill and Hannah (1982:104) for West-African varieties of English (and see Bokamba 1982 on African varieties of English in general).

Akere (1978:414-5) puts the point very vividly for Nigerian English; it also applies *mutatis mutandis* to Ghanaian and other African varieties of English. He writes:

The form 'Sorry' in English is intended as a genuine apology for a mistake or a wrong doing, for causing some inconvenience to somebody, as an expression of regret for an action not intended but whose result adversely affects or inconveniences another person. In Nigerian English, the semantic field of 'Sorry' has become extended. It is used in addition to the above as an expression of sympathy or pity for a person involved in an accident or for minor things such as tripping, knocking one's toe against a stone and so on. In a classroom situation for example, if a lecturer accidentally drops his lecture notes or a piece of chalk his students would say 'Sorry, Sir'.

It should be noted that when people are involved in minor accidents such as tripping, expressions such as the following are appropriate in (native) English: *Hope you're not hurt.*~, *Are you alright?* etc.

Typically, the extended use of 'sorry' in these varieties of English is explained in terms of interference from the first languages of these speakers in which one form is used both for apology and sympathy which English apparently lacks. This explanation, in my view, is inaccurate because it is not true that English does not have a form used both for apology and sympathy. It does. *I'm sorry* is such a form (see Borkin and Reinhart (1978:60), Norrick (1978:262), Owen (1983:66 et seq.)). It seems to me, therefore, that it is not enough to explain the interference in terms of the lack of lexical equivalent. The uses of the English forms are described here and compared with those of the Ewe form to show what the differences are.

The excerpts cited earlier provide very useful hints about the use of *sorry* in native varieties of English. It is felicitous when the speaker is responsible in some way for the bad thing that has happened. Thus it is said after a speaker has stepped on the addressee's toes, or bumped (accidentally) into him/her, for

example. A very common use of *sorry* is that of asking for repeats in conversation. At first glance this may not seem to imply that the speaker has done anything bad to the addressee but it should be recognised that one of the norms in English conversation and many more cultures is that conversationalists have to be attentive and co-operative (Grice (1975, 1978), Leech (1983) Levinson (1983)). Hence if one interlocutor has not been attentive and did not get what the other said and asks for a repetition, it is a breach of contract which is a bad thing. Besides, asking someone to say what has been said again is, more or less, an inconvenience to him/her caused by the inattention of the other interlocutor; hence the latter must apologise for it. *Sorry* is also used in turning down invitations and offers. Here again, the speaker is unable to do something and so is responsible for causing displeasure - a bad thing - to the host. *Sorry*, then, involves a recognition of causing some inconvenience to the other and feeling bad for it.

In all the contexts discussed so far where *sorry* is used, *I'm sorry* would also be very appropriate. However, there are situations in which *I'm sorry* can be used while *sorry* cannot. For instance, *I'm sorry* is appropriate as a condolence while *sorry* is not. In general, it can be said that *I'm sorry* can be used to sympathise with people while *sorry* cannot. *I'm sorry* is also commonly heard in telephone conversations where a caller asks to speak to someone who turns out to be unavailable, the receiver sometimes prefaces this information with *I'm sorry*. Owen (1983:56) comments that "though the person receiving the call is not responsible for the unavailability of the person requested, apologies are routinely made". I am not sure if these are apologies. The English folk-label 'apology' as I understand it, refers to the expression of guilt and regret for something bad that the speaker has done. To my mind, the speaker in such a situation is only expressing how bad s/he feels that the one asked for by the caller is unavailable. Incidentally, Owen's corpus does not have an occurrence of *sorry* in such a context.

Apart from the inappropriate use of *sorry* for sympathy, *I'm sorry* further differs from it in that it is used, whether as apology or sympathy, for fairly serious matters (Borkin and Reinhart (1978:65-66), Fraser (1985:265 et seq.), Owen (1983:70)). The illocutionary purpose of *sorry* and *I'm sorry*, however, is the same, i.e. the speaker says either of them because s/he wants to show how bad s/he feels because of the bad thing that has happened to the addressee.

baba differs from each of these expressions in some way. It differs from *sorry* in so far as the latter cannot be used to sympathise with people. **baba** also differs from *I'm sorry* since the former can be used where the situation that triggers the sympathy or apology is trivial. **baba** unlike *sorry* and *I'm sorry* is not used to ask for repetitions in conversation. In addition, **baba** is sometimes

rendered idiomatically into English as ‘consolation’ (Adzomada (1968)). While this translation does not capture the whole import of the word, it is indicative of an underlying assumption in its use, viz. the speaker assumes that what is said would help assuage the grief of the addressee. The differences and similarities among the expressions *sorry*, *I’m sorry* and **baba** are quite discernible from the following explications of their meanings:

Sorry!

- (a) I know I have done something bad to you
- (b) I feel something bad because of that
- (c) I think you feel something bad towards me because of that
- (d) I want to say the kind of thing one should say to another when she/he does things of this kind to him/her
- (e) I say: I have done something bad to you
- (f) I say it because: I want you to know how I feel
I want to cause you to feel something good
- (g) I imagine that you would not want to feel something bad towards me because of what I say

I’m sorry!

- (a) I know that something bad has happened to you
- (b) I think you feel something bad because of that
- (c) I don’t want bad things of this kind to happen to you
- (d) I want to say the kind of thing that one should say to another when bad things of this kind happen to him/her
- (e) I say: I feel something bad because of the bad thing that has happened to you
- (f) I say it because I want you to know how I feel
- (g) I imagine I can cause you to feel something less bad because of what I say

baba

- (a) I know something bad has happened to you
- (b) I think you feel something bad because of that
- (c) I feel something bad
because I think of bad things that happen to you like this:
they happened to me.
- (d) I want to say the kind of thing that one should say to another when things of this kind happen to him/her
- (e) I say: I feel something bad (for you) because of the bad thing

that has happened to you

(f) I say it because I want t you to know how I feel

(g) I imagine that I can cause you to feel something less bad
because of what I say

If we compare the first component of each of the forms, for instance, it emerges that for *sorry* the speaker is responsible for the bad thing that has happened which is not necessarily the case for the other two. Note also that *baba* has one component - component (c) - which is not part of the meaning of *sorry* nor of *I'm sorry*. This component thus sets **baba** apart from the English expressions. It may well be that this is the component which is added onto the meaning of English 'sorry' in African varieties of English (see Ameka 1985 for elaboration on this point).

It should be noted that **baba** is a one word formula and not an interjection because it can take an addressee phrase as in the following example:

[98] baba na'wo`
 to 2SG
 'Sorry to you.'

It can also be reported using the verb **do** 'say'. This is the reason for the use of 'say' in the explication above.

14.7.2 *tɔ-nye me-dzo o*

The expression **tɔ-nye me-dzo o** literally 'mine is not straight' is used to acknowledge one's responsibility for something bad that one has done. It means 'I am guilty'. Consider the following extract in which the speaker admits her fault to her fiancé after they have had a petty quarrel:

[99] Nyuiko: fo, e` ga- le dɔme- dzo- e
 elder brother 2SG REP be:PRES stomach fire DIM
do' m' ɖe'ɲu- nye ko-ko-ko- a?
 wearPROG at side 1SG still TRIP Q
 'Dear, are you still annoyed with me?'

Adeladza: nye- me' do' dɔme- dzo- e ɖe'ɲu-'
 1SG NEG wearstomach fire DIM at side
wo` o. wo` e' do' dɔme- dzo- e
 2SG NEG 2SG aFOC wearstomach fire DIM
ɖe'ɲu- nye. nu' ka me- wɔ? ...
 at side 1SG thing WH 1SG do

'I was not angry with you. YOU were angry with me.
What have I done? ...

Nyuiko: tɔ- nye me' dzɔ o!
 POSSPRO 1SG NEG straight NEG
 'I am at fault'
 tsɔ' e ke- m
 take 3SG open 1SG
 'Forgive me' (Nyaku in press:24)

In this example, one can say that Nyuiko accepts responsibility or admits her fault with respect to the disagreement that they had. This applies only to the performative version of the utterance. If the person involved is a second or third person, then it implies that the speaker is apportioning blame to that person. For example, at an arbitration, the judge pronounces someone guilty of something using the same syntactic structure, but with the appropriate personal pronoun as in the following excerpt:

[100] ablewɔ' be'mia- gblɔ na'kofikuma' be'
 grandmother say 1PL tell to K. COMP
 nya si dzɔ la' e' tɔ- me' dzɔ o
 case REL happen TP 3SG POSSPRO NEG straight NEG
 'Grandmother says we should tell Kofikuma that in what has
 happened he is at fault.' (Akpatsi 1980:9)

Similarly when someone is acquitted, the positive version of the syntactic structure is used, as in the following example:

[101] tɔ- wɔ` dzɔ
 POSSPRO 2SG straight
 'Yours is straight'

However variations may occur. Thus the complainant in the above case was exonerated from guilt by the jury with the following words:

[102] melenya ya la' ablewɔ' be'
 M. as for TP grandmother say
 e' tɔ- e' nye' dzɔ-dzɔe- a loo
 3SG POSSPRO aFOC be straight RED NZR ADD
 'As for Melenya, grandmother says he (his) is right.'
 (Akpatsi 1980:9)

It should be noted that the verb **dzɔ** 'straight' is nominalised in the above.

It seems from these pieces of evidence that when the expression is used with respect to the speaker it constitutes an admission of guilt (see example 99). However, it does not in itself seem to make up a complete apology because it is always followed by another expression such as the one we find in [99] asking for forgiveness, or a pledge that the person would not do such a thing again. It is also sometimes followed by an expression of sympathy or consolation to the one who has been offended. Essentially then it can be said that the purpose of this expression is to acknowledge that the speaker is responsible for something bad that has happened.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication for **tɔ-nye me-dzɔ o**:

I know I have done something bad
 I feel something bad because of it
 I think you feel something bad towards me because of it
 I want to say the kind of thing that one should say
 when s/he does things of this kind
 I say: I have not done the right thing
 I say it because I want to cause you to know this:
 I know I have done something bad
 I think you would want to feel less bad towards me
 because of what I have said

The essential thing about this explication is that the illocutionary dictum represents the literal meaning of the expression. Furthermore, its purpose is just to indicate that the speaker is aware of his/her fault. As noted earlier, as the formula does not represent an apology in itself therefore there is no component which directly relates to that. A specific formula for apology is discussed in the next section.

14.7.3 *tsə́e ke-m*

As the extract in [99] shows, this expression is used to ask for forgiveness for a wrong that the speaker has done. In fact this is the formula used in a Christian confession to ask for forgiveness of one's sins. It is thus equivalent to English 'forgive me' or 'pardon me' in some of its uses. As its use in [99] above suggests, it may be used to ask for pardon for wrongs committed in personal relationships. It is also used in judicial contexts by the accused to ask for pardon from the plaintiff or the jury. What is common to all this is that someone realises that s/he has done something bad and is asking someone who is assumed to have authority to do so to forgive him/her for the offence. It is assumed that the addressee is affected in some way by the wrong that has been done.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication for ***tsə́e ke-m***:

I know I have done something that is bad for you
 I feel something bad because of it
 I think you feel and think something bad about me because of it
 I want to say something to you because of it
 I say: I want you to think and feel something good towards me
 I think you might not want to do this because of what I have done
 I say it because I want to cause you to think and feel something
 good towards me if you want to.

The first component tries to capture the idea that whoever the request is addressed to is affected in some way by the bad thing that the speaker has done. Thus in the context of using this formula to ask for forgiveness of transgressions against God, it can be assumed that the bad things that have been done affect God in a bad way. The dictum is phrased in terms of the speaker's wants because of the imperative structure of the formula. However since this is a request, the volition of the addressee with regard to accepting to carry it out is built into the illocutionary purpose component. The last but one component captures the idea that relations between the speaker and the addressee have been disrupted by the wrong doing and the speaker does not expect that the addressee would want to think or feel anything good about him/her. However by this formula the speaker invites the addressee to forgive him/her so that the good relations may be restored.

14.7.4 X - é kpé- e

This formula is used to commiserate with people to whom something bad has happened. The X slot may be filled by 2SG or 2PL pronoun according to the number of addressees involved. In the discussion the 2SG form will be used but the comments apply to the plural form as well. Thus the formula is realised in the following way:

[103] { $\begin{matrix} \text{wo} \\ \text{mia-wo} \end{matrix}$ } e' kpe' e
Error! aFOC meet3SG
 'YOU (sg/pl) have suffered it'

As noted earlier this formula is used to express condolences and sympathy to someone to whom something bad has happened. Thus this expression is said to people who are bereaved at funerals. The literal meaning of the formula is quite instructive, indicating that the speaker views the addressee as having suffered through some bad situation. The 3SG object pronoun in the formula suggests that the bad thing which has happened is assumed to be shared knowledge between the speaker and the addressee. The purpose of the expression is to show the addressee that the speaker is aware of his/her plight and to express his/her solidarity with him/her. It is meant to assure the addressee that there is support for him/her throughout the period of the bad situation.

The formula may be explicated as follows:

I know something bad has happened to you
 I think you feel something bad because of that
 I feel something bad because of it
 I want to say something to you because of it
 I say: something bad has happened to you
 I would want, it didn't happen (or: I wish it didn't happen)
 I say it because I want you to know I know it
 I want you to feel something less bad because of what I say

Some support for the illocutionary purpose component comes from the fact that one can add an addressive particle such as lo' to the formula **X - é kpé- e**. This suggests that the speaker is interested in making the addressee aware of the fact that s/he knows what is going on.

In the sixth component in the formula above it is indicated that the speaker wished that the bad thing had not happened. Part of the motivation for this

component comes from the message of the response that is given to this speech formula. The response is :

[104] yoo { mia-wo' } -e' ve'ame nu
 OK { 2SG } aFOC pity person mouth
 { 2PL-PL }
 'OK, YOU (sg/pl) have had pity on people'
 i.e. 'you have shown sympathy towards people.'

In this response, the respondent acknowledges receipt of what has been said to him/her. S/he further notes that the addressee has expressed sympathy towards him/her or has shown pity or mercy on people. From this, one can argue that the feeling component and the last component in the explication of X - e'kpe' e is justified. The response itself may be explicated as follows:

I know you have said something to me
 because of the bad thing that happened to me
 I feel something good towards you because of it
 I want to say something to you because of it
 I say: you are merciful
 I say it because I want you to know what I think/feel

Notice that the dictum just captures the literal meaning of the expression. The first component also captures the fact that the expression is a response. In fact the first part of the response is the form **yoo** which is a receipt signal. Its contribution is what is captured in the first component.

Further support for the analysis of the formula presented here comes from the use of the progressive aspect variant to wish a sick person well. The following form is addressed to sick people:

[105] { mia-wo' } e' le e' kpe' m'
 { wo' }
Error! aFOC be:PRES 3SG meetPROG
 'YOU (sg/pl) are suffering it'

This variant is thus functionally equivalent to the English expression 'Get well soon' which is used mainly in wishing cards. The Ewe expression is usually said to people whose sickness is fairly serious and which has persisted for some time. Its use seems to imply the wish of the speaker for the addressee to recover in good time. There also seems to be the hope that the grief or pain that the addressee feels will be assuaged because of what the speaker has said.

All these aspects of this variant are reflected in the explication of the aorist variant above.

14.8 Formulae for expressing ‘disclaimers’

The term ‘disclaimer’ is used here to cover both expressions which function as ‘requests’ in Goffman’s (1971) terms and those which function as ‘disarming apologies’ (Edmondson 1981) or ‘anticipatory apologies’ (Coulmas 1981). What is common to both types of functions is that they constitute a kind of excusing behaviour which the speaker engages in before doing something which may be thought of as socially offensive.

First, the formula **agòd̀** which is used not only in Ewe but across the languages of southern Ghana to request, so to speak, permission to perform certain socially defined activities is described. Second, the expressions used by a speaker to gain indemnity, as it were, before violating a social norm are discussed. The formulae discussed here are **mia (lo)** ‘left hand’ and its response which is used specifically to obtain permission to use the left hand in social interaction, and the one-word formulae **sebio**, **kafra** and **taflatse**. These one-word formulae are all borrowed into Ewe and they are all used across the languages of southern Ghana. They are used to preface a delicate or indecent thing that one wants to say. Some of these expressions are deferential in nature. Their discussion is therefore linked to the description of the deference marker **mede kuku** ‘I beg, please’ in Ewe.

14.8.1 agòd̀

It can be said that **agòd̀** has three distinct but related functions in Ewe. First, it is used as a request for permission or to gain attention to do something. In this usage its response is **ameè̀**. This is the usage which is common to the languages of southern Ghana. Second, it is used interjectionally when something bad is happening to the speaker or to someone else. In this usage it seems to have functions similar to those of oops! and oopsy daisy in English. This usage seems to be available only in Ewe and has not been attested in the other languages which use **agòd̀**. Third, **agòd̀** is used as a response to a call or an address term. This usage also seems to be restricted to Ewe. It should be noted that all the functions outlined above share some common features. They all pertain to an attention getting function. In some uses, the speaker requests the attention (the first and second uses) and in the other (the third usage) the speaker indicates that s/he is paying attention and is ready for anything that the interlocutor has to say. Each of these usages will be described in turn.

14.8.1.1 agòd̀ - ameè̀

The commonest use of this conversational routine in Ewe and in other languages of southern Ghana is to signal that the speaker wants to enter the premise of someone else. It may thus be said at the entrance of a house or a room or a compound to draw attention to the speaker and to announce his/her approach. The response **amee** is used by the addressee to grant permission for the visitor to enter. Consider the following example where Atɔ̀glo, the visitor, announces his arrival with **agòd̀** and requests permission to be allowed to enter Adladza's room.

[106] Atɔ̀glo: agòd̀!
 'agoo'
 Adladza: amee, atɔ̀glo, wò e' zɔ
 'amee' A. 2SG aFOC walk
 Atɔ̀glo: 'agoo' (i.e knocking)
 Adladza: 'Come in, Atɔ̀glo, welcome (Nyaku in press:16)

In this context, **agòd̀** is equivalent to knocking on the door or ringing a door bell. Sometimes **agòd̀** is accompanied by knocking on the door. In some cases the iconic depictive of knocking on a door is used instead of **agòd̀**. Thus one can say **kɔ̀-kɔ̀-kɔ̀-kɔ̀** to request right of entry to a place. In this case the response can be the same as that of **agòd̀**, namely, **ameè**.

This contextual use of **agòd̀** is the one that has been widely noted in the literature and it is the one common to the languages of southern Ghana. Thus for Ewe, Westermann (1928) has the following entry, note the first part in particular:

call before entering a house or when calling attention,
 also reply to a call

Similarly Agblemagnon (1969:158) describes **agoo** as:

formule de politesse pour s'annoncer et s'excuser lorsqu'on
 arrive chez quelqu'un¹¹

Similar comments are found in the descriptions of the languages in which the form is used. The following are cited to give an idea of the consistent nature of the function of **agoo** across various language boundaries. It should be noted that the languages have been selected to represent different genetic sub-groups.

Nkonya (Guang)

agoo! greeting before entering a house. (Reineke 1972)

¹¹ 'a politeness formula for announcing and excusing oneself when one arrives at another's home.'

Akan (Tano)

agoo interjection; a salutation in or before entering a house
by day or by night, announcing that a visitor is coming.

(Christaller 1933)

Ga (Ga-Dangwe)

agoo interjection; giving notice of approach. (Zimmerman 1972)

Lelemi/Lefana (Togo)

agoo! 1. call before entering a house

2. to call the attention of a crowd. (Hoftman 1971)

The response to agoo in all these uses is **ame(e)**.

The last citation adds a second contextual use, namely, the use of **agoo** by a speaker who wants to make a speech at a public gathering, for example. Here, the use of **agoo** indicates that the speaker wants the addressees to be quiet and to listen and pay attention to what s/he wants to say. It is thus used to get attention as in the first context of use described earlier. The response **amee** from the audience signals that they are ready to listen. In some instances, when it is used to request silence, the verbal response is not used. Rather the audience just oblige by keeping quiet as was the case in the following example.

[107] Klokpa: agoo! ... ɔɔɔe' ne'zi ... mi- ɔɔ'to'
'agoo' tumult IMP stop 2PL set ear
'agoo! let there be silence.... on your ears.'
(Setsoafia 1982:7)

Klokpa is the towncrier and in this example he is calling people to attention at a village meeting. Notice that the utterances following this one explicitly call for silence.

In the contexts of use of **agoo** described so far, the one-word formula **agoo** may enter into construction with other linguistic elements such as the addressive particles **lo'** and **hee** both of which mean 'I advise you'. In fact some authors even list the combination of **agoo** and **lo'** as a fixed expression (cf Ansre 1966:244 and Westermann 1930:112).¹² Further evidence for the fact that agoo is a one-word formula comes from its co-occurrence with an addressee phrase as in the following example:

[108] agoo na'wo, nɔvi' aɔbale~ xle~ la'...
'agoo' to 2SG friend book read NER
'Agoo to you, dear reader ...' (Dogoe 1964:44)

¹² Interestingly enough, a similar advisory particle, **ei** or **ee** is added to **agoo** in Ga. At the beginning of an announcement recorded in Kropp Dakubu (1981:169) we get the following: agoo ei, ... 'Hail ...'

Another feature common to the contexts of use described so far is that the form **agoo** can be responded to with **amee**. In this respect they differ from the contextual usage described next.

A third context of use of **agoo** which is also found in the other languages of southern Ghana but which has received little mention in the literature is its use to ask for the right of way in a crowded street, for example. **agoo** is thus used to ask people to move out of the way for the speaker to pass. In this context, it does not elicit a verbal response, but rather a nonverbal one, that is, an action on the part of the addressee. Consider the following example of the use of **agoo** in which the co-utterance clearly indicates that it is used to ask people to give way. The context of this example is this: The speaker is furious with someone who has been falsely reported to him to have been back-biting him. The speaker wants the people around to give way so that he can go and have a fight with him straight away.

[109] agoo, mi- na' mɔ' m ma' yi
 'agoo' 2PL give way 1SG 1SG:IRR go
 ma' do' go- e fifi laa
 1SG:IRR wearpants 3SG now right
 'Agoo, give me way, to go and meet him right now.'
 (Gadzekpo 1982:12)

Another difference between this contextual usage and the ones discussed earlier is that if **agoo** enters into construction with a dative phrase, the object of this phrase refers to the speaker rather than to the addressee as is the case in the earlier uses. This perhaps suggests that this use is for the benefit of the speaker rather than the addressee. However, it still has an addressee or an intended interpreter because in this usage too the addressive particles can be used with **agoo**. It does seem justified to group this contextual use with the others discussed so far. Observe that in the following example, the object of the dative phrase following **agoo** is the first person pronoun which refers to the speaker. Notice also that in this case, the speaker is asking to be set free as she wrestles out of the grip of her fiancé.

[110] Adladza: (e' le' e' φe' alɔ- nu) nyuiko!
 3SG hold 3SG poss handmouth N.
 '(He held her hand) Nyuiko!
 Nyuiko: (e' uli do le e' si)
 3SG wrestle get out at 3SG hand
 agoo na'nye dahea
 'agoo' to 1SG poor

'(She wrestled out of his hand)
Give way to me , a poor one.' (Nyaku in press:19)

To summarise thus far, three contextual uses of **agoo** in its function as an attention-getting signal have been described. These uses are (i) to request permission to enter someone's premises, (ii) to request silence before speaking, and (iii) to ask for the right of way for the speaker to pass through. It has been noted that these three uses of the form **agoo** are found in other languages of southern Ghana. These uses of **agoo** can be roughly paraphrased as 'May I come in?', 'May I speak to you?' and 'May I get through?'. It should be noted that a verbal response is elicited for the first two uses. This is not the case for the last one.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication to account for the attention-getting function of **agoo** as described so far:

agoo

- (a) I want to do something
- (b) I know that if one wants to do things of this kind
one has to say something
- (c) I want to say the kind of thing that one has to say
- (d) I say: I want to do something
- (e) I want you to know it
- (f) I think I cannot do it if you don't want me to
- (f) I say it because I want you to do something
that would cause me to know I can do it

In all the uses of **agoo** discussed so far, it is said before an event . This means that a speaker is announcing or advising that s/he is about to do something. Recall that **agoo** can be used in collocation with advisory particles in these usages. These aspects of the form are captured in components (a) and (e). Further partial support for component (e) comes from the intuitive descriptions that are offered for the item especially in terms of **agoo** being used to announce the approach of someone. It would seem to imply that the formula is used to give information.

It also seems fair to say that part of the knowledge of the native speakers of the group of languages in which this formula is used is that one has to indicate that s/he is about to do things of the kind that **agoo** is used to preface. This aspect of the illocutionary meaning is hopefully captured in component (b). Underlying component (c) is the view that native speakers have a repertoire of symbols (including gestures) which may be conventional or nonce forms from

which to select to perform the same communicative act that **agoo** is used for. It should be recalled that one could physically knock or use the verbal descriptive phrase of 'knocking' to signal one's approach.

The response to **agoo** varies according to its use. There are those uses that require a verbal response, for example, when used before entering a house. When it is used to request permission to get through, the addressee need not give a verbal response. S/he could just respond by stepping aside. To capture both situations of verbal and non-verbal responses, the illocutionary purpose component has a 'do' rather than a 'say' in it. This verb captures both verbal responses and non-verbal ones. The 'something' in component (a) and also in the dictum - I want to do something - can be figured out when the expression is anchored in context either as entering a place, saying something, or passing through. The general explication provided would thus seem to be potentially predictive of the range of uses that **agoo** is put to in its attention getting function.

Now, we turn to the standard response to **agoo** in the uses described so far, namely **amee**. Agblemagnon (1969:194) offers the following characterisation for it with respect to Ewe:

formule de politesse par laquelle on autorise l'étranger ou le nouveau venu à pénétrer dans la maison ou à prendre place dans le groupe des présents¹³

This view restricts the use of **amee** to only one context. That is, its use to grant entry to a place to people. It excludes the other usage of **amee** in which it is used to indicate, roughly speaking, something like 'Speak, I am listening!'. This characterisation is thus too narrow. I suggest that the communicative strategy encapsulated in this routine expression may be more precisely paraphrased as follows:

amee

- (a) I know that you want to do something because you have said it
- (b) I think we know that you cannot do this thing you want to do
if I don't say you can do it
- (c) I say: you can do it
- (d) I say it because I want to cause you to be able to do
what you want to do

The main points about **amee** are (i) that it is used to acknowledge a previous utterance (component (a)), and (ii) to grant permission, so to speak, to one's

¹³ 'a politeness formula by which one authorises a visitor or the new arrival to come into the home or to take their place among the people present.'

interlocutor to do what s/he wants to do (component (c)). By uttering this response word, the speaker licenses the addressee to do what s/he wants. This is the idea captured in the illocutionary purpose component. Component (b) is meant to capture the shared knowledge that the interlocutors have concerning the fact that if there was no such response the agoo-sayer cannot do what s/he wants to do.

To conclude this section, some speculations are offered on the diachrony and spread of the **agoo-amee** conversational routine across the languages of southern Ghana. Southern Ghana is a kind of convergence zone. However, since the languages in this area belong to different branches of the New Kwa family of the Niger-Congo phylum it is not always clear whether the shared features are due to genetic inheritance or are the result of diffusion (cf. Ellis 1984).

With reference to the expressions in question, **agoo** could probably have a genetic source. Evidence for this speculation is found outside Ghana. Yoruba, an Old Kwa but New Benue-Congo language spoken in western Nigeria, has the form *ago* which is used in similar situations to the Ghanaian term. This point is noted by Kropp Dakubu (1981:177) when commenting on the forms in Ga. She writes: “This call and response (i.e. *agoo* and *amee*) are by no means exclusively Ga. They are used at least by the Akan and the Yoruba as well.” Further research is required to establish conclusively whether this item is a proto-Volta-Congo form or not.

If it can be tentatively assumed that the occurrence of **agoo** in the languages of southern Ghana is due to genetic inheritance, it is rather hard to hazard any guesses on the source of its response **amee**. For one thing, it has not been attested in Yoruba. Its Yoruba equivalent is **ago ya** ‘saying ago is not necessary’.

The issue is further complicated by other responses to **agoo** that are found in Ewe (but not in the other languages). In Ewe, the words for ‘human being’ or ‘person’ include **ame**, **gbeto** and a combination of the two **amegbeto**. The Ewes have either reanalysed and reinterpreted the *amee* response as standing for a human being, or they have constructed a folk etymology for it. Thus for them, the **amee** response implies ‘let a human being come in’ and ‘let a human being speak’. Consider the following exchanges which are representative of the Ewe responses:

- [111] A: agoo !
 B: gbeto, ge' de'e' me.
 person enter to 3SG in
 A: 'Agoo!'

B: 'Human being, come in!'

[112] Agbledela: agoo!

Kese : agoo ne' nɔ afi' ma'
 'agoo' IMP be:NPRES placeDEM
 ame ne' ge' de'e' me.
 person IMP enter to 3SG in

Agbledela: 'Agoo!'

Kese : 'Let 'agoo' be there and
 let the human being come in.' (Setsoafia 1982:28)

Indeed Agblemagnon (1969:158) specifically suggests that the **amee** response is based on the word for 'person'. He comments on it as follows:

*"ame 'la personne' est la réponse que l'on fait a quelqu'un qui s'annonce par la formule agoo"*¹⁴

This kind of evidence or argumentation could lead one to conclude that the item originated in Ewe. But if such a position is assumed, it would yield a direction of borrowing and diffusion which is the direct opposite of the normal trend of the spread of items in the area. Items are more likely to diffuse from or through Akan in the area because of its historical and cultural influence (cf. Dolphyne and Kropp Dakubu 1988:56). For this reason some dictionaries ascribe an Akan source to **agoo** and **amee**. However, the silence of Christaller (1933) on the etymology of these words makes one suspect that they may not originally be Akan (Kropp Dakubu private communication). Further research is needed to establish what the source of these items is.

Be that as it may, **agoo** has other functions in Ewe which have not been attested in the other languages of southern Ghana. These extended functions of **agoo** in Ewe further complicate the search of the source for these forms. These other functions are described in subsequent sections.

14.8.1.2 Interjectional use of agoo

In Ewe, when someone trips or slips on a banana skin, for example, or stumbles and hits his/her foot against a stone, s/he could utter **agoo**. It is also said when people bump into each other. In these situations, **agoo** is used in a way similar to that of oops in English. In addition when someone observes another person in a similar precarious situation s/he could utter **agoo**. Thus when someone sees a child about to fall, for example, an on-looker can utter **agoo**. Here it is similar to oopsy daisy in English.

¹⁴ 'ame literally 'the person' is the reply that someone makes to someone who announces him/herself by the formula agoo.'

This usage of the form is interjectional or expressive in nature. There is no addressee, although there may be witnesses whose attention the speaker may want to get. Apart from this, the form **agoo** has a characteristic intonation pattern, different from the pattern that is used for it in other usages. As an interjection, **agoo** is produced on a high pitch with rising intonation: **aḡoó**. Recall that in the contexts of use described earlier **agoo** is produced on a low pitch: **aḡoò**. Furthermore, **agoó** does not enter into construction with any other linguistic elements like addressive particles when it is used in these contexts. These pieces of evidence support the view that it is used interjectionally in these contexts.

The contexts of use of the interjectional **agoo** can be related in some way to the first function of **agoo** described in §14.8.1.1. The speaker in the first function uses **agoo** to draw attention to him/herself and indicate that s/he wants to do something. In this interjectional function, the speaker also draws the attention of people to the fact that something bad is happening, either to him/herself or to someone else. Support for this view is partially provided by a proverb in Ewe which says that when a thief stumbles s/he does not say **agoo**. The proverb is:

[113] fiafi kli- nu' me' do- a' agoo o
 thief strike thing NEG say HAB 'agoo' NEG
 'A thief who trips does not say 'agoo'.' (cf. Dzobo 1973)

It appears that if a thief stumbled and said **agoo** s/he could draw attention to him/her self. From this, it may be concluded that the interjectional use of **agoo** also implies an attention getting function.

It seems also that **agoo** is uttered in these situations to effect a change in the direction of something that is happening in the real world. That is, it is a request that the bad thing should stop happening, or that a bad result which could result from the present bad thing should not come about. If someone trips and is about to fall, presumably s/he says **agoo** because s/he does not want to fall. Tripping is itself a minor bad thing, but something worse could follow it. Because of this, **agoo** is said to stop it from happening.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication to account for the interjectional use of **aḡoó**:

I now know something bad is happening to me/to someone
 I don't want more of it to happen

I think if more of it happens,
 something very bad can happen because of it
 I think if I say something I can cause it not to happen
 I say [aḡoo] because I want something else to happen
 that would cause more of this bad thing not to happen

The first component captures the idea that the speaker perceives something bad happening to him/her or someone else. The second component relates to the wish of the speaker that the bad thing should stop. The third component is an attempt to capture the idea that the bad thing which is currently happening can lead to something worse. The fourth component expresses the speaker's belief that through the power of the word s/he utters, the bad thing can be stopped. The last component represents what is uttered and why it is uttered. This component is consistent with the communicative purpose component of interjections. In the next section, we shall describe another expression **agoo gbo** which may also be used in the same situations as **agoo**'is.

14.8.1.3 agoo gbo

In Ewe, **agoo** also forms a fixed collocation with the word **gbo**. Westermann (1928) glosses the word **gbo** as 'meanwhile, in the meantime, for the present'. If it is assumed that **agoo** roughly means 'request attention for something to happen', then perhaps compositionally the expression means something like 'request attention for something else to happen in the meantime'. This fixed collocation acts as a kind of discourse routine and is used mainly to change the direction of discourse. In some of its uses it is equivalent to hang on or wait a minute in English. Consider the following example:

[114] Sefako: srɔ̃ɖeɖe geɖe- wo' ɖe' gbegblẽ ku ɖe'
 marriage several PL poss spoiling hangat
 srɔ̃ ɲɔ̃su- wo' nɔvi' wo', vevi' tɔ,
 spouse man PL sibling PL important cmpv
 nyɔ̃nu- wo', ɖe' fuɖeɖe na'wo' nɔvi' wo'
 womanPL poss trouble to 3PL sibling PL
 srɔ̃ wo' ɲu'
 spouse PL side

'The ruin of several marriages relates to the trouble that
 the siblings of the husbands, especially the sisters, give
 to the wives of their brothers.'

Agblesi: agoo gbo mia- se na' m o ɖe?
 'agoo' meantime NEG:2PL hear to 1SG NEG Q

'Hang on, do you want to hear something?'...

(Nyaku in press:10)

The context of this example is this: Agblesi and Sefako are two of the three wives of a polygamous man. All the wives were having a discussion about the role of sisters-in-law in destabilising marriages. Sefako makes a general statement as cited above. Agblesi then butts into the conversation to give some specific information about their own sister-in-law and their husband, and she prefaces whatever she wants to say with the expression **agoo gbo**. Here, it seems that the form serves to change the direction of discourse as well as to claim the floor. It also seems to be used here to ask for the suspension of the general topic and to get the attention of the conversationalists to listen to the specific relevant piece of information. Notice that the co-utterance specifically invites the interlocutors to listen to something.

Perhaps the function of **agoo gbo** to change the direction of discourse and activity is more evident from the following example:

[115] Adeladzaĩ me- da'akpe'na'wo` ... agoo gbo
 1SG put clap to 2SG 'agoo meantime
 a` te'ŋu'a' kpo' m foŋli sia
 2SG:IRR can IRR see 1SG dawn DEM
 hafi' ma- dze mo' a?
 before 1SG:IRR land road Q
 'I thank you very much ... Wait a minute, can you
 see me at dawn before I hit the road?'

(Nyaku in press:25)

The speaker is the fiancé of the addressee and he is going on a journey early the next morning. Notice that the speaker was on the verge of getting into the stage in their conversation where they would say goodbye. It seems that it occurs to him that they could see each other the next morning before he leaves and he therefore utters **agoo gbo** to change the direction of the discourse. By doing so he interrupts the development of the discourse leading up to the point of saying goodbye. It may be inferred that he asks for something else to happen instead of the goodbye by saying **agoo gbo**. These examples suggest that the use of **agoo gbo** implies that the speaker wants something which would normally follow or continue what is happening at the moment during the discourse not to happen in the meantime.

In addition to such uses of the expression in discourse organisation, **agoo gbo** may also be used in a manner similar to that of **agoó'** described in §14.8.1.2.

That is it may be said by someone who stumbles or trips, and it may also be uttered when something bad is happening to someone else other than the speaker. Thus if someone is about to fall down on the stairs, a witness might say **agoo gbɔ**. In this context also it seems the speaker uses the formula to ask for the bad thing or its result to be delayed. It should not happen yet.

To account for the range of uses of **agoo gbɔ**, I propose the following explication:

I think someone wants more of what is happening now to happen

I don't want this

I want to say something because of this

I say: I want something else to happen now

I say this because I want to cause it to be able to happen

The first component contains 'someone' rather than 'you' because we want a general explication that would also account for the use of the formula when something bad is happening to someone other than the addressee, that is, the speaker or a third party. The second component relates to the view that the speaker wants the present happening to stop. The illocutionary dictum indicates that the formula is meant to change the direction of things happening at least for a while. The way this component is phrased is to capture a wide range of uses of the form and takes the compositional meaning of the formula into account. The purpose of this expression would appear to be that the speaker wants his/her wishes fulfilled by uttering the formula.

14.8.1.4 agoo as a response to vocatives

Another use of **agoo** which seems to be restricted to Ewe (and perhaps other Gbe dialects) is its use in response to a call or an address. Recall the second part of Westermann's gloss of the **agoo** quoted in §14.8.1.1. For example, the following dialogue occurred at a village meeting where one of the elders called out to his interlocutor by name.

[116] Sekle: seńyo´

Senyo

Senyo: agoo,tsiami- gaʒ, nye- e´ nye´ eşi

'agoo' linguist big 1SG aFOC bethis

'Agoo', chief linguist, I am here.' (Setsoafia 1982:115).

It is instructive that in this example, the respondent to the call goes on to present himself to the hailer. In this function, one can say that **agoo** seems to convey the fact that the responder is attentive and perhaps ready to hear

whatever his/her interlocutor has to say. From this perspective, this usage is also related to the attention getting function in that the utterer of **agoo** is drawing his/her interlocutor's attention to his presence and preparedness for the subsequent interaction.

This use is distinct from the others described earlier in two respects. First it is completive in function in the sense that it completes an adjacency pair whereas in the other uses, **agoo** is the initial part of a pair or constitutes a move by itself. Second, and related to the first, is the fact that the response usage is reported with a distinct verb whereas the other usages are reported periphrastically using the verb **do** 'say' as in example [113] above. Consider the following report in a narrative of a call and a response involving the use of **agoo**:

[117] e^z yɔ^z e ... be^z 'amega^z aɖukonu ..'
 3SG call 3SG comp Mr A.
 e^z tɔ be^z 'ago'
 3SG respond comp agoo
 'He called him: 'Mr Adukonu ...'. He responded: 'Agoo'.
 (Akpatsi 1980:63)

Notice that the verb **tɔ** 'to respond' is used in the report which provides linguistic evidence for the distinct nature of this usage of **agoo**.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication to account for the use of **agoo** as a response:

I know you want to say something to me
 because of what you have said
 I think I should say something to you because of it
 I say: you can say it now
 I say it because I want you to know I want it to happen now

In general, calls may have a number of functions, for example, the caller may wish to locate the addressee or the caller may wish to get the addressee's attention. **agoo** seems to be used to respond to calls that have the attention getting function. In the examples cited earlier the interlocutors were both in the same place so the call could not have been for locating the addressee. Rather it is meant to capture the attention of the addressee. For this reason, the first component in the explication indicates that the respondent is aware that the interlocutor wants to say something to him/her. The purpose of **agoo** in response is to notify the caller that the respondent is attentive and ready for what s/he wants to say, hence the last component in the explication.

In the preceding sections, three main functions of the **agoo** formula have been described: attention getting before entering a house or before a speech, the interjectional use and the response function. At this stage, it appears that the first function is the one that is an areal feature of southern Ghana. The other functions seem to be restricted to Ewe (and other Gbe dialects). One would hope that detailed investigations of the functions of **agoo** in other languages will become available so that we can establish conclusively whether these functions are unique to Ewe. Such studies would also be invaluable for determining the diachrony and spread of the formula.

14.8.2 mia (lo) - request to use the left hand

Now we turn to a requesting formula tied to a specific situation in Ewe. A very common and presumably civil practice in Anglo-Saxon culture, for example, is the use of the left hand for almost anything. In Ewe society (and some other African subcultures (see Ameka 1985) as well as some Asian cultures), the use of the left hand is restricted almost exclusively to the performance of ablutions. Because ablutions are thought of traditionally as 'dirty' or 'filthy', the hand that is customarily used for them is also considered 'dirty' and 'unwholesome'. It is forbidden therefore to use the left hand - the 'dirty' hand - in interaction with people. Its use in social intercourse implies an insult. Thus one cannot pass on something to another or wave to someone with the left hand. It is rude to point to somebody or to draw someone's attention to oneself with the left hand. In short the left hand should not be used when gesticulating. What African student is not shocked during the first few days in a pan-English country, for example, when people put up their left hands in order to get attention! Sometimes, serious social disasters occur in cross-cultural communication in relation to this value (see Ameka 1987:320 for an example).

Notwithstanding this cherished norm in Ewe society (and many other African ones), it is recognised that at one time or another, one might not be able to use the right hand in every situation that one ought to. The society permits the use of the left hand in such situations but one must excuse one's behaviour, gain indemnity, so to speak, to violate a social norm. One formula used in such situations makes specific reference to the left hand:

[118] mia (lo)!
 Left ADD
 'The left hand!'

The response from the addressee to this expression is:

[119] asi' - e!

Hand aFOC

'It is a hand!'

Impressionistically, we can say that in this conversational routine the speaker notifies the interlocutor that the hand s/he is using is the left one and the addressee acknowledges that it is a hand. This implies that the addressee, as it were, grants permission for the use of this hand. It further means that both conversationalists have agreed to suspend the implication of insult in the use of the left hand.

The addressive particle **lo** that is sometimes tagged on to **mia** (left hand) is an advisory particle. It can be paraphrased roughly as 'I advise you'. This is further evidence that part of the communication that a speaker puts across to his/her interlocutor by uttering this formula pertains to an advice concerning what s/he is about to do. The routine can thus be roughly paraphrased as:

I advise you that I am using the left hand.

This routine is one of those that parents and indeed adults in general drill children in. In addition, Ewe, for example, has a repertoire of proverbs that teach morals about the correct use of the left hand as well as its 'unwholesome' nature. One such proverb is:

[120] wo' me' tsɔ' a' mia fia' a' ame- φe'
 3PL NEG take HAB left show HAB person poss
 du- me mo' o
 town in way NEG

'The left hand is not used to point the way to one's hometown.'

Dzobo (1973:37) explains this proverb by saying: "the left hand is traditionally considered as an unclean hand because it is used for cleaning the anus, and so if you use it to point the way to your hometown it means that you do not think much of your hometown". It should be clear then that if you point to somebody with the left it does imply that you do not think much of him/her. I would go further than that and say that you regard the person as a nonentity.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explications for the illocutionary meaning of the formula and its response:

mia (lo)!

'The left hand.'

I know we should not do things of this kind with the left hand

I think you know that I would not have done things of this
 kind with the left hand if I could

I cannot do this thing that I want to do with the right hand

I want to say the kind of thing that one should say to the other
 when one cannot do things of this kind with the right hand

I say: I have to do this thing with the left hand
 I feel something bad because of that
 I say it because I want to cause you not to feel something bad
 because of it
 I imagine that you would not want to feel something bad
 towards me because of this

asi' - e!

'It is a hand.'

I think you wouldn't do this thing with the left hand
 if you could have done it with the right hand
 I say: the left hand is a hand
 I don't feel anything bad because of it
 I don't want you to feel something bad because of it
 I say it because: I want you to know what I think about it
 I want to cause you not to feel something bad
 because of it

These explications contain elements of the shared cultural knowledge that the interlocutors draw on in their interaction. The person who wants to use the left hand wants to be excused for it. S/he assumes that the addressee will understand that s/he wouldn't use the left hand if s/he can help it. An important component of the left hand formula is that the speaker invites the addressee not to feel insulted and thereby think that the speaker is a rude person. These ideas are captured in the last two components of the explication. The interlocutor's response provides an assurance that s/he understands that the person has to use the left hand. S/he affirms that there is nothing wrong with using the left hand in this context. It is also a hand. S/he also advises the interlocutor not to feel bad because of the use of the left hand.

This formula is specific to the use of the left hand. Some of the other formulae discussed in the subsequent sections can also be used before using the left hand. This is one of the motivations for the fourth component in the explication of **mia (lo)!** above. However these other expressions **sebio**, **kafra**, **taflatse'** and **mede kuku'** have more general applicability. Each of them will now be described in turn.

14.8.3 sebio

This formulaic word is often glossed as 'excuse me' or 'I beg your pardon' (Westermann 1930:113). It is a word which has been borrowed into Ewe and which is used like agoo and others across the languages of southern Ghana.

It is used before saying something which is thought of as socially and culturally bad. A speaker uses it to gain indemnity before violating the accepted norms of verbal behaviour. It is one of the things that one should preface to the mention of the name of a deceased person. In Ewe culture (and other cultures of southern Ghana) deceased people - ancestors - are venerated. Their names should not be mentioned in the course of casual speech. If one has to do so, one should excuse one's rude behaviour.

Another context in which the item occurs is just before the mention of an off-colour word in conversation. Dirty and taboo phrases are usually preceded by it. Any blunt talk about sex matters, for example, should be hedged with such an expression. Consider the following quote from the written version of a radio-talk on jealousy in Ewe. The speaker is commenting on the effects of excessive jealousy of a partner on the other:

[121]eye sebio, le go aɖe'- wo' me la,
 and at case INDEF PL in TP
 e'- ga- zu- a ahasi - to' ɖe'e'- dzi,
 3SG REP become HAB adultery NER to 3SG top
 'and, if you don't mind me saying, in some cases
 s/he becomes more promiscuous' (Nyomi 1980:7)

Here, the speaker is about to say something which is both unpleasant and indecent. To be told that one's spouse is an adulterer is a painful thing and what is more, it pertains to matters sexual therefore, he uses a disclaimer before it.

Prior to the mention of bad events, such as lightning and thunder, speakers are obliged to indicate that what they are going to say may be problematic and they do not necessarily wish that they should happen. One of the formulae that can be used in such a context is **sebio**. In general, it can be said before things that are symptomatic of an ill omen and maledicta which are not intended to be the wish for the bad things to occur. The use of the expression in this context is probably motivated by the desire to diffuse 'the magical power of words' and prevent the bad thing from happening.

In general, things that should be referred to euphemistically under normal circumstances should be prefaced with such an expression if they are going to be said in plain terms. Since euphemism is an aspect of polite behaviour (cf. Leech 1983:147), the use of this formulaic word entails politeness. Some writers suggest that this is its main function. For instance, Saah (1986:370) comments on the use of this word in Akan as follows:

Polite or courteous speech is most often characterised by the use of the word sebe before any statement which cannot be said in any

other way. The word means *excuse me, please*; the use of it shows that the speaker does not intend to offend his listeners. One who does not use the word may be seen as deliberately trying to offend.

The word in the quote above is spelled in the Akan orthography. The use in Akan is not that different from the use in Ewe and the comments equally apply. However, I would argue that there are other words in Ewe such as **mede kuku'** (see below) which also characterise polite or courteous speech.

On the basis of these observations, I propose the following illocutionary meaning for **sebio**.

- (a) I want to say something
- (b) I know we think of things of that kind as things that are bad for people to say
- (c) I think people could think/say something bad about me because of it
- (d) I think people would know that I wouldn't say it like this if I could say it in another way
- (e) I cannot say it in another way
- (f) I want to say the kind of thing that one should say when one has to say things of that kind
- (g) I say: I will say something bad now
- (h) I say this because I don't want people to think/say something bad about me because of it
- (j) I imagine that I can cause people not to think something bad about me when I say it

An important aspect of the knowledge of the ways and rules of speaking in Ewe (and in the other languages in which this item is used) is that there are certain things which can be talked about only euphemistically. It is also known that the culture recognises that there may be occasions when it may be legitimate to break the rule. But when one has to do so, a disclaimer - an expression that makes the potential violation less offensive - has to be used. It is also known that uttering the word without asking permission to infract the social norm can result in the speaker being typified or, at least thought of, or spoken of, as one who 'does not know how to speak'. These are the ideas that I have tried to capture in components (b) and (c) in the explication.

Components (d) and (e) are meant to capture the view that the speaker feels s/he is helpless, s/he says the thing that is culturally thought of as bad because

although s/he would like not to violate the rule s/he cannot think of anything better to say at the time. Of course, there may be other reasons for using the bare forms. Those fall under the real purposes of the speaker and are not relevant for our present concerns. The expressed purpose of using the formula is mainly to avoid social stigmatization and this is what I have tried to represent in the explication. Since this is a judgement that members of the community as a whole would pass on the individual, I have phrased the components in the explication to suggest that the utterance is directed at people in general. Some support for this comes from the fact that the word *sebio* does not take an addressee as the following illustrates:

[122] * *sebio na'wo`*
to 2SG
'se bio to you'

This also suggests that the form is an interjectional expression rather than a formulaic word. However, it can be argued that this is a secondary interjection whose illocutionary structure is just like that of a formula (see Ameka in press).

Some support for this analysis is provided by the diachrony of the word. Unlike *agoo*, this word, *sebio*, most probably comes from and is related to the Hausa word *saabi* which is glossed as 'sinning' or 'transgression'. In this respect, it is not surprising that *sebio* implies 'I am about to say something sinful'. The languages of Ghana have borrowed from Hausa mainly through trade and the spread of Islam in the West African region. It is probable that it was borrowed into Akan first and then from there it diffused into the other languages. However, this issue, like the diachrony of the related words *kafra* and *taflatse'* which are described below, requires further investigation.

14.8.4 *kafra* and *taflatse'*

These two words are used to excuse one's socially unacceptable behaviour and to show deference to one's interlocutor. They are usually glossed in the same way as *sebio* as 'I beg your pardon, please, excuse me'. It will become evident that these words have a wider range of use than *sebio* and should not be treated as its exact synonyms. It will further be shown that although *kafra* and *taflatse'* have overlapping functions, *taflatse'* has a wider range of use than *kafra*. In addition, it will be demonstrated that the difference between *taflatse'* and *kafra* does not lie in the latter being formal and the former being colloquial as has been suggested in the literature (see Warburton et al. 1968:32).

Here are variants of these words: *kafla* for *kafra* and *tafratse'* for *taflatse'*. The variants with 'l' conform with the indigenous phonology of Ewe.

That is, in a C_1C_2V syllable, C_2 is [l] if C_1 is grave (as [f] is). The 'r' versions reflect and confirm the view that these words have been borrowed into Ewe. Indeed, these words like **sebio** have probably come from Hausa via Akan. **kafra** is found in Akan and Ga as well as **tafratse'** which is realised as **tafarakye'** and **taflatse'** in Akan and Ga respectively. **kafra** seems to come from Hausa **kafara** which also comes from Arabic **kafara** and means 'atonement for a transgression of Muslim law'. **taflatse'** may have come from Hausa **tafarki**¹⁵ which literally means 'road' and figuratively means 'a means of doing something'. The meanings of the source words provide useful hints for how the words are used in Ewe.

kafra and **tafratse'** in one of their uses function in much the same way as **sebio**. That is, they are uttered before saying something indecent, rude or unpleasant in discourse. Thus one could utter these words before mentioning the name of a deceased person, or before talking about death, sex and related matters in a non-euphemistic way. They may also be used to request permission to use the left hand in social interaction. **kafra** and **tafratse'** can also be used as apologies for minor inconveniences that one may have caused another. For example, if someone steps on the toes of another or bumps into another person s/he could use either of these words to apologise for the bad thing that has happened. Furthermore, as with one use of **agoo** these words may be used as a preface to a request for the right of way to pass. It appears that their use in this context implies an excuse for imposing on the interlocutor.

Some support for this last contention comes from the fact that in this context of use these expressions can take addressee phrases. Recall that when **agoo** is used to request the right of way the object of its dative phrase refers to the speaker and not the addressee (see §14.8.1.1). Thus if one wants to pass through or get the right of way s/he could say the following by itself as s/he passes by:

[123a] *kafra na'milo'...*
 'kafra' to 2PL ADD
 'I beg your pardon ...'

[123b] *taflatse' na'wo` ...*
 'taflatse' to 2SG
 'I beg your pardon ...'

¹⁵ A hint of the Akan path of diffusion of this item is provided by the fact that Akan palatalises all velar sounds that are followed by a palatal sound. This is what has led to the alveolo-palatal affricates that the word is produced with in the other languages.

From all this, one can conclude, firstly, that these formulae are used as apologies for minor inconveniences that may have been caused. Secondly, these words are used in situations where one wants to do something which s/he thinks may adversely affect or inconvenience his/her interlocutor. In a sense then these expressions may be used as anticipatory apologies as well as apologies after the event. Their use as anticipatory apologies is further supported by the fact that both expressions can be used to preface a request. Consider the following examples in which the words preface questions:

[124] *kafra, aɸetɔ́, wò é nyé nufialá láa?*
 'kafra' mister 2SG aFOC beteacher DEF Q
 'Excuse me, sir, are you the teacher?'

[125] *taflatséfia, wò hañwo ñkɔ́ ɸe?*
 'taflatse' chief 2SG to^o 2SG:poss name Q
 'Excuse me, chief, what is your name?' (Setsoafia 1982:22)

The words can be substituted for each other in these examples. In this respect they are unlike **sebio** which cannot occur in such an environment, but similar to **mede kuku'** (see below) which can also preface requests.

Beyond this however, **kafra** and **taflatse'** are different. **taflatse'**, but not **kafra**, can be used to show deference to the addressee when the speaker wants to pass information on to him/her. Thus **taflatse'** is used to preface answers to questions which imply no request. Consider the following examples:

[126] *Fianyɔ: a- te'ɲu'a- xɔ- m ma- nɔ gbɔ- wò*
 IRR can IRR get 1SG 1SG:IRR stay side 2SG
ɣletí ɸeka'a?
 month one Q
 'Can you receive me into your home for one month?'

Agbledela: *taflatsénye ma- te'ɲu' i o*
 'taflatse' 1SG NEG:IRR can 3SG NEG
 'Please, I cannot (do it).' (Setsoafia 1982:21)

[127] *F.: nuka- ta mie- dze yo- nye-me va'*
 whatbecause NEG:2PL fall behind 1SG in come
agbleégbé-a o?
 farm today DEF NEG
 'Why did you not follow me to the farm today?'

D.: *fofo' nye, taflatséési mie' di' be'*

father 1SG 'taflatse' when 1PL wantCOMP
 mia' va' la'mia' nɔvi' sue- tɔ gblɔ be'
 1PL come TP 1PL sibling small CMPV say COMP
 dɔme le ye du- m'....

stomach be:PRES LOG eat PROG

'Daddy, please, when we wanted to come, our younger
 brother said his stomach was aching him

(Gadzekpo 1982:11)

[128] T.:... me- di' be' ma- ɔ' vi- wo',...
 1SG wantCOMP 1SG:IRR send child 2SG
 agbeve' de'ɲotsie ...

A. to N.

'I want to send your child, Agbeve, to ɲotsie ...'

S.: taflatse',kpaó

'taflatse' no

"Please no.'

(Nyaku in press:13).

kafra may not be substituted for **taflatse'** in these contexts, although **mede kuku'** (see below) can be used in place of **taflatse'** in these examples.

The generalisation to be made here is that **kafra** is used as a preface to a request to soften its illocutionary force and it is used before off-colour words in conversation to make them less offensive to the interlocutor. In both cases what the speaker is going to say or do can be viewed as something which could be bad for the addressee. Where it is used as an apology the assumption is that the thing that has happened is bad for the addressee. In all these cases, the speaker feels sorry or apologetic about the situation. There also seems to be the idea that the bad thing that is involved is something that is out of the control of the speaker.

To account for the uses of **kafra**, I propose the following explication. To save space the components that are affected by whether the word is said before or after the event have alternatives.

I want to do something that can be bad for you / I have done
 something that is bad for you
 I think you can feel / think something bad about me because of it
 I would want, it didn't happen
 I cannot cause it not to happen
 I want to say something to you because of that
 I say: I feel something bad because of it
 I say it because: I want you to know how I feel about it
 I want to cause you not to think or feel
 something bad about me because of it

It should be recalled that **kafra** comes from a word which means in part 'atonement for a transgression'. The fact that **kafra** is used as an anticipatory apology as well as an apology after the event suggests that the word implies that the addressee feels something bad about what s/he has done or is about to do. This is what is captured in the dictum.

While **taflatse'** also embodies ideas similar to those outlined for **kafra** above, it also encodes a deferential attitude that the speaker would want to convey to the addressee. Essentially, the speaker at least would like the addressee to think that s/he is someone the speaker respects. Because of this, the speaker wants the addressee to feel good about what s/he is going to do or say even though it may be inconvenient for him/her. This word is added as a softener or downgrader to cajole the addressee to feel good about it. Recall that the source word for this formula means 'a means of doing something'. The way to attain one's goal is to speak politely. By using this word, the speaker can get his/her interlocutor on side.

Partial support for this deferential aspect of **taflatse'** is that it can be used with an addressee phrase to mean 'to plead' or 'to beg' for something. Thus **taflatse'na'wo'** literally, 'taflatse to you' can be used to mean something like 'I beg your pardon' or 'I crave your indulgence'. The same sense of 'beg' or 'plead' is associated with the use of the item in its delocutive function. Consider this example in which the speaker is apologising for having been angry with his interlocutor earlier on:

[129] me- do'taflatse' de'ale' si me- do' domedzoe
 1SG say 'taflatse' to way REL 1SG wearanger
 de'nu' wo' la' ta
 to side 2SG TP because
 'I apologise for the way in which I was angry with you.'

To account for the range of uses of **taflatse'** I propose the following explication:

I want to do something that can be bad for you / I have done
 something that is bad for you
 I think you can feel/think something bad about me because of it
 I would want, it didn't happen [i.e. I wish it wouldn't happen]
 I want you to know I think of you (at this time) like this:
 you are someone I should not do things of this kind to
 I think if I say this, I can cause you not to feel something bad
 because of it
 I say: I don't want you to feel something bad
 because of what I (will) do
 I say it because I want you to know
 I think something good about you
 I think I can cause you not to think/feel something bad about me
 because of what I say

The first three components in this explication are the same as those for **kafra**. This is as should be expected since these words have overlapping functions. The fourth component is meant to capture the distance or avoidance that is associated with, or inherent in, deference. The speaker shows that s/he should not do certain things with the addressee because he respects him/her. Since the respect that is involved in this item is something that can be negotiated during interaction, I have included in this component the idea that the speaker is showing respect to the addressee at the time of speech. It should be noted that adults who are not under any obligation to show respect to children can use this word when interacting with children. However, children, are obliged to show respect to adults. The fifth component is meant to capture the speaker's belief that the uttering of **taflatse'** will indemnify or exonerate him/her from blame with respect to the bad thing when it happens. The dictum is addressee oriented in the sense that the speaker wants the addressee not to feel bad about the bad thing. This is different from the dictum of **kafra** which is speaker oriented. Part of the reason for this is that **taflatse'** takes an addressee phrase in all the uses whereas **kafra** does not. The illocutionary purpose component captures the idea that the speaker wants to show respect as well as good manners and s/he wants to be let off the hook.

To conclude, **kafra** and **taflatse'** are similar in many respects especially in their function as devices for expressing different forms of apology. But they also differ in that **taflatse'** encodes explicitly a deferential attitude on the part of the speaker towards the addressee. In this respect it is similar to **meḍe kuku'** 'I beg' which is a deference and courtesy marker. This formula is described in the next section.

14.8.5 *meḍe kuku'*

The expression **meḍe kuku'** literally means 'I take off (my) hat'. Idiomatically, however, it means 'I beg'. This formula is a performative version of the verb **ḍe kuku'**. This verb is glossed by Warburton et al. (1968:248) as 'to apologise, beg for pardon, ask for forgiveness'. It might be useful to first discuss some aspects of the verb to facilitate an understanding of the formula. Some examples of the non-performative use of the verb might provide a useful introduction to this formula. Consider the following examples:

- [130] wo' ga- ḍe kuku'na'mawu' be' wo` a na'
 3PL REP take offhat to God COMP 3SG IRR cause
 be' se'manu'na' xɔ ḍaseḍi'gbale~ la' ha~
 COMP S. SBJV get certificate DEF too
 'They also begged God to grant that Semanu should receive a

cerificate.'

(Akpatsi 1980:40)

[131] me- kɔ́ ame aɖeke' wò ɖe kuku'
 NEG:3SG see person INDEF 3SG take offhat
 ɖe'e- ta o
 to 3SG head NEG
 'S/he did not find anybody to plead for him/her.'

[132] me- di' xoxo' be' ma- va' ɖe kuku'
 1SG wantalready COMP 1SG:IRR come take offhat
 na'wo`
 to 2SG
 'I had wanted for a long time to come and beg you'
 (Akpatsi 1980:74)

It should be clear from these examples that the verb relates to begging and pleading. Pazzi (1980:227) offers an interesting comment on the connection between a hat and begging in Ewe culture. He writes:

On fait l'expression eɖe kuku'(il a enlevé le chapeau) dans le sens de 'il a supplié, il a demandé pardon'. En effet, le chapeau, pièce de l'élément solennel masculin, est un symbole d'autorité¹⁶

Indeed one has to take off one's hat before greeting people, as a gesture I believe, of respect. It is also courteous to take off one's hat during meals. The verb **ɖe kuku'** thus shows the intricate connection between showing respect (by taking off, or doffing one's hat) and begging in Ewe (cf. Goody 1972 on the links between 'greeting', 'begging' and the presentation of respect as a West African phenomenon).

Other linguistic expressions concerned with 'begging' or 'imploring' make use of the word **kuku'**. Consider the following:

[133] kuku- a' tɔ- wò e'
 hat DEF POSSPRO 2SG aFOC
 lit.: 'The hat is yours'
 'I beg you'

¹⁶ 'One uses the expression **eɖe kuku'** (he took off his hat) with the meaning 'he begged, he apologised'. In effect, the hat, a component of masculine symbolism, is a symbol of authority.'

Similarly, to express the idea of begging with something one can use the verb **ɖe kuku'** in a 'take' serial construction or with an instrumental prepositional phrase. For example, when someone has been fined and s/he is pleading for leniency for a part of the fine s/he may use any of the following sentences:

[134a] me- tsɔ́ aha ze ɖeka'ɖe kuku'na'tɔ́be- wo'
 1SG take drink pot one take hat to grandfather PL
 'I use one pot of palm wine to beg the elders.'

[134b] me- ɖe kuku'na'tɔ́be- wo' kple' aha ze ɖeka
 1SG take hat to grandfather PL with drink pot one
 'I beg the elders with one pot of palm wine.'

However it should be noted that this verb has become lexicalised in the language and it can be used to mean 'beg' and is accompanied by some other physical gesture of begging such as kneeling down or bowing as in the following example:

[135] me- dze klo le kuku'ɖe- m' na'wo'
 1SG fall knee be:PRES hat take off PROG to 2SG
 be'na- tsɔ́ nye nu'vɔ̃ wo' ke- m
 COMP 2SG:IRR take 1SG:poss sin PL open 1SG
 'I am on my knees begging you to forgive me my sins.'

With this background, one can appreciate the significance of the formula **mede kuku'**. The formula is a specialised form of the first person performative version of the verb. As Warburton et al. (1968:77) note, the speech formula 'serves as an obeisance when addressing elderly and people of respect'. It is perhaps better to say that it serves as an obeisance when addressing people to whom the speaker wants to show respect. This is to allow for the fact that it can be used by elderly people towards younger people without creating a humorous effect.

The main feature that distinguishes the speech formula from its non-routinised counterpart is that the speech formula is always used parenthetically. [That is, it is always separated from the rest of the utterance in which it occurs by a pause.] This is also true of contexts in which the formula occurs in an expanded form and includes an addressee phrase. Compare the use of **mede kuku'** in the following examples:

[136a] (e- dze klo) me- ɖe kuku',xɔ dzi- nye se
 3SG fall knee 1SG take off hat get top 1SG hear

‘(He knelt down) I beg you, (i.e. please) believe me.’
 (Setsoafia 1982:42)

[136b] (e- dze klo) me- ɖe kuku´
 3SG fall knee 1SG take offhat
 ɖe´fo- nye a´ ta
 to brother 1SG DEF head
 ‘(She knelt down) I plead on behalf of my elder brother.’
 (Setsoafia 1982:47)

In [136a] **mede kuku´** is a formula, whereas in [136b] it is used in a non-formulaic way. Similarly, compare the following set where the **mede kuku´** expression is expanded with an addressee phrase. Note again that the formulaic form is used in [137a] whereas in [137b] it is used in a non-formulaic way. The distinction in all these cases is in the presence or absence of a pause after the phrase.

[137a] amegañ, me- ɖe kuku´na´wo, ɖe asi´
 boss 1SG take offhat to 2SG take offhand
 le e- ŋu´
 at 3SG side
 ‘Sir, I beg your pardon/please, leave him alone.’
 (Setsoafia 1982:25)

[137b] me- ɖe kuku´na´wo` be´ na- dze agbagba´
 1SG take offhat to 2SG COMP 2SG:IRR fall effort
 na- m be´ srɔñ nye ɸe´ ŋku´ na´ trɔ´
 to 1SG COMP spouse 1SG poss eye SBJV turn
 ɖe´ŋu- nye
 to side 1SG
 ‘I beg you to do all you can for me so that my husband should
 turn his eyes to me.’ (Gadzekpo 1982:20)

It is instructive that **mede kuku´** co-occurs with address terms and with apology expressions like **taflatse´**. What this suggests is that it has elements compatible with both apology and deference as is evident from the following examples:

[138] aɸeñɔ nyui, me- ɖe kuku, aɸeke´wo- yɔ- na´
 madamgood 1SG take offhat how 3PL call HAB
 na´wo?

to 2SG

'Good madam, please, what are you called?' (Akpatsi 1980:15)

[139] taflatse,me- ɔe kuku,me- ga da asi'
 'taflatse' 1SG take offhat NEG:2SG REP put hand
 ɔe'dzi- nye o
 at top 1SG NEG

'I beg your pardon, please, do not put your hand on me.'

(Setsoafia 1982:36)

[140] me- ɔe kuku,tɔgbui, nye me' gblɔ nya
 1SG take offhat grandfather 1SG NEG say word
 aɔeke' na'wo' o
 INDEF to 3PL NEG

'Please, grandfater, I did not say anything to them.'

(Nyaku in press:17)

It should be noted that in these examples, **meɔe kuku'** occurs with a question which requests information (example [138]), with a statement that the speaker passes on (example [140]) and with a request for action as in example [139]. It can thus be said that it is used to soften the illocutionary force of requests as well as being used to mark politeness. This latter function is also evident in its use as a preface to responses as in the following example:

[140] T.:nyuiko ɔe?

N. Q

'Where is Nyuiko?'

Ny.: tɔgbui, me- ɔe kuku,nye- e' nye' esi
 grandfather 1SG take offhat 1SG aFOC bethis

'Grandfather, please, I am here.' (Nyaku in press:38)

In all the uses of **meɔe kuku'** discussed so far, it could be translated with the English word 'please' as I have been glossing it. However the expressions in the two languages have different contexts of use. For example, the Ewe one is not felicitous as an indication of accepting an offer whereas the English one is.

As mentioned in the earlier discussion, **meɔe kuku'** can be said before violating a social norm such as using the left hand in social interaction. Unlike the other expressions discussed here however, **meɔe kuku'** is not felicitous as a disclaimer for saying something that is vulgar, nor can it be used by itself to ask for the right of way. It is also not an appropriate expression of apology when

one bumps into another or when someone steps on another person's toe. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that **mede kuku'** is not a formula used for apologising. It is an expression for showing respect to the addressee and softening the illocutionary force of acts that may inconvenience the addressee.

With these considerations in mind, I tentatively propose the following explication to account for the uses of **mede kuku'** as a speech formula:

I want to do something
 One can think of it like this: it is something that happens to you
 I think you can think/feel something bad about me because of it
 I want to say something to you because of it
 I say: I want you to think/feel something good about me
 I say it because I want to cause you to know this:
 I think of you as someone to whom I couldn't say:
 'I don't want to do what you want me to do'

The main points captured in the explication are that the speaker is about to interact with the addressee in some way. This may be thought of as something bad or as something good for the addressee. The common core of this is that the interaction is going to involve the addressee. These ideas are hopefully captured in the first two components of the explication. The use of the formula is meant to show obeisance to the addressee. Its use indexes the speaker as a polite or courteous person. For this reason I suggest that its dictum is to beg the addressee to think of the speaker as someone who is polite. Finally, the attitude and the purpose of using the formula is that the speaker shows that s/he respects the addressee. The addressee is held in high esteem. This is captured in the last component in the form of the speaker not being able to disobey the addressee.

14.9 Parting expressions

The focus of this section is on those expressions that interlocutors use when they are parting from each other. It is useful for descriptive purposes to divide the expressions into those that are used when people are parting at night and those that are used at other times of the day. This is the distinction around which the section is broadly organised. It will become evident that most of the expressions encode ideas about the circumstances of the departure, or about what the speaker assumes the addressee is going to do after the parting. Thus if the interlocutor is going to bed, the speaker wishes that s/he should sleep well. Alternatively, if the addressee is going home after the encounter the speaker wishes for him/her to get home safely. Another factor that is at play

in these formulae is how long the speaker perceives the addressee is going to be separated from him/her. Some of the expressions are appropriate when the addressee is going to be away for a short time while others are used for people going on a long journey.

The expressions used to farewell people are discussed first. This is followed by a description of those expressions that are used to say ‘good night’ in Ewe.

14.9.1 ‘Farewells’

There are at least three kinds of expressions or routines that are used during leave-taking: (i) blessings and good wishes to the addressee; (ii) requests from the speaker to be remembered to people in the place where the addressee is going; and (iii) farewells or goodbye expressions. Farewells are always a part of leave-taking but blessings and requests to be remembered to other people do not always occur. Typically, they are enacted if the separation is going to be for a long time. This is part of the reason why this study is going to concentrate only on the farewell expressions. But to give an idea of what the others entail, some examples will be provided. First consider the following extract which is part of the pre-farewell wish of a father to a son who is about to leave for another town to look for work. This constitutes a blessing.

[141] mɔ́ me ná kɔ na'wo`
 way in SBJV clear to 2SG
 sodza ná dji na'wo`, tɔ́gbui zikpui- wo`
 God SBJV shine to 2SG grandfather stool PL
 ná kplɔ wo` de teɖe´ si yi-m´
 SBJV lead 2SG reach placeREL go PROG
 ne` le la´
 2SG be:PRES TP
 ‘May your way be clear, may God be gracious to you, and may
 the stools of our ancestors lead you to where you are going’
 (Akpatsi 1980:43)

In the following example all the three types of expressions identified above occur. Notice the order in which they occur: first, request for greetings to be extended to other people, second, blessing and good wishes to the addressee, and third, the farewell. All of these occur in one conversational move.

[142]... me do'gbe na'tɔgbui venya, fia sri`...
 1SG say voice to grandfather ũ. chief S.
 gbedzaha kple´ ziga~ kpakple'bu- a- wo´ kafa~kafa~
 G. and Z. and other DEF PL all-RED

'I greet Tɔgbui ũenya, Chief Sri, ... Gbedzaha and Ziga~and all the others'

maʷu- gaḱple' maʷu' bubu- a- wo' kpakple'mia'
 God big and god other DEF PL and 1PL
 tɔgbui- wo' na' kpɔ' mia ta
 grandfather PL SBJV see 2PL head
 aŀe' be' mia de dedie'
 such COMP 2PL reach safely

'May the Supreme God and the other gods as well as the ancestors watch over you so that you may reach home safely.'

mɔ' dzi' na' kɔ
 way top SBJV clear
 'May the way be clear.' (Nyaku in press:36)

Now we turn to farewells specifically. Many of the expressions for farewelling people involve verbs of motion and other adverbials meaning either well or quickly. The ones we shall be dealing with are:

(he)- de nyuie
 CON reach well
 'Get there well'

zɔ nyuie
 walk well
 'Travel well/Safe journey'

de aŀe-me nyuie
 reach house-in well
 'Get home well'

va kaʷa'
 come quickly
 'Come back quickly'

gbɔ kaʷa'
 go-come quickly
 'Go and come back quickly'

Other farewelling expressions such as the one used in example [142] above relate specifically to the path of motion:

mɔ́ me né fá
 way in IMP cool
 'May the road be cool/peaceful'

mɔ́ dzí ná kɔ
 way top SBJV clear
 'May the way be clear.'

The response to all these expressions is **yoo** 'OK' which signals that the addressee acknowledges the wish of the speaker (see §14.4.2 for an explication of this item). Each of the expressions involving verbs of motion will now be described.

14.9.1.1 hé-de nyuie

hé-de nyuie is used to farewell someone who is going on a journey. One assumption behind these expressions is that the addressee is going to a far away place and s/he is going to be away for a long time. Sometimes the separation that follows the departure could be a permanent one. Thus all farewells involving dead people make use of this formula. The dead are assumed in Ewe culture to be going on a journey into the other world (see Ameka (1980:65) for some linguistic evidence for this). The delocutive form of this expression **dó hé-de nyuie** is used to mean 'to say farewell/goodbye to someone' on formal occasions.

It is odd to use **hé-de nyuie** when saying goodbye to a neighbour who is going back to his/her home in the same village after visiting you for example. It is also inappropriate as a parting expression to someone who is going to do his/her daily occupational work or daily chore such as going to the farm, to the market, or even to the riverside. There are other specialised formulae for each of these situations which are described in later sub-sections. The infelicity of this formula in these contexts supports the view that it is used to farewell someone who is going away either permanently or for a long time. For example, Fianyo in the following excerpt has been sentenced to be banished from the village and to be sold as a slave for being a tyrannical chief. Thus he is going to be separated from the people in the village for ever and so one of the elders farewells him as follows:

[143] *fianyó, he' de nyuie, ne'e' dɔ' amerikala'*
 F. CON reach well if 2SG reach America TP
na- wɔ dɔ sesie~
 2SG:SBJV do work hard
 'Fianyó, goodbye, when you get to America, work hard.'
 (Setsoafia 1982:115)

The literal meaning of the expression **he-de nyuie** is quite instructive. The motion verb **de** used in the formula is a bidirectional resultative verb which means 'to have been to a place' (or 'to reach a place' or 'to get to a place'). Together with the imperative structure in which it occurs, it seems to imply in this context that the speaker wishes that the addressee should get to wherever s/he is going safely. This provides the basis for the dictum of the formula captured in the semantic representation below:

I think you and I know this:
 after now, we will not be in the same place
 because you will go to a place far away
 I think you will be away for a long time
 I want to say something to you because of that
 I say: I want you to get to that place well
 I think I can cause it to happen because of what I say
 I say it because: I feel something good towards you
 I want to cause you to feel something good.

The essential elements captured here are that the addressee is going to be away for a long time (second component) and s/he is going to a far away place (first component). The speaker wants the addressee to reach this far away place well (the dictum). This is a wish which the addressee would like to be fulfilled hence the fifth component. The purpose of this utterance is for the speaker to show that s/he feels something good towards the addressee and to cause the addressee to feel something good.

14.9.1.2 *zɔ nyuie*

zɔ nyuie is used in the same contexts as **he-de nyuie** is. Thus it is said to someone who is going on a long journey including a deceased person. It is infelicitous to say it to someone who is going to the farm or to the market even if this involves some travel. The crucial determining factors for the use of this expression are the perceived length of time that the addressee is going to be away and the distance of the place that the addressee is going to. It can thus be

said that **zo nyuie** and **he-de nyuie** have the same assumptions and illocutionary purpose.

They however differ slightly in their propositional content. This is a consequence of the different motion verbs that they contain. The verb **zo** simply means 'walk', it does not presuppose the idea that the addressee should reach his/her destination as the verb **de** does. Thus the formula **zo nyuie** only encodes the idea that the addressee should go to the place in a good way. As explained earlier in relation to the welcoming expression **wo-e-zo**, the use of the verb **zo** in such expressions suggests that the major means of transportation in Ewe country before the advent of motor cars was by foot. The assumption with respect to its use here is that the addressee is going to walk to wherever s/he is going to.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following illocutionary meaning for the speech formula **zo nyuie** which is identical to that of **he-de nyuie** in all respects except the dictum:

I think you and I know this:
 after now, we will not be in the same place
 because you will go to a place far away
 I think you will be away for a long time
 I want to say something to you because of that
 I say: I want you to go well
 I think I can cause it to happen because of what I say
 I say it because: I feel something good towards you
 I want to cause you to feel something good

The same comments about the imperative structure of the speech formula with respect to the phrasing of the dictum of **he-de nyuie** apply.¹⁷

14.9.1.3 *de aɸeɸe nyuie*

This expression is used to say goodbye to a visitor from the neighbourhood who is going back to his/her home. The first point to note is that the speaker is aware that the addressee is going back home after the encounter. The wish of the addressee is that the addressee should get home safely. The verb **de** used in this expression as in the case of **he-de nyuie** implies that the addressee should arrive home safely.

It must be stressed that this expression is only felicitous when the addressee is going back to a home which is in the same village. If the addressee were going back home, but this home is not in the same village, then this expression is not appropriate. Consider the following dialogue between two people at a

¹⁷ Expressions similar to **zo nyuie** are found in other Ghanaian languages. For example, its equivalent in Akan is **nanti yie** 'walk well'. It appears that this semantic formula as one may call it (cf. Pawley in press) is responsible for the ubiquitous use of 'Safe journey' in Ghanaian English.

village meeting as they are about to part. Notice that one of them signals that s/he was leaving the meeting and her interlocutor assumes that she was going back home and therefore says the appropriate formula to her:

- [144] A: ... me- dzo'
 1SG leave
 'I am leaving'
 B: e- nyo', de aɸe-me nyuie
 3SG goo reach house-in well
 'Good, get home safely' (Setsoafia 1982:34)

Consider another example where Tsiami, the visitor formally asks to take leave and when the permission is granted the farewell formula is added (cf. leave-taking section in chapter 11):

- [145] tsiami: ...fifia', mia- bia' mo'
 ...now 1PL ask way
 '...Now, we will ask permission to leave.'
 bokɔ: mo' li faa
 way be:PRES freely
 mia- de aɸe-me nyuie
 2PL reach home well
 'You may go. Have a safe journey home.'
 tsiami: yoo
 OK.
 'OK' (= Thank you) (Nyaku in press:9).

Note also the response to the formula as cited above. It is simply **yoo** 'OK'.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication for the speech formula **de aɸe-me nyuie'**

I think you and I know this:
 after now, we will not be in the same place
 because you will go to your home not far away
 I want to say something to you because of it
 I say: I want you to get home well
 I think I can cause it to happen because of what I say
 I say it because:
 I want you to know that I feel something good towards you

I want to cause you to feel something good

14.9.1.4 *gbɔ kaba'*

gbɔ kaba' is a speech formula that is used in a sense to request someone who is going somewhere to go and come back quickly. This expression is used by people in the same household or others who meet someone going to some place close to the village and it is assumed that s/he will come back after a short while. The expression is thus used to wish someone safe journey as well as safe return. Thus when a child is leaving for school in the same village and will return home at the end of the day, the parents can farewell him/her with this formula. Similarly when someone meets people going to the riverside, the market, the farm or just visiting another village nearby and will return on the same day, s/he can say goodbye to them with **gbɔ kaba'**.

In all these cases, the speaker assumes that the the addressee is going to a place which is not far away and that s/he is not going to be away for a long time. The speaker expresses the wish that the addressee should go and come back quickly. That is the addressee should not be away for a long time. A piece of linguistic evidence in support of this contention comes from the literal meaning of the expression. The verb **gbɔ** means 'go and come (back)' and the adverbial **kaba'** means 'quickly (or 'early' in some contexts). Compositionally, and taking the semantics of the imperative structure into consideration, one can say that the speech formula **gbɔ kaba'** means literally 'I want you to go and come back quickly'. This is the dictum of the expression. This kind of expression has produced a calque in sub-standard Ghanaian English as a parting expression go come.

With these considerations in mind, the speech formula **gbɔ kaba'** may be explicated as follows:

I know you are going to a place not far away
 I think you are not going to be away for a long time
 I don't want you to be away for a long time
 I want to say something to you because of this
 I say: I want you to go and come back at a time not long after now
 I say it because I want you to know
 I feel something good towards you

The first component in this explication is different from that of the other formulae discussed earlier in the sense that it does not state a kind of shared knowledge that the interlocutors have about their parting. Part of the motivation for this is that **gbɔ kaba'** can be used simply as a greeting and does

not have to be preceded by other leave-taking expressions. It can be said to people as they pass by each other on the way to the farm, the market etc. The fact that the interlocutor is going somewhere is an inference that the speaker makes. It is not a shared assumption between speaker and addressee, rather a mutually established assumption. Furthermore, because this expression is used to salute people who are literally going to wherever they are going, the progressive rather than the future is used in the first component. In fact the assumptions represented in the first three components are based on the conversational inferences that the speaker makes. The purpose of saying such a thing to someone whom you think is going somewhere is just to show your good feelings and solidarity with them.

14.9.1.5 va kaɓa'

va kaɓa' is used in the same contexts as **gbo kaɓa'**. It is thus used to salute people who are going to a place not far away and are expected to come back within a short time. Thus it may be addressed to say a child going to school, a farmer going to the farm, a trader going to the market and someone who is going to another place and will come back in a short while.

However, **va kaɓa'** and **gbo kaɓa'** are different in terms of their propositional content. The difference comes from the different verbs that are used in the two formulae. The verb **va** simply means 'come' (unlike the slightly complex meaning of **gbo** 'go-come'). For this reason, the illocutionary dictum of **va kaɓa'** is phrased as 'I want you to come back at a time not long after now'. Note that this is different from the dictum of **gbo kaɓa'** which includes both aspects of go and come as the semantics of the verb **gbo** demands.

The full illocutionary meaning of **va kaɓa** may be explicated as follows:

I know you are going to a place not far away
 I think you are not going to be away for a long time
 I don't want you to be away for a long time
 I want to say something to you because of this
 I say: I want you to come back at a time not long after now
 I say it because I want you to know
 I feel something good towards you

14.9.2 'Good night' expressions

When people part at night, they say some things to each other. Some of the expressions in this context relate to the circumstances of sleeping and explicitly

express the wish that the addressee should sleep well. Such formulae are the following:

(na) dɔ́ agbe
 SBJV:2SG sleep life
 lit: '(You should) sleep life'

dɔ-dɔ́ ne'nyo'
 sleep-REDIMP be good
 'Let sleeping be good'

mlɔ́ anyi' nyuie'
 lie down well
 'Sleep well'

Other 'good night' expressions in Ewe focus on the waking up process. The speaker in these cases expresses the hope that s/he and the addressee would wake up so that they could meet again. These expressions are:

ne ke mi' kpe'
 if open1PL meet
 'Lets meet when day breaks'

ma'wu' ne' fɔ́ mi'
 God IMP wake up 1PL
 'May God wake us up'

Another parting expression at night is the following:

zã me' do' haɖe'ɔ
 night NEG wearyet NEG
 'Night has not yet fallen'

This expression suggests an optimism on the part of the speaker that there is the possibility that s/he and the addressee might meet again that day before night falls. This may not happen in reality.

Each of these expressions are described in turn starting from this last one through the wake up related ones to the sleep related ones.

14.9.2.1 zã me-do' haɖe'ɔ

This is a formula that interlocutors may use when they part late in the afternoon or early in the evening. That is, it is used at a time when people are not yet ready to go to bed. Since the speaker is aware that it is not yet bed time though it is night time or close to night time, s/he does not want to say the kind of thing that one should say to someone who is about to retire to bed. Rather the speaker uses an expression which leaves open the possibility that

lit: You should sleep life. i.e. 'Sound sleep'
 B: yoo, mlɔ' anyi' nyuie', ne'ke mi' kpe'
 OK lie down well if open1PL meet
 'OK, sleep well, let's meet when day breaks.'

On the basis of the discussion so far, I propose the following explication for the speech formula **ne'ke mi'kpe'**

I think you and I know that we cannot say things to one another
 for some time because we have to sleep
 I want us to be able to say things to each other after that
 I want to say something to you because of that
 I say: I want us to be able to meet when it is day time
 I think I can cause it to happen because of what I say
 I say it because I want to cause you to think I feel something good
 towards you

It should be pointed out that the parting expressions at night unlike those discussed as farewells (§14.9.1) do not entail the idea that the interlocutors are going to be physically separated from each other. These 'good night' expressions can be used by people who sleep in the same place. This is the rationale for the way in which the first component is phrased. The use of 'you' and 'I' and 'us' in some of the components reflects the use of the 1PL pronoun **mi'** in the speech formula.

retire to bed. Thus when someone informs the other that s/he was going to bed, the interlocutor may wish him/her good night with this formula, as in the following dialogue:

- [147] A: me- yi ma' mló' anyi'
 1SG go 1SG:IRR lie down
 'I am going to sleep'
 B: yoo, mló' anyi' nyuie'
 OK lie down well
 'OK, sleep well'

The ideas encoded in the expression may be rigorously represented as follows:

- I know you will sleep after now
 I want to say something to you because of that
 I say: I want you to sleep well
 I say it because I want to cause you to think that I feel something
 good towards you

The imperative structure accounts for the way the dictum is expressed in the explication. Since this is a kind of greeting it is used to show the good feelings that the speaker may have towards the addressee. In fact this formula can be said in a cold and disinterested manner which suggests that it could be said without feeling. Hence the purpose is to cause the addressee to think that the speaker has some good feelings towards the addressee.

14.9.2.6 dɔdɔ'ne'nyo'

This expression, like the one described in the preceding section, is used to wish people who are about to sleep 'good night'. It is made up of the nominalised form of the verb **dɔ'**'sleep' and the third person imperative **ne'** and the verb **nyo'**'good'. Literally, it may be glossed as 'let sleeping be good'.

It is sometimes said that this formula is addressed to couples. There seems to be a connotation associated with the expression based on the verb **dɔ'** which can also mean 'to sleep with someone' that the speaker wants the addressee's going to bed with someone to be good. Because of this, this formula can be responded to in a jocular way with expressions which mean 'I am going to sleep alone' or 'Are you coming to sleep with me?' These retorts are used among young friends and between people of the opposite sex who are in jocular relationships. Recall similar jocular responses to the 'how-are-you' question involving the verb **dɔ'** discussed in §14.2.3.1.

The meaning of this formula, like that of the other ‘good night’ expressions seems rather straight forward. The speaker and the addressee are parting at night and it is assumed that they are going to sleep. The speaker wishes that the addressee should sleep well or that the sleep of the addressee should be peaceful. Note however that the third person imperative form is used in this construction. This suggests that the speaker does not necessarily want the addressee to cause this to happen but that someone else might cause this to be so. It could even be the ambience. The purpose of this formula is to show solidarity with the addressee. It should also be noted that this expression can be said to someone who is sleeping in the same place or bed with the speaker just before they both fall asleep.

These aspects of the meaning of the speech formula **dɔdɔ’ ne’nyo’** can be represented as follows:

I know you will sleep after now
 I want to say something to you because of that
 I say this: I want this: good things should happen in your sleep
 I think I can cause someone to cause it to happen
 I say it because I want you to know I feel something good
 towards you

The dictum is phrased in such a way that it reflects the imperative structure as well as the proposition that sleeping should be good. It has been assumed that the content can be paraphrased as the wish that good things should happen while the addressee is asleep.

14.9.2.7 (na) dɔ’agbe

This formula has several variants. First of all, if there is a single addressee, it may or may not be introduced by **na** (2SG:IRR) ‘you should’. Secondly, if there are two or more addressees, the 2PL form of the imperative is used, namely, **mi-dɔ’agbe** ‘you (pl) sleep life’. Along a different dimension, the vowel of the verb **dɔ’** may be elided to yield a predicate of the form **dagbe** for all these variants. This form with the elided vowel is rather common in colloquial speech.

The literal meaning of this expression is rather curious. As indicated earlier it means something like ‘you should sleep life’. It appears to be even contradictory. It seems however that this formula is a fossilised form of the following longer expression (cf. Agblemagnon 1969:58):

[148] na- dɔ’ ne’ na- nɔ agbe
 2SG:IRR sleeppurp 2SG:IRR stay life
 ‘You should sleep so that you should stay alive.’

welcoming people and those used for farewelling people. The following groupings are suggested

Farewell	Welcome	Common feature
he'-de nyuie	{ atuú` dzaá` }	{ for a long time far away place }
zo nyuie	wo`e'-zo	travelled far away
{ de afe'ne nyuie gbɔ kaba' vakaba' }	wo`e'-de	{ not far away short time }

Table 14.1 Correlations between farewelling and welcoming formulae

The way to understand the pairings is that someone who is farewelled with **he'-de nyuie** is likely to be welcomed with **atuú`** or **dzaá`**. However, this should not be interpreted in a prescriptive sense because someone who is farewelled with **he'-de nyuie** could also be welcomed with **wo`e'-zo**. The point of the display in the table above is that there is a discernible symmetrical pattern between the two sets of formulaic expressions.

14.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have tried to explicate the meanings of several speech formulae that are used by the Ewes. To conclude the discussion, I want to put these expressions in a cross-cultural perspective and to outline the various ways in which speech formulae vary across cultures. Finally, I will discuss a speech formula used to end speeches and to signal the end of a speaker's turn in conversation to end the chapter.

14.10.1 Speech formulae in a cross-cultural perspective

As was pointed out in chapter 12, speech formulae are found in all languages and cultures, however, 'their character and the incidence of their use may vary enormously from one society to another' (Ferguson 1976:137). There is considerable variation between different cultures which often do not agree in having equivalent formulae for similar situations. This variation can be along a number of parameters (cf. e.g. Richards and Sukwiwat 1983; Davies 1987).

First, there may be different norms and constraints associated with the enactment of formulae in different cultures. For example, it was indicated that in Ewe, someone who is going to the toilet or the rubbish tip should not initiate greetings. Such a constraint does not exist in English, for instance. Thus while

both Ewe and English have greeting formulae, there are differences in the constraints that operate on their enactment.

Second, the situations that require formulaic language may vary from culture to culture. For example, it is reported that in Moroccan Arabic, there are formulae which people use to acknowledge someone who has just had a bath (Davies 1987). Although similar situations exist in Ewe, they do not require formulaic language.

Related to this is the fact that some languages may have formulae for specific situations which may be recognised in other languages but not given any special routine formula. It was indicated that Ewe has a number of formulae which are used to acknowledge someone at work, for example, **ayikóó'** (see § 14.5.4). In English the situation of acknowledging someone you meet at work is recognised, but there are no special formulae for this specific situation.

Third, some culture-specific situations may have formulae associated with them. Since these are culture-specific, it follows that they are not recognised in the other cultures. The non-use of the left hand in social interaction and its associated formula in Ewe is a case in point.

Fourth, formulae in different languages used in similar situations have different meanings. Here one can cite the differences in the meanings between the formulae in Ewe for expressing gratitude and felicitations and similar ones in English (see § 14.6).

Fifth, equivalent formulae across cultures may be used in different situations. For example, 'sorry' in African varieties of English and 'sorry' in native varieties of English are used in different situations, although they overlap in some contexts of use.

Sixth, languages may vary in statistical terms in the number of formulae that are available for use in a particular situation. Ewe appears to have more 'good night' expressions than English for example (see § 14.9.2).

This variation of formulae across cultures lends support to the contention that speech formulae are culture-specific. However, like other elements of culture and language, they can diffuse and spread (cf. Ferguson 1976). Hence some formulae may become areal features of a cultural circle as opposed to specific cultures. We have seen that some formulae such as **agoo**, **ayikóó'**, **kafra** and **taflatsé** have spread over southern Ghana. More work needs to be done on the socio-historical evolution of these speech formulae.

Nevertheless, the culture-specific nature of speech formulae implies that they encode ideas about the cultural and social preoccupations of a speech community. There is the need for an investigation of the pragmatic effects and meanings of speech formulae and the linking of these meanings with the socio-cultural settings in which the forms are used. We need to investigate the

contribution of speech formulae to the ‘cultural style’ of the speakers of a language. Pointers were given at various places in the discussion to the link between cultural practices of the Ewes and the semantics of the formulae. For instance, some of the speech formulae such as the one for the left hand are a direct reflection of the practices in Ewe society. Others are less direct. For example, the gratitude expression **né me kú lá X** ‘When I die do X’ indirectly relates to the practices about death, funeral and the social importance of participating in these activities. It was also pointed out that some of the formulae confirm, so to speak, some of the findings in other disciplines like sociology and anthropology about the Ewes. For instance, several of the greeting formulae point to the key cultural concept of ‘communality’. Those that contain ‘God’ and other religious elements provide clues about the traditional religion of the Ewes. It is to be hoped that such linguistic evidence may be used to support ideas about the ethno-philosophy of the Ewes and of Africans in general which have been identified in other studies (e.g. Dickson 1977, Wiredu 1980, Ayisi 1979, Gyekye 1987 etc.).

14.10.2 *nye gbe dze anyi*

An appropriate way to end this chapter is to discuss a formula which is used to signal the end of a speech or the end of a speaker’s turn. There are two dialectal variants of this formula. They are:

[149a] *nye gbe dze anyi*
 1SG:poss voice fall ground
 ‘My voice has fallen’ i.e. ‘I am done’

[149b] *nye nu si*
 1SG:poss mouth run away
 ‘My mouth has run away’ i.e. ‘I am done’

These two variants are allo-lexemes, that is, lexical alternants of the same semantic unit. Therefore the comments made for one apply to the other. I will use **nye gbe dze anyi** as the paradigm example.

During a social visit when the participants are exchanging news, the one who is holding the floor can indicate that s/he has completed a current turn by saying **nye gbe dze anyi**. Sometimes the interlocutor can ask if the floor holder has said all s/he wants to say for the meantime on that subject and the floor holder can reply with this speech formula. Consider the following example in which the question makes use of the turn ending formula and the response also contains the same formula:

- [150] Tsiamigã: nya sesẽ dzɔ wo gbe
 word hard happen 2S̃G:poss voice
 dze anyi' - a?
 fall down Q
 'This is a difficult case, are you done'
 Adladzã e, tɔgbui, nye gbe dze anyi'
 yes grandfather 1S̃G:poss voice fall down
 'Yes, grandfather, I am done.'
 (Nyaku in press:26)

However, the holder of the floor can terminate his/her own speech and signal that someone else can take the floor without a prompting question. The following example is self explanatory:

- [151] Bokɔ: ... nya sia- wo' e' le asi- nye
 word this PL aFOC be:PRES hand 1SG
 na'nyɔnu eve sia- wo'
 to womantwo this PL
 ... nye gbe dze anyi'
 1S̃G:poss voice fall down
 'These are the words I have for these two women ...
 I am done.'
 (Gadzekpo 1982:30)

In the glossary to the book from which the above example is taken, the author offers the following Ewe explanation for the speech formula **nye gbe dze anyi'**:

- [152] me- dzudzɔ nya si gblɔ- m' me le la'
 1SG stop word REL say PROG 1SG be:PRES TP
 'I stop what I am saying'.

This explanation is an instructive clue to what the propositional content of this formula is. Essentially the speaker declares that s/he is not going to say anything more. The contextual assumptions that go with this declaration is that the speaker has been saying something for some time. One effect of this utterance is that it enables other people to say something or do something. Thus if it was said at the end of a meeting, it could be the signal for people to depart. If it was said in a dyadic interaction, it could provide a cue for the interlocutor to take the floor. The purpose of the utterance is to cause people to know that the speaker is not going to say anything more. Partial support

for this is provided by the fact that the formula is syntactically a declarative sentence.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication for the turn ending formula **nye gbe dze anyi'** and its variant **nye nu si:**

I think you and I know this:

I have been saying something for some time now

I don't want to say anything more

I want someone else to be able to say something

I say: I will not say anything more after this

I say it because I want you to know it

Chapter 15

INTERJECTIONS

One short interjection may be more powerful, more to the point, more eloquent than a long speech.

(Müller 1860:368)

15.1 Introduction

It is perhaps true that apart from nouns and verbs, interjections - those little words, or 'non-words', which can constitute utterances by themselves - are another word class found in all languages. But it is also true that this class of items has eluded description and has, for the most part, been ignored in theoretical linguistics discourse (cf. Ehlich 1986 and Wilkins, 1991). Indeed as Schachter rightly observes: "Although there are a good many linguistic descriptions that fail to mention interjections, it seems likely that all languages do in fact have such a class of words" (Schachter 1985:60). The situation with Ewe interjections is not that different. Various writers on Ewe have listed a number of items which they consider to be interjections (see Westermann 1930:112 -115, Ansre 1966, Duthie in press). These lists are based on traditional definitions of the term interjection (see below) and are therefore too broad. They tend to include speech formulae as well (see Chapter 14). However, no systematic study has yet been done of the meanings and the conditions of use of these very important items in the language. The purpose of this chapter therefore is to describe the meanings of Ewe interjections in a manner that would constitute a reliable guide to their use.

In the rest of this introduction, I will outline very briefly the definition, characteristics and typology of interjections that is assumed in this study (see Ameka 1991b, 1991c and forthcoming for a more extensive discussion of these issues). I will describe the organisation of the chapter at the end of the introduction.

15.1.1 Defining interjections

Interjections may be defined using formal, semantic or pragmatic criteria. From a formal point of view, an interjection is typically defined as a lexical form which (i) conventionally constitutes a non-elliptical utterance by itself, (ii) does not enter into construction with other word classes, (iii) does not take inflectional or derivational affixes, and (iv) is monomorphemic (cf. Wilkins 1991, Evans 1991). This definition characterises the core members of the interjection

class. It captures most of the elements which have traditionally been described as interjections. However, this formal definition which is essentially the traditional definition is too broad since it encompasses different semantically definable classes such as one- word speech formulae which could be distinguished from the typical interjections on semantic grounds. The formal criteria above will therefore be supplemented by semantic and pragmatic criteria.

From a semantic point of view, prototypical interjections may be defined as conventionalised linguistic signs which express a speaker's current mental state, attitude or reaction towards a situation (cf. Wierzbicka 1990). This definition narrows down the class of interjections and excludes onomatopoeic words, for example, which are descriptive rather than expressive.

In terms of pragmatics, interjections are context-bound linguistic signs. That is, they are tied to specific situations and index elements in the extra-linguistic context. They cannot be fully interpreted unless they are situated in the appropriate discourse and social context. Being context-bound (i.e. indexical), interjections embody presuppositions about discourse and social context which could be explicated in terms of propositions (see Wilkins 1991, Evans 1991). For instance, if someone utters the English **ouch!**, s/he indexes himself/herself as experiencing a sudden and sharp pain. Once the speaker is identified, this utterance can be fully interpreted. The interpretation of other interjections however involves not only contextualisation and substitution of elements in the context for arguments in the propositions underlying them, but also complex processes of conversational inference. That is, the arguments in the propositions underlying the interjections are not fully specified as in the case of **ouch!** for example. The identity of the arguments are open to context based inference. For instance, one of the propositions underlying the Russian **porá** as an interjection is 'it is time for someone to do something that is given by the context'. The 'someone' in the proposition can be either the speaker, the hearer or both. The exact identity of the agent of the action is figured out by inference. It cannot be filled out by a straight forward substitution of the contextual elements for the arguments in the proposition (see Evans 1991 for a full discussion).

Closely related to their indexical nature is the fact that interjections are typically and commonly accompanied by physical gestures. For instance, in Ewe the interjection **atúù!** which is used to welcome people is uttered at the same time as the interlocutors hug each other (see §14.4.1). Sometimes physical gestures may substitute for interjections. For example, instead of using the Ewe interjection **mm** for nasal repugnance, one may just hold one's nose to prevent a bad smell from entering it (see § 15.2.3). For this reason, the

boundary between gestures as semiotic signs and interjections as linguistic signs is sometimes hard to draw (cf. Goffman 1981, Wilkins 1991, and Eastman 1991 among others).

Interjections tend to be phonologically and morphologically anomalous. They may be made up of sounds and sound sequences that are not found in other parts of the language. Some interjections in Ewe are clicks which are not used otherwise in the language. Others are voiceless nasals as in the example **m̥m̥** cited above. Several interjections, as will become evident, also contain diphthongs as the syllable nucleus. The only other place where such a sequence of sounds occurs is in loans and ideophones.

15.1.2 Types of interjections

There are different ways of classifying interjections. One classification is based more or less on the form of the interjection and the other on the communicative function of the interjection. Along the formal dimension, interjections may be divided into two broad classes: primary interjections and secondary interjections.

Primary interjections are little words or 'non-words' which in terms of their distribution can constitute an independent non-elliptical utterance by themselves and do not normally enter into construction with other word classes (English **Gee!** 'I am surprised' **Oops!** 'I now know I have done something bad' etc., French. **Aïe!**, 'I feel pain', Ewe **tsó** 'I am surprised', **adzéi** 'I feel pain').

Secondary interjections are those words which have an independent semantic value but which can be used conventionally as non-elliptical utterances by themselves to express a mental attitude or state. Under secondary interjections fall such alarm calls and attention getters as English **Help! Fire!** and swear and taboo words such as Eng. **Fuck!, Shit!**, French **Bordel! Chiotte!**

In terms of their function, interjections can be categorized according to the traditionally recognised functions of language such as expressive, conative, phatic etc. (Bühler 1934, Jakobson 1964). This functional classification is based on what is perceived to be the predominant function of the item in question with respect to its semantics.

Expressive interjections are vocal gestures which are indicative of the speaker's mental state. They may be subdivided into two groups: the emotive and the cognitive. The emotive ones are those that express the speaker's state with respect to the emotions and sensations they have at the time. For example: English **Yuk!** 'I feel disgusted', **Ouch!** 'I feel sudden pain' and Ewe **búbuí** 'I feel pain and shock'. Cognitive interjections are those that pertain to

the state of knowledge and thoughts of the speaker at the time of utterance. For instance, English **Aha!** 'I now know this', **oh-oh!** 'I now know something bad can happen' and Ewe: **ehé** 'I now remember'.

Conative interjections are those expressions which are directed at an auditor. They are either aimed at getting someone's attention or they demand an action or response from someone (English **sh!** 'I want silence here'; **eh?** 'I want to know something'; Australian English **cooe** and Russian **a'u** which are used to keep contact with people in the bush). Presentational interjections with the meaning 'I want you to take this thing I am holding out to you now' which are found in various languages may be classified as conative interjections, e.g. Italian **to!**, Japanese **hai!** (in one use) (see Miyokawa 1990), Aranda (Australian) **me!**, Mayali (Australian) **nja!** and Warlpiri (Australian) **ma!**. Calls to animals etc. also belong here as conative interjections (see §13. 9) for Ewe examples).

Phatic interjections are used in the establishment and maintenance of communicative contact. A variety of conventional vocalizations which express a speaker's mental attitude towards the on-going discourse, that is backchanneling or feedback signalling vocalizations, may be classified as phatic, for example, English **mhm**, **uh-huh**, **yeah**. Included in this class also are interjections used in the performance of various interactional routines, such as greeting and leave-taking, and in the organization of discourse (e.g. English **OK** and Ewe **yoo**).

15.1.3 Organisation of the chapter

The chapter is organised around the classification of interjections based on the communicative functions of language. First, the emotive interjections are discussed. This is followed by a description of a few cognitive interjections. The phatic ones are presented after that. The conative ones have already been described in chapter 13 under modes of address.

Throughout the discussion I will return to the issue of whether the interjections discussed are speech acts or not. There is a current debate on this matter. Some analysts argue that linguistic activities involving interjections do not constitute conversational encounters nor are they speech acts (cf. Goffman 1981, Wierzbicka 1990 and Ameka 1991c). In this respect they are different from formulae which always involve conversation and are speech acts (see Ameka 1991c and chapter 14). Closely allied to this difference is the claim that interjections do not have addressees, although they (especially the conative ones) may be directed at people who are the intended interpreters of the communicative act in which they are involved. Recall the Ewe language internal evidence that was adduced in chapter 14 in support of this. It was shown there that interjections do not occur with addressee phrases whereas

one-word formulae which belong to the same form class as interjections do. In the discussion here the same test will be applied.

15.2 Emotive interjections

15.2.1 Interjections of 'surprise' and related feelings

Different interjections are used to express various shades of 'surprise' in Ewe. These form the subject matter of this section.

15.2.1.1 *tsô*

tsô! pronounced [tʃô] may be uttered when one is confronted with something that one would not have expected to happen. Thus it may be roughly paraphrased as 'I did not expect this'. It also has an associated meaning of 'I am not pleased (about this)'. The speaker feels somehow that this unexpected thing should not have been allowed to happen in the first place. Thus in some contexts it may carry overtones of rebuke. For example, in the following extract the speaker comes across two brothers who were fighting. One would not normally expect them to have been doing that. The speaker is therefore surprised and at the same time disapproving of their behaviour and produces this utterance:

- [1] *tsô nya ka- é dzɔ dɛ mia- wó dɛdɛ dome?*
 word WH aFOC happen to 1PL PL only between
tsô! what is going on here between you two! (Nyaku in press:29)

Similarly, the speaker of the following excerpt has been attacked unexpectedly by his neighbour. He is amazed that the neighbour should just launch into hailing blows at him. He expresses his shock with the interjection **tsô** said repeatedly, and questions what the cause of this attack may be:

- [2] *tsó tsó nú ka- é me- wɔ, xã nye?*
 thing WH aFOC 1SG do friend 1SG
 'tsó! tsó! what have I done, my friend?' (Gadzekpo 1982:13).

In the examples cited so far the co-utterances of the interjections provide some clues to the semantics of the interjection. They indicate or suggest that the speaker doesn't like what happened. In the second example, it should be noted that the interjection is repeated to emphasise the intensity of the emotion being felt by the speaker.

tsô! is perhaps different from wow in English, which is also used to express surprise, in one important respect. It seems that wow implies that the speaker is both surprised and pleased (see Wilkins 1991, Wierzbicka 1990). For instance,

To account for the range of uses of this form, the following explication is proposed:

I now know something
 I wouldn't have thought I would have come to know it
 I think people should not come to know this kind of thing
 I feel something because of that
 I feel like someone who thinks: something bad can happen to me
 I say this: [dzalélé] because I want people to know what I feel

The subtle difference between **dzalélé** and **tsô!** is evident when one compares their explications. In particular **tsô!** has a component which indicates that the situation is displeasing, which **dzalélé** does not have. Thus in the formula for **tsô!** there is the component: 'I think this thing is not as good as one would have wanted'. By contrast, **dzalélé** has an element of the fact that the situation is an undesirable one for people to come to know. This is captured in the third component in the formula above: 'I think people should not come to know this kind of thing'.

These explications seem to be consistent with the usages of the forms **tsô!** and **alélé** as they are used by the interlocutors in the following extract:

[4] Al.: Av., wò ðeká øé agble- é nyé gã sia? alélé
 2SG one poss farm aFOC bebig DEM

'Av., is this big farm for you alone? alélé'

Av.: tsô nú sue sia- a?
 thing small DEMQ

me- kpó nanéké teøé o
 2SG:NEG see nothing placeNEG

'tso! this small thing? You ain't seen anything yet.'

(Nunyamɔ p 12).

Al. observes a big farm and is surprised that it belongs to one person. It is obvious that Al. does not think that Av. will be able to own such a big farm or work on it by himself alone. In a sense then it has some bad consequence for him. Either he will be considered lazy or if he tried to match Av.'s achievement, he feels apprehensive that he might not be able to. Av.'s response to this feeling expressed by Al. is one of surprise, but he is also not pleased about how Al. feels. Note that Av. goes on to claim that what Al. considers big is just a small thing and he does not think it is big. From this perspective one gets a feeling that Av. is displeased with Al.'s assessment.

15.2.1.3 (k)ô

kô and **ô** seem to be variants of each other. In fact **ô** seems to be a reduced form of **kô**. Westermann (1973) provides an instructive gloss for the significance of **kô** as follows:

exclamation of disagreeable surprise, indignation.

Elsewhere, he characterises it as an interjection for expressing ‘reproach’, or ‘disapproval’ (Westermann 1930:112). From these descriptions, one can get a glimpse of the uses of these interjections. They are used when one is confronted with an unexpected situation which s/he disapproves of. The speaker would have preferred it if the situation did not occur. To take a simple example if one notices two children playing and one hits the other, the onlooker might exclaim **kô!** and then add a rebuke. In this example, the speaker expresses surprise and disapproval at the behaviour of the child.

Similarly, in the following extract, the speaker, a mother, is shocked to find that, contrary to what she expected, one of her sons had very little money in his moneybank . His brother had about ten times what he had. Notice that the interjection is followed by a question asking for an explanation.

[5] ô yaovinú ka- é dzɔ?
 Y. thing WH aFOC happen
 ‘Oh! Yaovi, what happened? (Nunyamɔ p. 44)

The surprise and disapproving aspect of this interjection is also evident from its use in the following excerpt. The speaker asked his friend about where he was going in such a hurry. His friend took offence and warned him not to laugh at him. The speaker of the following utterance was surprised because he thought he was being friendly. The co-utterance is again instructive about the sense of disapproval and surprise that is associated with this interjection.

[6] ô nya sue si me biá wo lá ta- é
 word small REL 1SG ask 2SG TP because aFOC
 nè dó dzikúálé a?
 2SG wearanger thus Q
 ‘Oh! Is it because of this trifle question that I have asked
 you that you are so angry?’ (Nunyamɔ p. 52)

Clearly, the speaker disapproves of the anger that his interlocutor has expressed, apart from the fact that he is shocked by it.

To account for the range of uses of **kô** and **ô** I propose the following semantic formula:

I now know something happened
 I think it is bad
 Before now I didn't think I would come to know it
 I feel something bad because of that
 I say this: [kô/ô] because I want people to know what I feel

The message of **(k)ô** is different from that of **tsô!** discussed earlier. They both express surprise but **tsô!** carries the further implication of 'I am not pleased about this'; while **(k)ô** has the further element of disapproval. These differences are reflected in the explications. In particular there is an explicit reference to the situation being thought of as bad in the formula for **(k)ô**. Thus although the two interjections are used to express global surprise, there are different shades of meaning associated with each of them.

15.2.2 Interjection of 'relief'

An interjection of the form **ô!** which is homophonous with the reduced form of **(k)ô** may be used to express relief or triumph. It is used when one comes to the realisation that something which could be bad would not happen. Consequently the speaker feels something good, that the bad situation that was anticipated is no longer going to occur. For instance, when the people in a village learn that their tyrannical chief, who is also a lecher, has fled from the village, several of them make statements indicating how relieved they feel. Each of these starts with the interjection **ô**. Consider the following examples:

- [7] Mana: ô me- votsó fia gbégbľě
 1SG free from chief spoil RED
 gbolo- wó xɔľɔ sia sí me
 whore PL friend DEMHAND in
 'O! I am now free from this spoilt chief, the friend of whores.'
 (Setsoafia 1982:11)

(Note that Mana is one of the women in the village that the chief had made advances to.) Another woman expresses the same sentiment as follows:

- [8] Fafa: ô miá de ɔetugbui- wó kpó vovo azɔ
 iPL home girl PL see freedom now
 'Oh! the girls of our hometown have now got their freedom.'
 (Setsoafia 1982:11)

Similarly an elder of the village expresses a similar feeling of relief at the departure of this terrible man in the following words:

[9] Klopa: ô dukó sia vo azo
 nation DEMfree now
 ‘Oh! This nation is now free.’

It is instructive that the co-utterances of this interjection in the examples cited so far have an element of attaining freedom. Thus it can be said that the departure of the chief is perceived as a triumph for the people of the village.

To account for these aspects of the interjection, the following explication is proposed:

before now, I thought this: something bad could happen
 now, I know this: this thing will not happen
 because of something else that happened
 I feel something good because of that
 I say this: [ô] because I want people to know what I feel

15.2.3 Interjection of ‘revulsion’

An interjection which may be phonetically represented as [mm̩] may be produced when one is suddenly confronted with a bad smell. It may be described as a sequence of a voiceless bilabial nasal followed by a bilabial nasal which are both produced with some implosion and high tone. Physically the sounds are accompanied by or produced by closed lips and a wrinkling of the nose. All this suggests that the speaker is doing something to prevent the smell from entering their body either through the nose or through the mouth. Thus the physical gesture may be symbolic of the wants and feeling of the utterer of the interjection (cf. Darwin on gestures of disgust, and the discussion in Wierzbicka 1990).

Thus when one unexpectedly encounters the smell of a rotten egg, or passes by an open sewer or a gutter full of stench one can produce this interjection. This sound together with the action is what children will produce in a classroom if one of them polluted the air by emitting some bodily gas. However children are taught or trained not to utter this interjection in public, especially when they are in the company of older people or strangers. This may be partly due to the fact that the onlookers might interpret the utterance as implying that they are emitting the bad smell. What one is expected to do in public when they are confronted with a bad smell is to cover or hold one’s nose

without making any sound. This is a polite gesture. Thus there is a social constraint or 'social placedness condition' (cf. Evans in press) on the production of this interjection which could be stated roughly as:

One should not do this [mm] in public.

Nevertheless, people use this form when they are with their acquaintances or play-mates or when they are alone in a place and come across a bad smell. Parents also use a form derived from this interjection in the toilet training of children. The form is [kū:kū] which is used to signal to children that there is something dirty or smelly around and the child should keep away from it.

With these considerations in mind, the following explication is proposed to account for the meaning of [mm]

- (a) I now know something bad about this place
- (b) I feel something (bad) in my body because of this
- (c) I feel like someone who thinks: I don't want this to come
into my body through my nose or my mouth
- (d) I do this: [mm] because of that
- (e) I think other people would feel the same

Component (a) is meant to capture the view that the speaker comes in contact with a bad smell. It is assumed that the bad smell is a property of the ambience hence one perceives something about the ambience rather than a specific entity in the place, although the bad smell may be emitted by a particular object in the environment. In any case the bad smell soon becomes mixed with the air in the atmosphere. Component (c) is also intended to capture the fact that someone who is confronted with a bad smell wrinkles his/her nose and closes his/her mouth to prevent the polluted air from entering his/her body. The nose and the mouth are seen as the obvious openings through which such mass of air could enter the body. Finally, component (e) captures the idea that anyone would feel the same and react in the same way if they come into contact with the bad smell.

15.2.4 Interjections of 'fright'

When one is frightened or comes across something scary, s/he may respond to such a situation with some cry. In this section we discuss some of the 'response cries' that are used in Ewe when one is frightened.

15.2.4.1 yii

The form **yii** pronounced [ji:] is produced when one comes in contact with something that is fearful or frightening. It can thus be paraphrased as 'I am frightened'. Typically, the scary thing is a physical object. For example, when

some children visited a blacksmith at his workshop and saw him remove a hot burning bar of metal, they shouted **yiii** as reported in the following extract:

[10] gbede zānú tsó abé ɖe ga lá
 blacksmith Z. take crow-bar remove metal DEF
 le dzo- á me é- xɔ dzo hē
 at fire DEF in 3SG get fire red
 sukú- ví á- wó dó ɣlí bé ‘ yiii’
 school DIM DEF PL put out shout COMP
 ‘Blacksmith Zānu took a crow-bar and removed the metal
 from the fire. It was red hot. The school children exclaimed: yii ..’
 (Nunyamə p. 57)

However, the trigger for this interjection could just be the thought of something frightening without coming in contact with it. For instance the thought of not being adequately prepared for a forthcoming examination could be the stimulus for uttering **yii**.

It can thus be said that this form is expressive of the current mental state of the speaker. The speaker feels afraid or apprehensive or anxious at the moment of the utterance. Although it is not addressed to anybody, it is a conventional means of communication that is recognised by the speakers of Ewe as expressing a certain meaning. This meaning may be explicated as follows:

I now know this: something bad can happen
 I feel something because of that
 I do this: [ji:] because of that

15.2.4.2 búbúi

búbúi is a response cry of pain or fright. It is related to the interjectional summons **búbúbúi** (see §13.9.1.4). It is used as a vocalization to externalise the pangs of fear that the speaker is experiencing. A bereaved person who is apprehensive of what the loss of the relative is going to be for him/her can wail with a series of **búbúi**'s. In other cases, it may be produced when one experiences some pain out of fear.

There is a related form **bùbùì** which is used to scare children. Its effect is to create fear in the child and stop them from doing something which the care-taker thinks is bad. The conventional meanings of these forms may be explicated as follows:

búbúi

I now know this: something bad is happening to me
 I feel something bad because of it now
 I do this [búbúi] because of that

bùbùì

I know this: something bad can happen to you
 I don't want this bad thing to happen to you
 I want you to know it
 I want you to do something because of that
 I do this: [bùbùì] because of that

The main difference between **yii** and **búbúi** is that the latter tends to be used in reaction to a frightening situation that is occurring at the moment of speech. **yiii**, on the other hand, is a signal of apprehension: the speaker thinks something bad can happen and expresses the emotion that is felt because of it. An attempt has been made to capture this difference in the explications above in terms of aspect and modality. For **yii**, the speaker has a cognition that 'something bad can happen'; while for **búbúi** the speaker is aware that something bad is happening. A further difference is that for **yii** the bad thing does not have to be thought of as something that could happen to the speaker. However, for **búbúi**, the outcome of the bad thing tends to be self or speaker directed.

feeling that s/he has because of the situation. This makes the speaker think about the situation.

The uttering of **hmm** is reported with the phrasal predicate **ɖe hū** 'issue hū'. This partly suggests that this action is viewed as an 'acting' rather than a 'saying'. Some sayings concerning this action suggest an element of helplessness on the part of the speaker. The sayings suggest that no matter how much one indulges in this act, one's woes are not easily reduced. Consider these statements.

- [12] hū ɖeɖe mé ɖe- a hiã ɖá o
 hmm issue RED NEG remove HAB need away NEG
 'moaning/grieving does not relieve pain/remove one's wants.'
 (Setsoafia 1982:64)

And there is the following aphorism as well:

- [13] hū geɖe ɖe-ɖe vevé ko wò dza- a
 hmm many issue RED bile only 3SG fall HAB
 ɖé dzi dží ná ame
 at heart top to person
 'Grieving/moaning a lot, only increases one's adrenalin.'

In some contexts, this interjection may be used to signal regret for one's own behaviour. In this situation too, there is a reflection upon or thinking about something that may have happened which is linked to self-pity. For instance, the speaker of the following sentence was reflecting at the time of her death on her character and the suffering that she was going through because of the bad things she had done. Note that the utterance which follows locates the source of the problem in the speaker's own disobedience to her parents. Consider the following:

- [14] mhuu! tó gbe - ma- se nɔ - gbe- ma- se
 father voice NEG hear mother voice NEG hear
 yé wɔ- m áléa
 aFOC do 1SG thus
 'hmm! disobedience to father and mother is what has made me
 like this.' (Dogoe 1964:41)

It is instructive that this speaker went on to suggest that if she were to become a child again, she would make sure she does not fall into the same situation. With these considerations in mind, the meaning of the interjection **hmm!** may be explicated, tentatively as follows:

I know something bad is happening to someone
 I don't want it

I feel something bad because of it
 I want to do something about it
 I do this: [fimn] because I want people to know what I feel

The first component is phrased in a way that ‘someone’ in the appropriate context would be interpreted as the speaker or someone else. Furthermore, it is in the progressive to capture the idea that the knowledge and thought of it is very current, although the behavior may have occurred some time earlier. This interjection **hmm!** is less self-oriented than another ‘grieving’ interjection **áò** which is described in the next section.

15.2.5.2 **áò**

This interjection is a form that is used to express a kind of self-pity, sorrow and grief. The situation which triggers this interjection tends to be one which the speaker perceives to have an adverse effect on him/her. For instance, the speaker of the following utterance has been trying to win the heart of the woman named Ama in the example. His proposal has been rejected and Ama has asked him to leave. He then exclaims as follows:

[15] **áò áò** ama, è gba nyě dzi, **áò áò**

A. 2SG break 1SG:poss heart

‘**Ao! Ao!** Ama, you have broken my heart. **Ao! Ao!**’

(Setsoafial 1982:65)

It is fair to claim that the speaker was full of sorrow and self-pity and was grieving for losing out on the woman whose heart he was trying to win. Thus something bad is happening to him, namely, he has been rejected or rather he is being rejected by a woman he fancies. Because of this he feels something bad and utters the interjection to show what he feels.

The situation is even clearer with the speaker of the following extract, a father, who is reminded of his dead son by the behaviour of his daughter and starts to grieve for him using the interjection **áò** :

[16] ... wò nú wɔ- na sia ná

2SG:poss thing do HAB DEM cause

bé me- ga- dɔ̀ŋkú vi- nye dɔ̀glólɔ̀lɔ̀

COMP 1SG REP set eye child 1SG D. beloved

ɸé kú dzí éye aɗatsi lóló dɛ̀ŋkú dzí

poss death top and tear melt at eye top

ná m áò dɔ̀gló.. **áò áò**

to 1SG D.

'... this behavior of yours has made it that I have remembered
the death of my beloved child Dɔ̀glo and it has put tears in my
eyes. Ao! Dɔ̀glo! ... Ao! Ao! (Setsoafia 1982:48)

Here the speaker is grieving for and lamenting over his son. Note that this is triggered by something that someone else had done to remind him of the death of his son.

In other circumstances, the speaker may be expressing self-pity or the sorrow that she/he feels for himself/herself because of some situation in which s/he finds him/herself. Consider the following examples:

[17a] áò nye- é kpé nú áléa a?
1SG aFOC meetthing thus Q
'Ao, is it me who has come in contact with misfortune like this?'

[17b] áò ame sia- wó ga vá fu ɔ́ ɔ́ gé
person DEMPL REP come trouble issue INGR
ná m ...
to 1SG
'Ao, these people have come to trouble me again.'
(Setsoafia 1982:50)

In both cases something bad is happening to the speaker and he feels something bad about it. Note that he cannot do much about the situation, even though he doesn't want the situation.

With these considerations, I propose the following explication to account for the range of uses of **áò** as an interjection for expressing grief, sorrow etc.:

I now know this: something bad has happened to me

I cannot not think about it

I don't want it

I cannot do anything about it

I feel something bad because of that

I say this: [áò] because I want to show how I feel.

The essential difference between **hmm** and **áò** lies in the fact that **áò** entails something bad having happened to the speaker. **hmm**, on the other hand, does not have to be speaker-oriented, although it could be. Besides, the triggering situation is something that for **áò** may have happened earlier, but for **hmm**, it may still be current. Note that the meanings are not incompatible and for this reason both interjections can co-occur as in the following example:

[18] áò áò mhuu ...!

'Ao! Ao! hmn!'

(Dogoe 1964:42)

15.2.6 Interjections of 'pain' etc.

In this section, three interjections of pain are discussed. They are: [ʔm], áí_ and ádzéí. Essentially these interjections are used to signal that the speaker is experiencing some pain.

15.2.6.1 ʔm

ʔm is usually repeated as one experiences some prolonged pain. This is the vocal gesture that someone who is chronically sick and is in severe pain might use to indicate what s/he is feeling. Someone who is undergoing some intermittent pain as when his/her sore is being washed or something of the sort can utter a series of these interjections at the same time as s/he experiences the pain. It appears that there is not much the experiencer can do about the situation.

Tentatively, I propose the following explication to account for the uses of ʔm:

I know something bad is happening to me

I think it will happen for some time after now

I don't want it

I cannot do anything about it

I feel something very bad because of it

I do this: [ʔm ʔm ʔm...] because I want people to know what I feel.

An attempt has been made to capture in the above explication the fact that the pain is enduring (components 1 and 2), and that the experiencer is somehow helpless (component 4), and that the pain is intense or severe (hence the use of 'very' in the feeling component). It seems that this is the dimension in which this interjection differs from the other interjections of pain.

The action of uttering [ʔm] may be described using the verb **gbli** which Westermann (1973) glosses as 'to groan, moan'. The paraphrase provided above is compatible, I suggest, with groaning and moaning. The other interjections of pain discussed in the next section cannot be reported with this verb. The gloss of Westermann, I believe, suggests an intense and durative activity which are the main features of the interjection ʔm. We now turn to the other 'pain' indicating interjections.

15.2.6.2 áí! and ádzéí!

Both áí! and ádzéí! are used to signal that something painful has happened to the addressee. (Both forms are also used in Akan to express similar meanings.) In this respect, they differ from ʔm which is used for on-going pain. Thus they

can both be used when someone is grieving for the loss of a relative. However **ái!** and **ádzéi!** seem to differ in at least two respects. First, **ái!** seems to be used when one experiences a sharp and instant pain as when one steps immediately on thorns or a coal of fire. **ádzéi!** is less likely to be used in such a context. Second, **ádzéi!** may be used to signal that one is undergoing a ‘pleasurable pain’. For instance, if one had heard something funny and was laughing his head off, s/he could signal the ‘sweet and sour’ pain of laughing by **ádzéi!**. **ái!** is less likely to be used in such a context. In general, and in many cases, **ái!** and **ádzéi!** are interchangeable but there are these differences which suggest some contrasts.

Tentatively, I propose the following explications for these interjections:

ái!

I know something bad is happening to me now,
not at any other time
I wouldn’t have thought it would have happened to me
I don’t want it
I feel something bad because of that
I do this: [ái] because I want people to know how I feel

ádzéi!

I now know something bad has happened to me
I wouldn’t have thought it would have happened to me
I feel something because of that
I do this: [ádzéi] because I want people to know how I feel

There is a suddenness about the realisation that something painful has happened to the speaker. This element has been captured by the second component in both explications. The explication for **ái** attempts to capture the idea that it is used for an instant sharp and sudden pain, while that for **ádzéi** suggests that the situation that triggers it is not necessarily sharp and instant although it is unexpected. To capture the idea that **ádzéi** may be used in situations where there is ‘pleasurable pain’, its explication does not contain a rejection component: ‘I don’t want it’, as the one for **ái** does.

15.2.7 Interjection of ‘contempt’

tswiã is an interjection that is used to express contempt that a speaker has for someone or for an idea. This interjection may be pronounced in one of two ways: [tɕiã] or [tɕʷiã]. Sometimes the affricate may be palatalized to yield pronunciations of the form [tɕiã] or [tɕʷiã]. By and large, these different

phonetic forms express the same meaning. The interjection conveys disrespect for someone who may have done something or said something which the speaker considers bad. It also implies a rejection of the person or the idea which triggered the interjection. Consider the following extract which contains an instance of **tsiã**:

- [19] K.: né me- kúgɔ hãlá, mia- tsó
 if 1SG die eventoo TP 2PL:NEG:IRR take
 fia- zikpui lá á dzó e o
 chief stool DEF IRR leave SER NEG
- A.: tsiã né è kú lá ǎ- gblɔ bé
 if 2SG die TP 2SG:IRR say COMP
 ɖe ye- kú eyata- é me- té ɲú
 pFOC LOG die therefore aFOC 1SG can
 tsó fia- zikpui lá dzó e ma - kú o
 take chief chair DEF leave SER NEG:2SG:IRR die NEG
 ǎ- nɔ agbe-á kpó kplé ɲkú hɔɔ
 2SG:IRR be:NPRES life IRR see with eye clear
 háfí ma- tsó fia- zikpui lá.
 before 1SG:IRR take chief chair DEF

'K: Even if I die, you will not take the chief's stool away.

A: **tsiã**! If you die, you will say that it is because you were dead that is why I was able to take the chief's stool away. You will not die, you will be alive and it will be before your own eyes that I will take the stool away.

(Nyaku in press:29)

Perhaps the situation is clear enough, but to orient the reader, the context of the extract is that A. had come to the village of K. to take away the chief's stool of A's people (A. belongs to a clan who broke away from the clan of K). K. then asserts that this will not happen, even if he dies. A. utters the interjection **tsiã** to show his contempt and disrespect for both the idea and the person. This message is reinforced by the utterance which follows the interjection.

This example and the description offered so far is consistent with Westermann's (1973) entry for the item. He describes this form as an 'interjection of displeasure, annoyance, contempt'. Notice that in the above example, A. feels a bit irritated that K. should suggest that he could not take the stool away.

The following example perhaps illustrates the use of the interjection for an idea or a situation and not necessarily for a person, although the implication of disdain for the people involved cannot be entirely ignored. The context of the

example is that two women, one married the other unmarried, were talking about the domestic life of the married woman. When the married woman pointed out the amount of pocket money that her husband gives her for the domestic expenses, the unmarried expressed her feeling about it in the following way:

[20] tsiã né me- le ɔkui- nye sí lá é nyó wú
 if 1SG be:PRES self 1SG hand TP 3SG good surpass
 ‘tsiã if I am independent, it is better.’ (Akpatsi 1980:53)

The speaker implies that the money is insufficient and if that is how married women are treated then she would rather be independent than get married. One could thus say she was expressing contempt for both the pocket money and marriage.

The message of this interjection may be paraphrased as follows:

I now know something about this person
 Because of this, I think this:
 one can say something bad about this person
 I don't want to be in the same place like this person
 I feel something bad towards him/her
 I do this:[tsiã] because I want people to know what I feel and think

The first component in the semantic explication is fairly general in order to account for situations where one may utter this interjection because of what the target person has said or some behavior that s/he has displayed. The interjection may also be triggered by a conclusion that the utterer may draw, based on some other evidence, about the nature of someone. For example, the incompetence of someone in some way may lead to a rejection and contempt of him. All these can be related to the idea that the utterer of the interjection has become aware of something about the target person. Based on this knowledge the utterer passes a judgement that there is something bad about this person and is disgusted by his/her behavior. It is this feeling of disgust and rejection that is captured in the third component. The utterance of the interjection is a display of the internal state, the emotion and the attitude that the speaker has towards this person. This view is captured in the last component.

15.2.8 Interjection of ‘exasperation’

The interjection **akúã** may be described as an interjection of exasperation. It is used to express the shock and exasperation that one feels when one hears something which s/he thinks is bad or when one is confronted with some behaviour that s/he disapproves of. Typically, the speaker feels as though the situation negatively affects him/her. For instance, if someone is falsely accused of something and gets to know of it, s/he could exclaim **akúã**. Or if someone has been bothered to do something and s/he finds that all the trouble was in vain, s/he could utter the following sentence:

[21] akúã nè xa- m ñútó
 2SG suffer 1SG much
 ‘akúã, you have bothered me.’

In this context the speaker expresses the exasperation s/he feels at being bothered in vain. Here also it may be directed at a particular person who is perceived as the source of the irritation.

However, **akúã** may also be triggered by some shocking thing that the speaker has heard which s/he doesn't like. S/he feels some annoyance that such a situation should exist. For example the speaker of the following utterance has just heard that some women bewitch their men so that they (the men) give them all their salary. The speaker - a man - does not like the idea and expresses his shock and (mild) anger in the following way:

[22] akúã ésia ya ga sē ló
 this INT REP hard ADD
 ‘akúã, as for this one, it is hard/difficult.’ (Nyaku 1984:19)

The meaning of this interjection may be explicated as follows:

The above sentence was uttered by the fiancée of a man who has been sent on an errand to the village of his ex-girlfriend. His fiancée was of the view that he wanted to go there because of his ex-girlfriend and therefore hooted at him.

This example and several usages of these ridicule expressions indicate that they are addressed to somebody. And in a way they are premeditated and less automatic than prototypical interjections. Notice that the expressions can occur with an addressee phrase **ná wò** ‘to you’. The act of ‘ridiculing’ enacted through these expressions is typically performed by shouting out the forms. In fact, people may be invited to ridicule others by asking them to shout at the offender. Teachers or parents may invite the peers of a child to hoot at them with **hoo** or **wuu** as a punishment for some social misconduct. In the following example, an elder of the village invites the villagers to ridicule their undisciplined chief:

[25] K.: miá tɔ - wó mi- dó yí dé é ta
 1PL POSSPRO PL 2PL cause shout to 3SG head
 né é - øé luwɔ nádzó le é té
 purp 3SG poss soul IRR leave at 3SG under

(all of them): hoo! hoo!

K: ‘(My) people! shout on him so that his soul can flee from him.
 all: Shame! Shame! (Setsoafia 1982:107)

The statement that was added to the invitation provides a clue for the fact that shouting **hoo** or **wuu** at someone is meant to humiliate the person (and make him/her lose her soul). In some contexts also, the co-utterance of **wuu** or **hoo** suggests that part of the message is that the person has been caught out or exposed. Commonly one can hear the following as an utterance of shaming someone:

[26] wuu! náné be kpó wò
 something hide see 2SG
 ‘wuu! someone/something has seen you.’

These pieces of evidence lead us to the following conclusions: the forms are not as spontaneous as prototypical interjections; they are used to ridicule someone who has done something bad; the bad thing is seen as morally and objectively bad; the purpose is to make the addressee feel humiliated and perhaps cause him/her not to behave in that way again.

With these considerations, I propose the following explication to account for the range of uses of **hoo!/wuu!/ohoo!**

I now know you have done something bad
 I feel something bad towards you because of that
 I say this: [hoo/wuu/ohoo] to you because of it
 I say it in this way because:
 I want you to feel something bad
 I want to cause you not to do this kind of thing again

These forms are not prototypical interjections because, as pointed out earlier, they can take addressee phrases. This is reflected in the explication. In other aspects however, their illocutionary structure is similar to that of interjections. I think they are somewhere on the continuum between prototypical interjections and formulae (see §15.5 and Ameka 1991c for a discussion of the continuum).

15.3 Cognitive interjections

Cognitive interjections are the vocal gestures which signify the current state of knowledge or thinking of the speaker with respect to something in the context. A couple of these are discussed in this section.

15.3.1 *ehē*

This interjection is used in various contexts. In one usage it may be paraphrased as ‘I remember now’. In other usages it may be glossed as ‘I am pleased’ or ‘I think it is good’. That is, it may be used in situations where someone recalls something or obtains a sudden realisation or thinks that their wants have been fulfilled or their suspicions confirmed. At first this range of uses might suggest that this interjection is polysemous. However, it will become evident that one can state a single meaning for this form from which all these uses may be predicted.

This interjection should be distinguished from another one which has the same segmental form but a high tone on the last syllable, namely, **ehē̃**. This form is used as a reaction signal, either as a backchanneler or as a response to a proposition (see §15.4.1.2 for description of this form).

Typically, the cognitive interjection **ehē** may be uttered when a thought has just occurred to someone. This thought is something that the speaker would have had before, but forgot for some time before it re-surfaced. This is why I think a gloss of ‘I remember now’ or ‘I have just remembered this’ might be appropriate for it. Consider the following examples. In the first one, the

speaker had intended to notify his interlocutor about some plans he had made for their travel. Just as they were going to part, he remembered that he had not told the interlocutor about these plans and then exclaimed as follows:

- [27] ehẽ me- ga- wɔ dza-dzra-ɔ búbú áǰé wó
 1SG REP do preparation other INDEF PL
 me ɲlɔ wó béklóé
 1SG forget 3PL VS almost
 ‘ehẽ, I have made some other preparations, I nearly forgot
 about them’ (Nyaku in press:23).

In the example below, the context of the use of **ehẽ** suggests that a thought occurred to the speaker and just at that time he uttered the interjection. In this particular case, the interjection seems to signal a sudden realisation that the speaker has attained. This is not inconsistent with the earlier suggestion that **ehẽ** may be paraphrased as ‘I remember now’:

- [28] énumaké susú áǰé vá ta-me ne
 immediately thought INDEF come head-in to:3SG
 é gblɔ náé ɔ́kui bé:
 3SG say to 3SG REFL COMP
 ehẽ me- nyá nú si ma- wɔ
 1SG know thing REL 1SG:IRR do
 ‘Immediately, a thought occurred to him and he said to himself:
ehẽ, I know what I will do.’ (Nunyamɔ p. 65)

It can thus be said that this interjection is used when one has just become aware of something, that is, a recall or a sudden realisation. There is an element of satisfaction associated with this form that may be gleaned from the last example. It seems to me that this is how the recall usage is related to the use of the interjection in a context where the wants of a speaker are fulfilled or their suspicions confirmed. For example, in the following extract from a play, Fianyo is a wanderer who has got into the farm of Kofi’s father and prepared some food. He is eating it as Kofi and his father arrive. In an attempt to get them on his side he invites them to join in the meal. Naturally Kofi and his father resist this. When he finally gets the child, Kofi, to sit down, he utters the following:

- [29] ehẽ kofí ... nɔ anyí na- ɔ́nú tɔɔ
 K. sit down 2SG:IRR eat thing ADD

'ehe, Kofi sit down and have something to eat.'

(Setsoafia 1982:21)

In this example, it can be said that the wants of the speaker have been satisfied and it is this realisation which makes him utter the interjection.¹

Similarly, this interjection may be used in a context where the speaker's fears and suspicions have been confirmed. For instance, if a child was warned about playing with a knife, but failed to heed the advice and consequently got hurt, the onlooker could exclaim: **ehē**. In this case, it usually carries a rebuking or ironic message: 'it serves you right' or 'you deserve that'. This is the sense in which the speaker of the utterance in example [30] below uses the item. The context of this extract is that a man had caused a couple to have an argument unnecessarily. When the husband turned on the man to sort things out with him, he picked a fight with him. The husband knocked him down on the floor. When this happened the woman was content and uttered the interjection followed by calling the other man names. Consider part of the words used by the woman:

[30] ehē wò ahanomunɔ vló sia, è kpó é teḡé...
 2SG drunkard bad DEM2SG see 3SG place
 'ehe, you drunkard, you deserve that ...'

Nevertheless, the primary sense of the realisation that some suspicion or fear has been confirmed is still present. In this case it may be that the woman's view that the man is an ineffectual person who causes trouble may have been confirmed.

To account for the range of uses of **ehē**, the following semantic formula is proposed:

I now know something
 I didn't know it before now
 I think it is good
 I feel something good because of that
 I say this: [ehē] because of that

I submit that the various uses of **ehē**, for recall, for sudden realisation, for satisfaction of one's wants and for the confirmation of one's suspicions are all

¹Perhaps a piece of evidence in support of the use of the interjection to signal the realisation that one's wants have been satisfied is that there is a (dirty) joke in which this form **ehē** is used as a sexual moan by a woman as a signal of her sexual satisfaction.

compatible with this formula. In particular note that the sarcastic reading that one may get of ‘you deserve that’ or ‘it serves you right’ is systematically linked to the formula in the sense that there is a component of ‘I think it is good’ which is also present, I suggest, in its use in such contexts. Furthermore, it is suggested that there is an emotional component in the meaning of this item. This is particularly true of situations in which it is used to signal the realisation of the satisfaction of one’s wants and the confirmation of one’s suspicions. It may be argued that when one recalls something, one could be pleased about it. Hence in all cases, there is an emotive component associated with this cognitive interjection.

15.3.2 *ahā*

ahā is another cognitive interjection. It is used to signal cognitive states of the speaker that may be represented as ‘I understand’ or ‘I see’. In this respect it tends to be used in ways similar to that of the English *aha* which may also be glossed in the same way. However I am not sure that the range of uses of the English form as described by *The Longman Dictionary of the English Language* (LDOTEL) is isomorphic with those of the Ewe form. LDOTEL claims that English *aha* is ‘used to express surprise, triumph, derision or amused discovery’. The use of the Ewe form may be associated with surprise and perhaps triumph, but it does not seem to be used to express ‘amused discovery’.

It is instructive that Ewe **ahā** tends to occur in parataxis with utterances such as ‘I now understand’ (see example [31] below) or ‘I told you so’. These co-utterances perhaps amplify the content of the interjection. Consider the following extract from a play. The context of the extract is this: A. is the leader of a group who has come to sort some things out with T. After their mission has been established T. poses a question which A. takes literally. T. then corrects A.’s interpretation of the question and after this A. utters the sentences with **ahā** and adds that he has now fully understood the question. The relevant utterance is this:

[31] A: *ahā me- se é me azo ..*

1SG hear 3SG in now

‘*aha*, I now understand...’ (Nyaku in press:27).

Similarly, after a guide had explained the history behind a drawing in an art display to the speaker of the following sentence, he immediately realised the connection between the text underneath it and the history and exclaimed:

[32] *ahā ésia- ta- é wó ɲlo dé*

this because aFOC 3PL write at
 nútátá sia té bé ...
 picture DEMunder COMP
 'aha, this is why it has been written under this picture that ...
 (Nyaku 1984:13)

The essential message of **ahā** suggested by these examples is that the speaker gets a sudden understanding of a situation. One could feel triumphant on attaining that kind of understanding.

Like **ehē** discussed earlier, **ahā** can also be used in a derisive or ironic way. For example, if a child was playing and was late for school, one could say the following to him/her as the school bell was ringing:

[33] ahā game su
 time suffice
 'aha, it is time.'

To account for the range of uses of **ahā**, the following explication is proposed:

before now I didn't know this
 now I know it
 I feel something because of that

The last component is added to capture the emotional feeling that is associated with the sudden understanding that one experiences.

15.4 Phatic interjections

Phatic interjections are those vocal gestures which are used in establishing and maintaining communicative and social contact between interlocutors. It should be stressed, however, that this does not preclude them from having meaning components which may be 'expressive' or 'volitive' in nature. These phatic interjections can be divided into at least two classes:

- (a) those interjections that are used in the performance of interactional routines or rituals such as greeting, welcoming, thanking, etc. An example of such an interjection in Ewe is **atúù** which has already been described in §14.4.1.
- (b) those interjections which are used as reaction signals in the sense that they express a speaker's attitude to a statement, question or proposition of an interlocutor. These may be divided into those that are used in backchanneling, that is, as auditor feedback signals, and those that are completive in function (cf

Bloomfield 1933:176); that is, they are used as responses to questions and propositions.

In the present section, we are concerned with the backchanneling and completive forms. The status of many of the forms described here with respect to whether they are interjections or formulaic words is not clear-cut. The complication arises from the fact that the same form functions either as an interjection where it is a spontaneous signal of the mental state of the speaker or as a formulaic word where it is a premeditated response to a proposition. In most cases one has to postulate polysemy. Both functions are described here because the analysis proceeds from the form to the meanings.

First, the backchanneling forms will be described. This is followed by an investigation of the meanings of the response signals.

15.4.1 Backchanneling interjections

Backchannels in general may be characterised as those signals, verbal or non-verbal, which an auditor or interlocutor uses to provide different kinds of information to the (main) speaker as s/he is speaking, that is during the speaker's turn or as s/he still holds the floor, without the producer of such signal claiming the floor. They may be regarded as listener feedback to what is being said (cf. Yngve 1970, Kendon 1967, Duncan 1974, Schegloff 1981 and Brown and Yule 1983 among others).

The term 'backchannel' implies that there are two channels in communication (or conversation): one for the current speaker who holds the floor, and the other for the recipient/listener. The channel for the listener is used to provide feedback to the one holding the floor and therefore may be called backchannel. The verbal elements which may be deployed to serve this function include not only vocalizations but also 'a much broader range of utterance types, including larger stretches of talk' (Schegloff 1981:77). Thus backchannels may be of various types (see Duncan 1974:166):

- Vocalizations and stereotyped phrases eg. *uh huh, yeah, right, oh,*
- sentence completions, that is, the auditor completes a speaker's sentence
- requests for clarification eg. *huh? what? who?* etc.
- brief restatements
- head nods and shakes (physical gestures)

This list demonstrates that members of a number of different categories may be used to express the backchanneling function. Of course, at another level, these items may all be considered to constitute a functional class. The class of

items that we are concerned with here are the vocalizations, vocal gestures that are predominantly used to provide auditor feedback.

Backchanneling behaviour in general may serve different purposes: they provide support or co-operation in the interactional discourse, they may show an interlocutor's state of attentiveness, understanding or preparedness for the next set of things, and they may signal the interlocutor's interest or involvement in what is being said. The interjections to be discussed here do just that. They may be thought of as 'attention-signals', that is, forms that provide cues to the speaker that the interlocutor is paying attention and is interested. They may also show appreciation and encourage or urge the speaker to say more!

Apart from **mbó!** which we have already noted has a backchanneling function (see §14.5.5), we will describe the following: **yue**, **ehě** **mm**, **ěě** and **ampa**.

15.4.1.1 yue

This form is used by members of the audience at public orations, for example during speeches, funerals, the swearing-in of chiefs, the paying of homage to a superior chief by a subordinate one etc., to show their appreciation for what is being said, and to urge the speaker on. The uttering of this item, especially during the swearing-in of a chief, signifies one's role as a witness of the event. One can thus generalise that the use of the form indicates auditor (or audience) participation in the on-going speech activity.

yue can also be used in dyadic interactions as well. Apart from being used to indicate the attentiveness of the auditor, it also serves as an encouragement to the speaker to go on. In such contexts **yue** is used to show that the auditor is impressed with what is being said, or with the way it is being said.

To account for the range of uses of this item, I propose the following explication:

yue

I think you are saying something very good

I want you to know this:

I am thinking about what you are saying

I want you to say more

I say this: [jue] because I want people to know what I think

The first component is intended to capture the fact that the utterer of **yue** is impressed with and appreciates what is being said; it is something which s/he thinks is very good. The second component is meant to capture the idea that the utterer is paying attention. The third component spells out the wish that

the main speaker should go on. The last component represents the communicative purpose of this form.

It could be argued that there is the need for another component which captures the shared knowledge that this form is a backchannel and that its production does not imply a rude interruption of the speaker nor a claim to take the floor. Very roughly such a component could be phrased as follows:

I think you know/understand this

I say this not because:

I want you not to say this

I say it because I want you to say something more

But is this part of the semantics or is it an explication of the ‘discourse placedness condition’ or the ‘contextualisation’ convention that the form has (cf Evans in press, Gumperz 1982, 1989). Furthermore, the same component will have to be stated for all the backchannels. It seems better to specify this as a principle of discourse interpretation that operates on the semantic formula to give its overall interpretation.

15.4.1.2 *ehě*

The phatic interjection, **ehě** is distinct from the cognitive interjection of similar segmental form in tone. The cognitive interjection has a falling tone: **ehě** (see §15.3.1). The phatic interjection has a number of uses which cut across the backchannel and response functions. All the uses of the form are described here.

One of the uses of this form is as a backchanneler. In this function it tends to signal to the main/principal speaker that the interlocutor is paying attention and that the speaker should say more. In this respect it is very similar to **yue** described in the previous section. There is however a difference between the two items: **ehě** does not entail an appreciation sense which **yue** contains. Furthermore, **ehě**, unlike **yue**, is not used at public orations. This follows from the fact that it does not contain an appreciation component.

Consider the use of **ehě** in the following extract where a diviner uses it to keep in contact with and give signal to his spiritual messenger that he was listening:

[34] Bokɔ: nya etã é wó bé na- biá
 word three aFOC 3PL say 2SG:SBJV ask
 náye wó ... ehě ... ehě ... ehě ...
 to LOG PL

éya ńútó a - gbo lóó ...

3SG self 3SG:IRR return Q

'There are three things they want you to ask about for them
... ehe ... ehe ... ehe ... Will she herself come back or ...'

(Nyaku in press:8)

The dots in the extract are meant to represent what the messenger was saying back to the diviner.

ehě may also be used in telephone conversations as contact and go-on signals. This is also consistent with the basic use of this item as a feedback signal in conversation.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication to account for the backchanneling function of **ehě**:

ehě (backchannel)

I know you are saying something to me

I want you to know this

I am thinking about what you are saying

I want you to say more

I say this: [ehě] because I want you to know I am listening

The first component in the semantic formula captures the idea that **ehě** is used between interlocutors in dyadic conversations; hence the inclusion of 'to me' in that component. The above formula seems to be consistent with the use of **ehě** as a response signal, the usage to which we now turn.

ehě as a response or reaction signal may be used in response to an attention getting action. Thus it may be used in response to a knock on the door or a clap to indicate that someone wants to come in. In this context then one could say that **ehě** could be paraphrased as 'come in' or even 'yes, come in'.

Similarly, **ehě** can be used as a response to a call. However, this response in this context may be used only among equals or from superiors to juniors and not vice versa. If it is used by a younger person to an elderly person, it is perceived to be rude. Thus the following could be an exchange between two equals:

[35] A: kofi!

Kofi!

B: ehě.

'yes (with rising intonation)'

In this usage as a response, **ehě** serves the function of an acknowledgement of the initial attention getting signal which may be verbal or non-verbal. Furthermore, it shows the one who is asking for attention that the addressee is

paying heed. It also seems to carry the implication that the one who says **ehĕ** is ready for further interaction. That is, s/he wants the wishes of the initiator met.

What seems to be common to these usages as a response to some other signal is that the speaker expresses his/her preparedness for whatever is going to follow next to occur. Thus in the case of a knock, s/he is ready for the interlocutor to enter the room. In the case of a call, s/he is prepared for the interlocutor to say or indicate why s/he called him/her. The activity that is to follow is something that would involve the person who responds with **ehĕ**.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication to account for **ehĕ** as a response signal:

ehĕ (response)

I know you want something to happen

because of this, you did something

I think you want me to say if I want it to happen

I think this:

you think it cannot happen if I don't say that I want it to happen

I want to say something to you because of this

I say: it can happen now

I say it because I want it to be able to happen

In this semantic formula an attempt has been made to capture the invariant features of **ehĕ** as a response. In the first component, the speaker indicates that s/he knows that the interlocutor wanted something from the activity - verbal or non-verbal- that was performed. The second and third components reflect the speaker's assumption that s/he has to signal to the interlocutor whether or not his/her wishes should be fulfilled. That is, the speaker assumes that s/he has to indicate whether the interlocutor should enter the room or not. Or in the case of a call s/he has to indicate whether the interlocutor has succeeded in locating him/her and getting his/her attention. I assume that all these are happenings in one sense and hence the formulation in terms of 'I think you want me to say if I want it to happen'. The dictum seems to be that the speaker expresses the desire and preparedness or readiness for the thing to happen. The illocutionary purpose is to signal to the interlocutor that the thing that s/he wants can happen.

15.4.1.3 ampá

ampá is a word that is used in backchanneling to show agreement and interest or involvement in what is being said. It seems also to imply that the speaker of **ampá** believes that what is being said is true. The utterance of this form does not necessarily claim the floor from the person currently holding the floor.

Typically, this form is used in dyadic conversations rather than during public orations.

The significance of this form may be roughly paraphrased as follows:

I know you are saying something to me

I want you to know this:

I think the same as you do about these things

I say [ampá] because of that

One significant difference between the semantic explication of **ampá** and that of the other backchannels is that it does not have a component which relates to its use as a go-on cue. This is because although **ampá** may be used as a 'continuer', it may also be used at the end of a turn to signal agreement with all that has been said. It seems therefore that the core meaning of this form is just that of signalling agreement although it may be used on occasion at certain points within the sequence of talk to indicate 'I want you to say more'. In this case it could be argued that this component is added by virtue of the placement of the item within the talk and is not part of its invariant semantics.

15.4.1.4 mm! āā ēē

These three forms seem to be alternants that have the same cognitive as well as interactional functions. They tend to be used in situations where they could be glossed as: Is that so? (with rising intonation). As this English gloss suggests, there is an element of surprise when the speaker comes to realise or be aware of something that s/he didn't know before. Typically this is uttered as a response to something that someone else has said. In addition the forms seem to elicit from the interlocutor a confirmation of the doubt that is conveyed by an interrogative intonation that is used with these items.

Consider the use of **āā** in the following extract:

- [36] Nufiala: ... ame - wó yóne bé akogε
 ... person PL call HAB:3SG COMP
 Senyo: āā akogε, ɖe- wó le fo- nye sí
 some PL be:PRES brother1SG hand
 gaké nye- mé - nyá bé akogε
 but 1SG NEG know COMP
 wó yó á wó e o
 3PL call HAB 3PL NEG

N.: ... People call them akogε

S.: aa, akogε. My brother has some, but I didn't

know that they were called akogε. (Nunyamɔ p. 55)

Note that in this example, Senyo knew the objects but did not know their name. When Nufiala (the teacher) named them he was surprised and exclaimed **āā**; he then repeated the name as if to confirm its appropriateness. This example would appear to support the view that these interjections are used in reaction to or to express the state of knowledge of the speaker with respect to something that has just been said.

With these considerations in mind, the significance of these interjections could be explicated as follows:

before this time, I didn't know something

at this time, not at any other time, I have come to know it

I didn't think I would come to know this

I feel something because of that

I say [āā/ēē/mm] because I want people to know what I feel

15.4.2 Completive signals

Completive expressions, according to Bloomfield (1933:176ff) are those forms which supplement a situation - an earlier speech or a gesture. In this section, the forms that serve this function in Ewe will be described. These forms may be used as answers to propositional questions, e.g. **ɛ̃** or **e** 'yes' or **ao** 'no', as responses, of agreement or disagreement, acceptance or denial, to proposals, offers, invitations, requests etc., e.g. **yoo** 'O.K.', **kpáó** 'no, never' etc. It is debatable whether these items are prototypical interjections or one-word formulae. From a semantic point of view, they seem to have illocutionary dicta, just as typical formulae do. However, they do not seem to be able to take an addressee phrase as formulae do (cf. §14.1 and Ameka 1991c). They are discussed here because of their close connection with backchannelers and also because they fit the characterisation of phatic interjections. First, the assent, agreement or acceptance signals, **ɛ̃** or **e** 'yes', **yoo** 'OK', a palatal click with nasal release [ɕⁿ] and **yé**, a response to a call similar to the use of 'yes' in English as a response to a call, are described. Second, the denial, rejection or disagreement forms, **oo** or **ao** or **mm** 'no', **kpáó** 'no, never' and **gbedé** or **ɖabi(ɖa)** 'never', as well as **óho** 'don't do it', are presented.

15.4.2.1 Assent or agreement forms

15.4.2.1.1 ɛ̃ and e

ɛ̃ and **e** are alternants that have two main uses: first, they are used to express an agreement response to propositional questions; second, they are used to signal a positive attitude of a speaker towards what s/he is saying. They are not used in response to proposals or calls. In this respect they are different from other positive or agreement markers such as **yoo** (§15.4.2.1.4), and **yé** (§15.4.2.1.2). Each of the usages will be discussed in turn.

(i) ɛ̃ and e as responses to propositions

When **e** or **ɛ̃** are used in response to questions, they seem to indicate that the speaker thinks that the proposition which his/her interlocutor has put forward is true. Consider the following example:

- [37] A: è - fɔ́ a?
 2SG awake Q
 B: ɛ̃
 yes
 A: Are you fine/well?
 B: Yes (I am fine)

In this example, the initiator of the exchange A presents a proposition that his/her addressee is awake and wants confirmation. The interlocutor confirms the proposition with **ẽ** 'yes'. Note that this is a typical 'how-are-you' exchange (see §14.2.3.1).

The polarity of the propositional question does not affect the use of this form as is the case in some languages. If the propositional question is positive and the respondent thinks that the positive proposition is true, s/he would answer with **ẽ** or **e**. For example:

- [38] K.: mie- lɔ́ bé miá dí ɲútsu- wó
 2PL agree COMP 1PL seek man PL
 ná mimia- ɖe ... a?
 to 2PL 2PL:IRR marry Q
 Y.: e, mié lɔ́ ...
 yes 1PL agree
 K.: 'Do you agree that we should find men for you to marry?'
 Y.: 'Yes, we agree ...' (Setsoafia 1982:109)

It is instructive that in this example, Y. adds a statement which shows that **e** signals agreement with the proposition. If the propositional question is negative in polarity, the respondent uses the form **ẽ** or **e** to agree with the negative proposition. Consider the following example:

- [39] Agɔ̀kɔ̀li: éyata- é mie- vá o- a?
 therefore aFOC 2PL come NEG Q
 Adeladzã: e,... éyata- é mié vá o.
 yes therefore aFOC 1PL come NEG
 Agɔ̀kɔ̀li: Because of this, you didn't come (to see me)?
 Adeladzã: Yes, because of this we didn't come (to see you).
 (Nyaku in press:34)

It should be noted that in English to express agreement with a negative proposition one cannot use 'yes'. For instance, in the above example, 'yes' in English is inappropriate. The appropriate answer should be 'no'. (For similar differences between the use of affirmative signals in Gwa and English see Painter 1975; see also Elliot 1974 on a typology of response systems.)

e or **ẽ** are not only used in response to questions. They can also be used to confirm the doubtful statement that an interlocutor made. For example:

- [40] Tsiamigã: é wɔ́ abé me- dze sí wò ené

3SG do as 1SG land mark 2SG as

Ahiātaku: e, a- nyá dze sí m
 yes 2SG:IRR MOD 'land' mark 1SG
 le étime mié nɔ afisia...
 at time in 1PL be:NPRES here

T.: 'It seems I know you'.

A.: 'Yes (indeed) you could have known me from the time
 when we were here ...'. (Nyaku in press:30-31)

Note that Tsiamigā makes a non-assertive proposition and his interlocutor confirms his suspicion with **e**. Although the earlier speech is not a question it is a proposition which has been put forward which needs confirmation.

Thus it can be said that **e** or **ẽ** is used to confirm a proposition that has been put forward whether it is presented as a question or a statement. Roughly speaking, the speaker of **e** or **ẽ** signals that what the interlocutor has said is true. These forms **e** and **ẽ** are thus used in reaction to an earlier speech in which the speaker expresses some uncertainty. It is not used in response to calls or non-verbal gestures as **ehe**, for example, is (see §15.4.1.2). Thus the following exchange is infelicitous:

[41] A: Kofi!

K.

B: ?? e

yes

The main element of this form would seem to be that the respondent uses it to agree with an earlier proposition.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication for **e** or **ẽ**:

I know you have said something to me

I think you want to know if it is true

I think you want me to say if I think it is true

I want to say something to you because of this

I say: I think it is true

I say it because I want to cause you to know what I think

The first component in the formula links the forms **e** and **ẽ** to the prior utterance of the interlocutor. The second and third relate to the assumptions that the speaker makes about the wants of his/her interlocutor. The dictum is

that the speaker confirms that the proposition contained in the interlocutor's utterance is true. The purpose of this form is to make the interlocutor aware of what the speaker thinks.

(ii) é and ẽ as attitudinal markers

There is an extended usage of ẽ or e as a kind of marker of a speaker's attitude towards the proposition that s/he is conveying. In this case it does not seem to be in response to a prior utterance. It is a kind of speaker commentary on the rest of the utterance. It seems to express the speaker's belief that everybody will agree with the assertion she/he is making. It could be speculated that in this usage the speaker imagines that someone put forward the proposition which s/he agrees with, and therefore says e to confirm the truth value assigned to it. This usage is a kind of self-thought or soliloquy and occurs in poetic speech. Consider the following extracts from a speech of reflection on the qualities of the Volta Lake, the biggest artificial lake, which is on the western border of Ewe country:

[42a] talking about the way people drown in the lake and are later found on the banks of the river elsewhere, the speaker continues (in reference to the banks):

e, afíma nyé á ηútsu vló aló
 yes there beHAB man bad or
 nyónu dzɔgbevɔetó sia øe mló øé
 womanunfortunate DEMposs sleepplace
 'Yes (indeed) that is the place of rest for this bad man or
 unfortunate woman.' (Setsoafia 1982:75)

[42b] the speaker, a wandering chief has escaped from his subjects who wanted to sell him as a slave. In the following extract he affirms and expresses this belief to himself; note that this is prefaced with e.

e, nyě dumegā wó bé ye- wó a- dzrá m
 yes 1SG:poss town elder PL say LOG PL IRR sell 1SG
 ná yevú ame- si- tsa- lá wó
 to whiteman person trade wanderNER PL
 'Yes, my elders want to sell me to white slave traders.'
 (Setsoafia 1982:76).

Perhaps the main difference between this usage and the earlier one described is that there is no prior utterance. It may be possible to account for both usages

in one formula, however at this stage, I prefer to posit polysemy and propose the following explication for this second usage of **e** or **ɛ** as attitudinal markers:

I am thinking about something
 I say: I think this is true
 I think anybody/other people would say the same
 I say it because I want to say what I think

The propositional component in both explications is the same. Notice though that there are no components in the above formula relating to assumptions etc. of an interlocutor's earlier utterance. There is also the added component that other people would think or know that what the speaker is saying is true.

15.4.2.1.2 yé

yé is a form that may be used in response to a summons which is effected by name or a kin term etc. (see Chapter 13 on address). It is rather familiar and can therefore be perceived to be rude when it is used between people who are not familiar. Thus colleagues or age-mates could respond to each other using **yé**, but a child should not respond to adults using **yé**. It should be recalled that polite responses to calls or addresses make use of kin terms and status titles (see chapter 13 on address).

The following is a felicitous exchange if the interlocutors are equal in rank socially or age-wise:

[43] A: Kofi!
 K.
 B: yé
 yes
 A: Kofi!
 B: Yes! (with special intonation).

Typically, this response is perceived to be produced in an abrupt impatient way, as if to suggest that the respondent does not want to be bothered with whatever the caller wants to say. The hectoring tone can be reinforced by a sharp short high intonation on the form.

The use of the form **yé** may be accounted for with the following explication:

I want you to know I have heard you

I want you to know I am here
 I say: I want to know what you want to say to me now
 I think I can say this to you

All the components except the last one answer, as it were, the components of a calling act. Thus the first one represents an acknowledgement of receipt of the call. The second component shows the location of the respondent, and the third, the dictum, asserts the readiness of the respondent to listen to what the caller wants. There is the word 'now' in this component which is meant to reflect the abrupt and impatient tone that is associated with the response. The last component is included to capture the 'social placedness condition' on the form. It is framed in a way that would account for instances where someone may assume wrongly that they are on familiar terms with the caller and use this form. This miscalculation may lead to the response being perceived as rude (see Kasper 1990 on rudeness).

15.4.2.1.3 The palatal click with nasal release

Another assent signalling form that is used in Ewe and across the languages of Ghana is a palatal click with a nasal release [ɕⁿ]. It is used as a backchanneler or as a response to questions to show that the speaker agrees with what the interlocutor has said or is saying. In this respect its use is the same as the use of ehẽ as a backchanneler and as a response to questions. It is puzzling in some ways that the same linguistic gesture is used across Ghana. Perhaps, it is even pan-West African. I understand that the same gesture is used among the Sonrai and Bambara speakers of Mali in backchanneling to convey meanings like 'yeh, I read you!' or 'right on!' (Tim Shopen (private communication)).

Dolphyne (1985) notes that some European visitors to Ghana reported that they noticed the use of this item a lot in conversation. She provides a phonetic characterisation which is slightly different from the one given here. She describes the vocal gesture as a labial palatal click. This is based on the fact that this sound is made with the gesture for a palatal click at the same time as the lips are closed. However, I think the effect of closed lips is that air rushes in through the nasal cavity rather than through the mouth when the palatal stricture is released. Furthermore, the lip closure is not released as it were simultaneously with the making of the click. It seems therefore that the lip closure is meant to ensure the nasal release and is not a simultaneous place of articulation for the sound.

More work is needed especially in terms of conversational analysis to determine the functions of the palatal click with nasal release in interactions. But as a first hypothesis I suggest that when this item is used as an assent

marking backchannel, or as a response to propositional questions, it carries the following meaning:

I know you are saying something to me
 I want you to know this
 I am thinking about what you are saying
 I think the same as you do about these things
 I do this: [Cⁿ] because of that
 [I think you want to say something more]

This explication is general enough to cover both situations. When it is used in response to a question, it is expected that the conversation would go on. It is rather odd if this were used as a final response without anything else. Similarly, it is odd if this was the final thing that was said during a conversation. This is the reason for including the last component in the explication tentatively at least.

15.4.2.1.4 yoo

The form **yoo** like the palatal click with nasal release (see §15.4.2.1.3) is a pan-Ghanaian form for signalling agreement with, or acceptance of, proposals, offers and invitations etc. Westermann (1973) provides an instructive description of this item as follows:

an interjection of assent, also reply to a call.

It must be pointed out, however, that **yoo** is not used in response to any kind of call. It is used in response to an appellation (see chapter 13 on address). It is thus inappropriate as a response to a call by name or kin term. For instance:

[44] A: Ama!
 B: ??? yoo!

However, if the initial vocative was followed in the same move by another proposal then **yoo** could be an appropriate response. For instance:

[45] M.: ama, nɔ anyí dé zikpui sia dzí ma- vá
 A. sit down at chair DEMtop 1SG:IRR come
 M.: 'Ama, sit on this chair, I'll be back soon.'
 Ama: yoo ...
 OK ...

Note that in this example, **yoo** is used as a response to the offer of a seat rather than to the vocative. In this usage, the significance of **yoo** is that the speaker accepts the offer.

As a response to appellations, **yoo** is used to signal that the speaker accepts or agrees with the praise names that have been attributed to him. It is thus not a response to a vocative as **yé** is. Consider the following extract in which the interlocutors use appellations for each other. Note that in each case the addressee responds with **yoo**.

[46] M.: ... wò fia tsiŋku, subɔlá wó ka le ŋu- wò
2SG chief mean servant PL scatter at side 2SG

Fianyoyoo! ... wò ahiã ma- dzɔ abé agbleené
OK 2SG lover 1SG:IRR guard as farm as
wó le é dzɔ- mí gaké xe- á wó
3PL be:PRES 3SG guard PROG but bird DEF PL
le ðu- mí
be:PRES eat PROG

M.: yoo! ...
OK

M.: 'You chief who has been mean and has had servants
run away from you..

Fianyoyoo: OK, you a lover, who I will guard like a farm, a farm
that is being watched, but on which the birds are feeding.
(Setsoafia 1982:84)

It can be said that when **yoo** is used in response to appellations as in the above examples it may be that the speaker accepts the appellation or agrees with the content of the appellation. This is consistent with the other usages of the form **yoo**.

One common usage of this form is in response to salutations which constitute proposals, or invitations. It can be said that **yoo** in such a context signals the acceptance of the salutation. Here are some examples:

[47a] A: wò é zɔ
2SG aFOC walk
lit: 'you have travelled'
'Welcome!'

B: yoo
OK.

[47b] A: va mí ðu nú a
come 1PL eat thing DEF

'Come and let's eat'

B: Yoo. ...

OK

yoo may also be used just to acknowledge receipt of some information that has been communicated to the interlocutor. For example, when one is informed of something that someone else is about to do, one can register their receipt (and acceptance) of it by **yoo**. For instance:

[48] A: me- yi kpando ma- vá!
 1SG go K. 1SG:IRR come
 'I am going to Kpando, I'll be back.'

B: yoo!

OK.

It should be noted that the illocutionary purpose of A's utterance in the above example is to inform the addressee (B) of what s/he wants to do. One can conclude that in this and similar contexts the message of **yoo** is simply to indicate that the message has been received.

This message is made explicit in some instances by the co-utterance of the form. In the example below, the speaker makes clear the fact that he has heard what has been said. This follows the initial receipt indicator **yoo**.

[49] Gbeblewu: ... me- gblɔ- e ná wò vɔ
 1SG say 3SG to 2SG PFV
 '... I have finished saying it to you.'

Fianyɔ: yoo! me- se- é ...

OK 1SG hear 3SG

'OK, I have heard it...'

In other contexts, **yoo** seems to indicate in addition to acceptance a sense of the readiness of the speaker for further action. In particular, in response to a request **yoo** signals that the speaker would acquiesce to the wants of the addressee.

For instance, in the following extract Adeladzã accepts the message that has been passed on to him from Tsiamigã and there is the implication that he and his entourage are willing to wait till he comes. Thus **yoo** here seems to indicate that the speaker is prepared to accede to a request that has been made of him/her.

[50] Kpɔdugbe: tsiamigãmé li o, é do
 T. NEG be:3SG NEG 3SG go out

é bé né mie- vá lá mia- lala ye
 3SG say if 2PL come TP 2PL wait LOG

Adeladzã: yoo ...

OK.

Kpɔdugbe: 'Tsiamigã is not in. He has gone out. He says that if
 you come, you should wait for him.'

Adeladzã: OK (Nyaku in press: 28)

Associated with the uses of **yoo** is the idea that the interlocutors are in agreement or have reached a consensus. Some clues for this view are provided by some fixed collocations in the language. For example, an aphorism which is used to dissuade people from engaging in long arguments is this:

[51] yoo mé - didi - a nya o
 OK NEG lengthen HAB word NEG
 'OK does not prolong matters'.

The moral of this saying is that to say 'yoo' to something reduces or eliminates unnecessary debate. Here **yoo** implies acceptance of the other person's views or agreement with the other person's view. In effect it implies that to reach a consensus quickly in an argument is desirable.

Sometimes, people can be asked or invited to agree with certain propositions (in a dictatorial way). What is of interest here is that the verb **lɔ** which among other things means to agree is used in such an utterance:

[52] lɔ bé yoo
 agree COMP OK
 'Give your assent by saying yoo.'

Thus one is invited to say 'yoo' if one agrees with what is being said. I believe these pieces of evidence confirm the view that **yoo** is used to signal agreement with or acceptance of a proposal, offer, or invitation.

This function is consistent with and (partially) explains the fact that **yoo**, unlike **e/ɛ**, is not used in response to propositional questions. It should be recalled that the purpose of a propositional question is to verify whether or not the proposition it contains is true, and **ɛ/e** affirms the truth of the proposition. **yoo**, by contrast, is used to show that someone accepts or agrees with a proposal. The veracity of propositions is not an issue here. Thus the following exchange is infelicitous:

[53] A: a- gbɔ egbe-a?

2SG:IRR return today Q

'Will you come back today?'

B: * yoo

O.K.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication to account for the range of uses of the form **yoo**:

I want you to know I have heard what you said

I think you want me to say what I think about it

I want you to know I have thought about it

I want to say what I think

I say: I think the same

I say it because I want to cause you to know what I think.

This formula captures all the aspects of the form. The first component registers the fact that the earlier message of the interlocutor has been received. It should be remembered that **yoo** is a reaction signal to verbal acts only. The second component implies the idea that the interlocutor has made a proposal which the current speaker is meant to respond to. The component is general enough to cover all the sorts of situations that may be responded to with **yoo**. This includes response to information that is passed on, offers, invitations and proposals. It also includes the situation where it is used in response to an appellation as a reaction to its content. The third component indicates that the speaker deliberates for a moment at least about it. The dictum signals that the speaker agrees with the proposal etc. contained in the earlier speech. The illocutionary purpose is to convey what the speaker thinks to the interlocutor. Some of the uses of **yoo** are very similar to the uses of OK in English. For example both forms may be used to indicate that the speaker is ready to carry out an action requested of him/her (see Condon 1986 and Merrit 1984 for a discussion of the uses of OK in different kinds of interaction).

15.4.2.2 Dissent and disagreement forms.

15.4.2.2.1 ao, oo, mm

These three forms are used interchangeably to signal one's disagreement with a proposition, a rejection of a proposal, offer etc. From this point of view, these negative response forms are not exactly parallel to **e/ě** since the latter are not used in response to proposals etc. Thus to express a negative answer to a propositional question either of the three forms may be used.

Consider the following examples:

- [54a] Adeladzā: ... mie- se nya áḍéké haḍéké o ḍé
 2PL:NEG hear word any yet NEG Q
 Tsiamigā: oo, mié se nya áḍéké haḍéké o ...
 no 1PL hear word any yet NEG
 Adeladzā: ‘... you have not heard anything yet, have you?’
 Tsiamigā: ‘No, we haven’t heard anything yet ...’
 (Nyaku in press:30)

- [54b] Tsiamigā: aha lá nyó ḡútó ... é vɔ- a?
 drink DEF good much 3SG finish Q
 Adeladzā: ao, mé vɔ kúra haḍéké o ...
 no 3SG:NEG finish at all yet NEG
 Tsiamigā: The drink is very good ... Is it finished?’
 Adeladzā: ‘No, it is not yet finished ...’ (Nyaku in press: 32)

Note that if the propositional question has a negative polarity as in [54a] above, a negative response tends to indicate that the proposition contained in the question is not true. Similarly, if the polarity of the propositional question is positive (as in [54b] above), a negative response signals that the speaker thinks that it is not true. One can thus say that the negative response signals respond to the main proposition irrespective of the polarity of the question as a whole. It should be mentioned that either of the three forms could be used in response to the above questions. It should be stated however that **mm** is not frequently used in written registers.

The form **ao** described here should be distinguished from the emotive interjection with the same segmental form (see §15.2.5.2). Both forms have different tones. The form described in this section has a low to mid rising tone while the emotive interjection has a falling tone.

These negative response forms are also used to signal disagreement with a situation or a proposal. They may also be used to reject an offer or to indicate that a request will not be granted. Consider the following examples:

- [55] Nyuiko: ... ékemá na má kplɔ wò á yi-i
 then let1SG:IRR lead 2SG IRR go SER
 Adeladzā: ao, nye ḍéká ma- yi ko
 no 1SG one 1SG:IRR go only
 Nyuiko: ‘... then, let me go with you’
 Adeladzā: ‘no, I alone will go by myself’

(Nyaku in press:19)

- [56] V̄sefetu: tsó mí yi
 rise 1PL go
 Adeladzā: oo, mé nyé fífi laa o.
 no 3SGNEG benow rightNEG
 V̄sefetu: 'Get up and let's go'
 Adeladzā: 'no, not right now' (Nyaku in press:15)

In these examples, Adeladzā rejects the proposals or offers of his interlocutors using these negative response signals. Consistent with this usage in rejection and disagreement is the fact that these forms may be used to indicate prohibition. That is, a speaker may use it to express the view that s/he does not want the interlocutor to do something that s/he may have been doing. For example, if a child was climbing on chairs one could just say **ao** to him/her to signal that she/he should stop doing this. This usage is not any different from what the forms express when they are used as disagreement markers.

It seems that one has to postulate two separate meanings to account for the range of uses of these forms. One for their use in response to propositional questions and the other for their use as disagreement with and rejection of proposals etc. signals. Essentially, in response to propositional questions, these forms signal that the proposition contained in the question is not true. As a response to proposals etc., they signal that the speaker does not agree with the interlocutor's proposal. These senses of the forms may be explicated as follows:

ao/oo/mm (as response to propositional question (see example[54]))

I know you have said something to me

I think you want to know if it is true

I think you want me to say if it is true

I want to say something to you because of this

I say: I think it is not true

I say it because I want to cause you to know what I think.

This explication captures the various aspects of the use of the forms in response to propositional question. It is quite parallel to the explication of **ẽ/e** as responses to propositional questions(see §15.4.2..1). As a response to proposals, the forms may be explicated as follows:

ao/oo/mm (responses to proposals (see examples [55] and [56])

I want you to know I have heard what you said

I think you want me to say what I think about it

I want you to know I have thought about it

I want to say what I think

I say: I don't think the same as you do

I say it because I want to cause you to know what I think

It is perhaps interesting to observe that the two senses of **ao** and its variants proposed here correspond to two different assent forms. The propositional question response usage corresponds to **ẽ/e** while the response to a proposal usage corresponds in some respects to **yoo**.

The three forms can be used emphatically. In such a usage some phonological modifications occur. For **ao** the first vowel [a] is prolonged and the [o] is added at the end sometimes with a labial-velar approximant [w] inserted between the two vowels: [a:(w)o]. To emphasise **oo** and **mm** glottal stops are inserted between the segments and at the beginning of the word: [ʔoʔo] and [ʔmʔm].

15.4.2.2.2 kpáó

kpáó is another negative response form. It is, however, not used in response to propositional questions. It is used to signal disagreement with a thought or proposal and to reject a proposal or an offer. In the following example, a husband makes a proposal to send the child of one of his wives on an errand and his wife, the mother of the child in question, rejects this outright with **kpáó**.

[57] Tɔgbui: séfakó me- dí bé má dɔ́ vi-wò

S. 1SG wantCOMP 1SG:IRR send child 2SG

ɲútsu-ví tsi-tsi- tɔ, agbevé dé ɲɔtsié
 man-DIM old RED compv A. to N.
 wò a- ɖa- tsó nyě fia- zikpui
 3SG IRR purp take 1SG:poss chief stool
 ve ná m
 come:3SG to 1SG

Sefakɔ: taflatsé kpáo
 please no

Tɔgbui: Sefakɔ, I want to send your eldest male child, Agbeve,
 to ɲɔtsie so that he would go and bring my chief's stool to me.

Sefakɔ: No sir. (Nyaku in press:13)

In the following example also, a husband uses **kpáo** to signal his disagreement with and rejection of his wife's advice. His wife advised that he shouldn't be kind to someone who had maltreated and assaulted her husband and the father during his husband's childhood. It should be noted that in the co-text that accompanies **kpáo** the speaker specifically expresses his desire not to retaliate:

[58] Enyo: me- ga- wɔ dome-nyo ádéké nɛ o
 NEG:2SG REP do stomach-good any to:3SG NEG
 Semanu: kpáo! nye- ma- ɖo vɔ̃ vɔ̃ téfɛ o
 no 1SG NEG:IRR put evil evil placeNEG
 Enyo: 'Do not show him any kindness'
 Semanu: No, never, I will not retaliate.' (Akpatsi 1980:74-75)

It is clear from both examples that **kpáo** is used to show rejection of an idea, a suggestion or a proposal. There is a sense of emphasis involved in that the speaker seems to suggest that s/he will never want this. The rejection is a firm decision. This seems to be implied in Westermann's (1973) glosses of the item, namely: 'no, not at all, by no means, never'. It is in a sense an emphatic 'no'. This is the dimension in which it may be different from **ao** despite some partial similarity in form. (One might speculate that the meaning of **kpáo** should be more elaborate than that of **ao** on the basis of formal complexity of the forms (cf Zipf's law and Haiman 1985). It appears that **kpáo** takes on added components apart from the other differences between **ao** and **kpáo**).

Essentially **kpáo** seems to convey the idea that the proposition proffered by the interlocutor is not acceptable to him/her. It seems to have the implication that it may never, at any other time, be acceptable to the speaker. It also seems to combine disagreement, which is captured in the formula with the phrase 'I

don't think the same as you', and rejection ('I don't want it'). Roughly, 'I don't want to think that I will at any time think the same as you about this. This, I believe, captures the intuitions expressed in the glosses provided by Westermann (1973), for example, cited above.

With these considerations in mind, I tentatively propose the following explication of **kpáó**.

I want you to know I have heard what you said to me
 I think you want me to say what I think about it
 I want you to know I have thought about it
 I want to say what I think
 I say: I don't think I will think the same as you do about this
 at any time
 I say it because I want to cause you to know what I think

This semantic formula is symmetrical to the formula for **yoo** in §15.4.2.1.4. This is perhaps appropriate since **yoo** signals acceptance and agreement and **kpáó** signals rejection and disagreement. In their propositional content, however, both forms differ: **kpáó** carries the implication that the speaker cannot see him/her-self agreeing with the interlocutor at any time on the proposition or the situation that is before them; **yoo**, by contrast, does not entail a permanent or unchanging view of agreement on the part of the speaker. The formula above also shows that **kpáó** is used in response to a verbal stimulus: the interlocutor must have said something (component 1) which seems to invite a comment from the speaker upon reflection about it (components 2 and 3).

In the next section, we shall discuss two close synonyms to **kpao**, namely **gbedé** 'never' and **ɖabi(ɖa)** 'never'.

15.4.2.2.3 gbedé and ɖabiɖa

These two words are synonymous with each other and to some extent with **kpáó**. They both express a speaker's disagreement with or rejection of a proposition in universal terms. They may both be translated as 'never'. **gbedé** which may optionally collocate with the final negative marker **o** in this usage is an indigenous Ewe word. **ɖabi(ɖa)**, which may be shortened to **ɖabi** and pronounced with a long initial vowel as [ɖa:bi], seems to have been borrowed from Akan. It also occurs in Ga with the meaning of 'no'. A further difference between **gbedé** and **ɖabiɖa** is that the former may be used adverbially in a clause while the latter cannot. In its use as an adverbial and as a completive signal **gbedé** may be reduplicated for emphasis. **ɖabi** may also be iterated for

emphatic purposes. The following example illustrates the adverbial usage of **gbedé**. Note that **ɖabiɖa** cannot occur in this example instead of **gbedé**:

- [59] né atí kpo nɔ tɔ-me øe akpe ɖeká hã lá
 if tree log stay river-in year thousand one even TP
 ma- zu ló gbedégbedé /*ɖabi(ɖa) o.
 3SG:NEG:IRR become leopard never -RED never NEG
 ‘Even if a log stays in a river for a thousand years, it can never
 become a leopard. (Nyaku in press:18)

However as completive signals **ɖabi(ɖa)** and **gbedé** are interchangeable without any discernible semantic difference. Thus both forms may be used as disagreement responses to propositional questions. For instance, in the following extract **ɖabi** is used but **gbedé** can replace it and the message would be the same:

- [60] Ame II: ékemá ési wò le áléa ɖé
 then when 3SG be:PRES thus TP
 nye- ma- xɔ wò á ɖe o- a?
 1SG NEG:IRR get 2SG IRR marry NEG Q
 Nyɔnu la: ɖabi, nye- mé le dzre dé gé
 never 1SG NEG be:PRES quarrel put INGR
 mibokó wó ɖe ɖé dome... o
 2PL diviner PL only between NEG
 Ame II: ‘Then if it is like that, should I not marry you?’
 Nyɔnu la: ‘Never, I am not going to cause a fight between you
 diviners.’ (Setsoafia 1982:33)

In this example, **Nyɔnu la** rejects the proposition that her interlocutor puts forward. Notice that the elaboration on the answer is also in the negative. Note also that the communicative function of the propositional question is one of making a proposal or suggestion.

This is consistent with the use of these expressions in rejecting proposals and suggestions in general which are not syntactically questions. In the following extracts either of the forms can be used in the responses.

- [61] A.: gbɔ dzi ɖí me- ɖe kúkú ná wò papa
 calm heart down 1SG remove hat to 2SG dad
 Kp.: ɖabi, ama, me- ga- ɖe kúkú ɖé é ta o. ...
 no A. 1SG REPremove hat at 3SG head NEG
 A.: 'Calm down, I beg you, Dad.'
 Kp.: 'No, Ama, don't intercede on his behalf.' (Setsoafia 1982:42)

- [62] F.: me- ɖe kúkú ná wò ga- bu ta-me víe
 1SG remove hat to 2SG REP think head-in little
 Ama: gbedɖ, nye- ma- té nǔ i o.
 no 1SG NEG:IRR can 3SG NEG
 F.: 'Please think again about it.'
 Ama: 'No, I can't do it.' (Setsoafia 1982:65)

In these two examples, which are quite representative of the uses of **ɖabi** and **gbedé**, the forms are used to indicate that the speaker is not prepared to acquiesce to the request of the interlocutor. This seems to be applicable to the earlier example too, where the forms could be used in response to propositional questions.

It can thus be said that these forms **gbedé** and **ɖabi** involve the following elements. An interlocutor expresses a wish that s/he wants to be fulfilled, and which involves the speaker. It may be an action that the speaker of **gbedé** may be expected to perform or some other happening that affects him/her in some way. The speaker of **gbedé** signals the rejection of this. S/he seems to be saying that s/he does not think that the wish of the interlocutor can ever be fulfilled. It is significant that the co-text of these forms further contain negative propositions to reinforce the rejection encoded in the **ɖabi** or **gbedé**.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following explication as the core meaning of **ɖabi(ɖa)** and **gbedé (o)**:

I want you to know I have heard what you said to me
 I think you want something to happen
 I think this thing can be thought of as something that happens
 to me
 I think you want me to say what I think about it
 I want you to know I have thought about it
 I want to say what I think
 I say: I don't think it can happen at any time
 I say it because I want to cause you to know what I want

It must be stressed that the above explication is meant to capture the core meaning of the forms. It should be possible to propose other components in addition to distinguish between **dabi** on the one hand, and **gbedé** on the other. In particular, a stylistic or register component is needed to give a full picture of **dabi**. Recall that **dabi** is borrowed from Akan.

Perhaps **dabi** should be distinguished from **gbedé** with a component such as: I say it this way because I want to be seen to be speaking a variety of Ewe with Akan borrowings. This is a very rough formulation. It is meant to be suggestive of the direction of inquiry that may be followed to account for the distinction.

15.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have explored the semantics of interjections in Ewe. I have argued, and hopefully demonstrated, that interjections are meaningful, not only in the functional sense, but also in their content. Thus the description of interjections in this chapter does not stop at assigning them functions such as emotive, or phatic or completive etc.. Rather, explicit semantic representations have been proposed for each item from which, it is hoped, one could predict the range of uses to which a particular item may be put.

In particular, a comparison of the explications of the one-word formulae in the previous chapter with those of interjections in this chapter reveals some differences between the semantic structures of interjection words and formulaic words. Perhaps the most noticeable difference between the explications proposed for interjections in this chapter and those proposed for single word formulae such as **agòò** (§14.8.1) **káfra** (§14.8.4), **ayikóó** (§14.5.4) **dzaa** (§14.4.2) etc. is that there is no component of the form: ‘I say: ...’ in the explications for the interjections, while there is such a component in those of the one-word formulae. In the NSM framework such a form is a paraphrase of the illocutionary dictum component of the meaning of an utterance. This means that there is no illocutionary dictum component in the semantic structure of interjections. The dictum is a crucial component that the illocutionary forces of utterances should have. As Wierzbicka (1980: 295) puts it: “the illocutionary force of an utterance contains at least two components one of which can be called ... the dictum, and the other ... the illocutionary purpose”. From this point of view one could say that interjections do not have illocutionary dicta in their semantic structure.

To say that interjections do not have dicta does not necessarily mean that they do not have illocutionary forces. There are other linguistic elements such as particles which have illocutionary forces but no illocutionary dicta in their structure (see below). The component of meaning which seems absolutely

essential for one to say that a certain element has an illocutionary force seems to be its illocutionary purpose. As Searle (1979: 3) observes, the most important component of the illocutionary force of a linguistic item is illocutionary purpose. The question that must be answered then is this: do interjections have an illocutionary purpose component in their semantic structure?

Wierzbicka (1990) contends that interjections do not have either a dictum or an illocutionary purpose component and therefore they do not have an illocutionary force. This conclusion would be correct if it was shown beyond doubt that there is indeed no illocutionary component in the conceptual structure of interjections. From the explications in the previous chapter, it is clear that one word formulae such as **dzáà** have an illocutionary purpose component which in the NSM framework is represented in the form: 'I say this because ...'. Thus the formulae have both a dictum and a purpose. They thus constitute speech acts in the full sense of the word.

The situation with interjections is less clear: they do not have dicta but they have a component which resembles an illocutionary purpose component. This component may be more appropriately described as representing the communicative purpose of the interjection. The component in question has two variant forms depending on whether the item is construed as a saying or a doing. For example, the relevant components of the interjections of 'grief' etc., **hmm** and **áò**, represent the two different variants of the communicative purpose of interjections (see §15.2.5):

I do this: [fìmn] because I want people to know what I feel.

I say this: [áò] because I want to show how I feel.

Thus it would appear that interjections have a component which is comparable to an illocutionary purpose component in their meaning. For some interjections such as **hmm** and English forms such as **psst** or **shh** this component starts off with a verb of doing, viz 'I do this: [vocal gesture] because ...'. For others, it is 'I say this [vocal gesture] because ...' (cf. Wilkins (1991) who argues that the illocutionary purpose of interjections has the form I say / do '[X] because ...').²

² It should be pointed out that there is a difference between the way the illocutionary purpose component of a real speech act such as an imperative is interpreted and the way this component in the semantic structure of interjections is interpreted. For instance, an imperative such as 'come here' may be paraphrased into its essential illocutionary components as follows:

I say: I want you to come here

I say it because I want to cause you to do it.

In this formula the 'it' in 'I say it because' refers to the propositional content component rather than the utterance itself. In the component that resembles the illocutionary purpose

The general conclusion that may be drawn from the discussion so far is that interjections have a component in their conceptual structure which is very similar to the illocutionary purpose of utterances. If one accepts Searle's view that the illocutionary purpose is the most important component of the illocutionary force of a linguistic item, then one could say that interjections have an illocutionary force since they have a communicative purpose. But this illocutionary force does not contain an illocutionary dictum.

If this conclusion is correct, it would be consistent with the relationship that is assumed to exist between interjections and particles. In the illocutionary structure of particles, there is no dictum; particles modify the content of the proposition in which they occur. However, they have illocutionary purpose (see Goddard 1979 and the papers in Wierzbicka ed. 1986, and see also chapter 8). For example, propositional question forming particles such as **à** in Ewe have an illocutionary force which does not contain a dictum but includes an illocutionary purpose. The form **à** in Ewe is attached to declarative sentences to form propositional questions. Thus a sentence such as [63] below may be made interrogative as in [64] by the addition of the particle **à**:

[63] kofi dzó
'Kofi left'

[64] kofi dzó à?
Kofi leave Q
'Has Kofi left?'

The propositional content of the utterances in [63] and [64] is the same and it may be roughly spelled out as follows:

I say: Kofi left

However, they differ in the rest of their illocutionary meanings. In particular the rest of the meaning of [64] is contributed by the particle **à** whose illocutionary force may be explicated as follows (see Ameka (1986:67ff.) for justification and further illustration):

I don't know if this (i.e what I say) is true

in the semantic structure of interjections, the 'this' in that component refers to the utterance itself. On this score, one could argue that this component does not really spell out the illocutionary purpose but the conventional communicative purpose that uttering the interjection serves. This point deserves further investigation, at this stage, I leave the relationship between the two types of components an open question.

I want to know it
 I think you might know
 I say it because I want to cause you to say something that
 would cause me to know it

Thus one could say that particles have illocutionary forces which do not have illocutionary dicta in much the same way that interjections which are sometimes classified as a subclass of particles do not have illocutionary dicta. But they do differ in the way the illocutionary purpose is interpreted (see footnote 3 above).

To summarise the discussion so far, one could say that interjections have a semantic structure which is different from that of formulae principally because they do not have illocutionary dictum while formulae have such a meaning component. Following from this one could further claim that interjections are not fully fledged speech acts because one would expect a speech act to have an illocutionary dictum. One-word routines or formulae, however are speech acts because they have the essential components that constitute such an act. Nevertheless, interjections do seem to have illocutionary meanings just as particles do.

I venture to suggest in conclusion that lexemes which may constitute utterances by themselves without being elliptical have different degrees of affinity with or resemblance to prototypical speech acts. At one end of the continuum are conventional vocalizations which make use of sounds and phonological structures which are not part of the main sound system, for instance, the Ewe interjections **ʔm** 'I feel pain' [**ʔⁿ**] 'I agree' etc. and English **brrr** 'I feel cold', **psst** 'I want to speak to you confidentially', and the dental clicks **/tsk, tsk/**. Note that the English forms are reported with the verb 'go', as in "'Psst", she went' (cf Wilkins 1991), while the Ewe ones are reported with different action verbs. Roughly speaking the semantic structure of such interjections have the following elements:

I feel/think/ want X

I do this: [vocal gesture] because of that

In the middle of the continuum are those verbalizations which are more integrated in the linguistic system and are reported with the verb 'say'. Examples here include for English **wow** 'I am surprised', **aha** 'I understand' **oops** 'I am embarrassed', and for Ewe **akúá** 'I feel exasperated' and **dzalélé** 'I am surprised'. These, I suggest have a structure of the form:

I feel/think/ want X

I say this: [vocal gesture] because of that

These two points on the continuum are filled by interjections, but at the other end of the scale are formulae and lexical items which are interactional and are speech acts. Some English examples are: **goodbye!** **welcome!** **sorry!** and **thankyou!**, and Ewe examples are **dzáà** **agóò** and **taflatsé**. These could be said to have the following skeletal components in their structure:

I say: X

I say it because I want you to

One way of looking at this continuum is in terms of conventionalization of lexemes: 'from symptoms ... to consciously selected signals' (Haiman 1989:159, and see also Stankiewicz 1964, Trager 1964). Or it may be viewed as a hierarchy of lexemic utterances from mental acts to speech acts. Whichever way one looks at it, one thing is certain: there is the need for further investigation into the semantic structures of these lexemic utterances to establish their relationship to other utterances.

Another topic which deserves further investigation is the intonation patterns that are associated with the individual utterances, especially the interjections. In the description provided in this chapter, the focus has been on the characteristic intonation patterns, but it is well known that interjections may have different intonation contours associated with them to convey specific nuances of meaning (see Ehlich 1986 for German examples and see Bolinger (1989:263 ff.) for an insightful discussion of intonation contours of various English interjections). It is hoped that this topic will be examined in future for Ewe.

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