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A Preliminary Linguistic Analysis of Plant Names in Ikpaná (Logba), an Endangered Ghana Togo Mountain Language

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Study Abroad – Ghana (Arts & Culture)

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Abstract

1. Title: A Preliminary Linguistic Analysis of Plant Names (and Uses) in Ikpána (Logba), an Endangered Ghana Togo Mountain Language
2. Author: Lydia Jewl Green (lydiajgreen@gmail.com; USC – College of Letters, Arts and Sciences and the Institute for Multimedia Literacy)
3. Objective: The purpose of this project is as follows:
    i. To conduct a study of the linguistic properties of plant names in Ikpána
    ii. To analyze the degree of lexical borrowing in the botanical domain
    iii. To document the names and usages of the plants in the surrounding area for the benefit of both the local community and the research community.
    iv. To contribute to the lexical corpus of the language towards the creation of a dictionary of the language, with the ultimate goal of developing teaching materials so children can be taught in their mother tongue
4. Methodology: I spent 12 days living in three of the towns in the Logba traditional area (Alakpeti, Klikpo, and Tota) during which time I elicited approximately three hours of footage spread over four miniDV tapes of native speakers of Ikpána describing the names and uses of the plants in the surrounding area in the Ikpána language.
5. Findings: The names for plants used by native speakers of Ikpána include a significant number of Ewe terms. This linguistic shift can be shown to be occurring particularly in the terms for plants which have both an Ikpánaa name and an Ewe name, where the Ewe name is better-known by younger speakers and is more commonly used.
6. Conclusion: Ikpána is being pressured by Ewe and by the effects of globalization. This can be demonstrated through an analysis of the plant names, which in addition to including Ikpána names also include borrowed names. These names can be shown to be from Ewe and from the influences of agriculture. Further documentation and study is needed (and desired by the leaders of the community).
7. Appendix: The compiled corpus of plant names and uses, along with reference information for the footage and photos of the plants, is contained in the Appendix. The document is bound separately from this paper and, due to the sensitive nature of the material, cannot be checked out or copied without prior permission from the author and the Paramount Chief of the Logba Traditional Area (Togbega Dabra VI, e-mail: tdrdabra@yahoo.co.uk)

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Acknowledgments

I am sincerely grateful to many people for the advice, support, and assistance that they gave me during the course of my research for this project.

Firstly, I am most grateful to my parents for supporting my decision to study abroad in Ghana and always challenging me to challenge myself. They have supported me my whole life.

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Much thanks is due to the members of the staff for SIT – Ghana: Arts and Culture. In particular, I would like to thank Olayemi Tinuoye, the Academic Director, for his patience, support, and faith in me. Whenever I changed my topic, he would laugh, say he was not surprised, and then add that he thinks it is good to think critically and challenge oneself. Also, I am very grateful to Papa Attah for his encouragement and advice, as he always told us, "You are full-grown mosquitoes!" and "You can paddle your own canoe!" before sending us off on our own. I also wish to thank Kokroko for always being there, and Kwakuche for helping me before I changed my project to a new location.

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Additionally, I was greatly aided by my two advisors: Dr. Dakubu, who provided me with academic resources and advice and directed me to my other advisor, Dr. Dorvlo, who provided me with an amazing opportunity to do research on an endangered language he has been working on for the last five years and set me up with all of the resources I needed to do so.

Lastly, I would like to thank all of the people of Logba who were so helpful to the completion of this project: Mawuli, for patiently teaching me the language and working all day with me on the research; Mr. and Mrs. Howusu, for their kind hospitality; the Time Tells family, for their friendship and delicious food; Alex, Daniel Kofi, Daniel Koku, Elizabeth, Kudzo, Lawrence, Mabel, Manfred, Mathias, and Togbe Shamoa III, for sharing their knowledge of plants; and finally Unansanango Togbega Dabra VI and family for welcoming me into their family and believing in the value of my research.

Anyiŋtsé

(Thank You)

Introduction

Definition of Terms

Akpanawò – Ikpána word for the Logba people

Common – I use this to refer to plant names which are known by the majority of the population

GTM – Ghana-Togo Mountain (languages)

Ikpána – Ikpána word for the Logba language

ISP – Independent Study Project, term used to refer to this project by the academic program for which it was completed

Plant Name Committee – this is the term I use to refer to the group of people I organized to look through my compiled list of plant names to determine certain linguistic properties of them.

Metadata – data about data

Morpheme – a meaningful semantic linguistic unit

Obscure – I use this in the sense of "little known" when referring to plant names. They may only be known to elders in the community.

Odikro – Gong-gong beater

Opaque – I use this term to refer to plant names which cannot be broken down into clear morphemes

Orthography – the particular writing convention used for a language where symbols (in the case of English and **Ikpána,** these are the letters of the Roman alphabet) or combinations of symbols are

given arbitrary phonetic values to create a meaningful system. Ideally there is a one-to-one correspondence between the symbols and the phonemes of the language (this is more-so the case with **Ikpána** than it is with English).

Ɔkyeame/"Linguist" – **Ɔkyeame** is the Akan word for what has been translated into English as "linguist." This person is a sort of spokesperson, usually for a leader of a community. All communication to and from the leader must pass through the spokesperson first. This is not to be confused with what I mean when referring to a linguist, which is a person who scientifically studies Language.

Phoneme – the smallest meaningful unit of sound

Togbe – Traditional ruler

Transparent - I use this term to refer to plant names which can be broken down into clear morphemes

Unansanango – Paramount Chief of the Logba Traditional Area

Purpose

This project is a preliminary study of the linguistic properties of plant names in **Ikpána**[1] and the linguistic situation of this endangered Ghana-Togo Mountain (GTM) language. The purpose of the project is to analyze the process of language shift which is occurring in the language as can be seen through the degree of lexical borrowing in the botanical domain (i.e. plant names). The project also provides audio-visual documentation of these names along with the practical and medicinal usages of over 100 different plants found in the surrounding area, all in the **Ikpána** language, in the form of almost three hours of footage recorded on miniDV tape.

These recordings are of value both to the Logba community (called **Akpanawò**) and to linguistic researchers, as they are a record of the botanical, medical[2], and linguistic knowledge of the community. The recordings also contribute to the lexical corpus being compiled by one of the project's advisors, Professor Kofi Dorvlo, who has written a grammatical description of the language (2008) and is currently working on the completion of a trilingual (**Ikpána**-Ewe-English) dictionary. This lexical corpus will aid in the future development of teaching materials in the language, so that children can finally be educated in their first language. Ultimately, it is my goal

[1] **Ikpána** refers to the Logba language. It is the term used by speakers of the language, and out of respect for them it is the term I use throughout the rest of this paper. Any Ewe or **Ikpána** words, including **Ikpána**, are written with bold formatting.

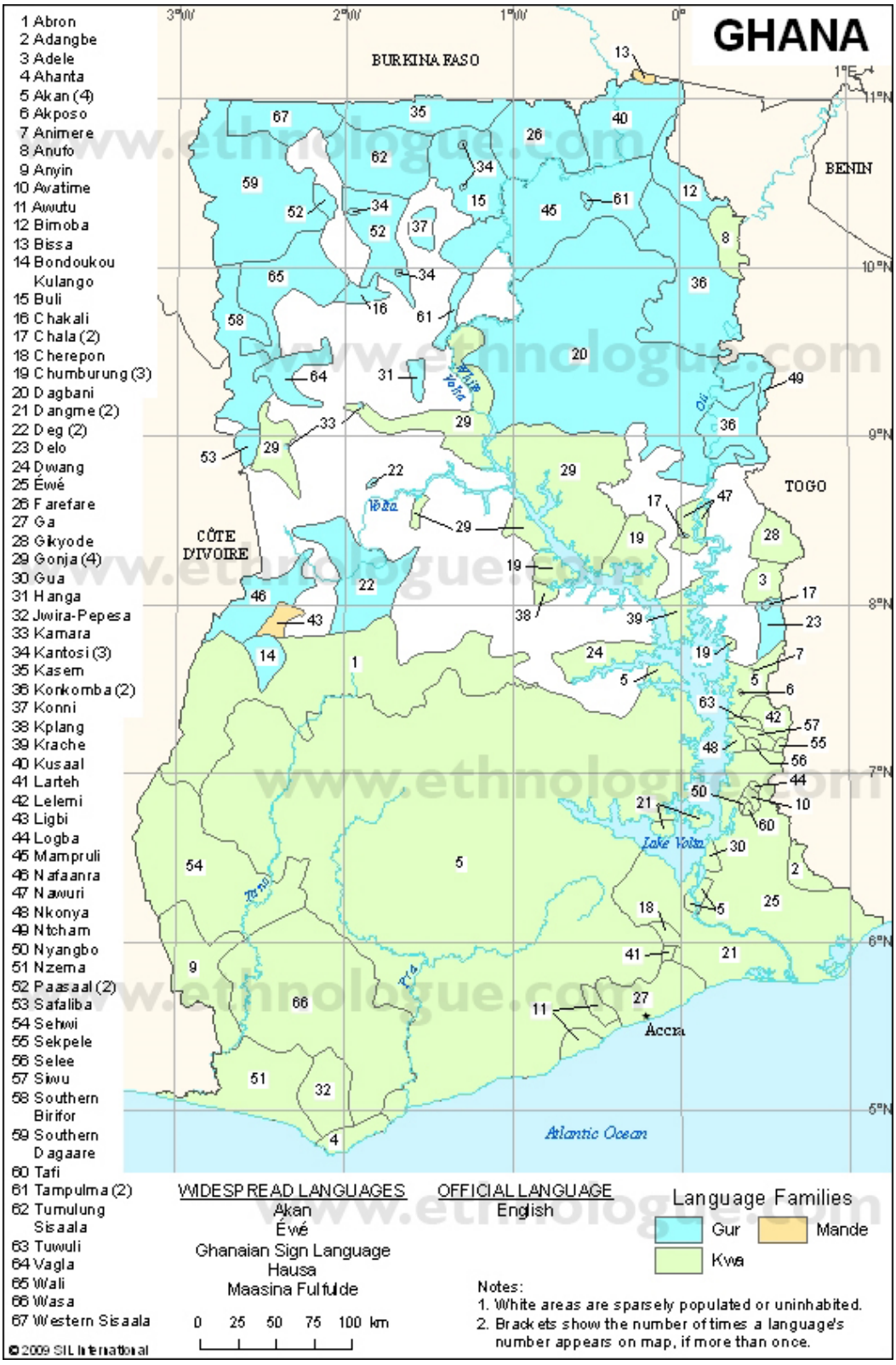
[2] Due to the sensitive nature of the medical knowledge contained in the recordings, they are available only to members of the **Akpanawo** community and the Academic community. Anyone seeking access must first obtain permission from the **Unansanango** (Paramount Chief of the Logba Traditional Area) and from the researcher, Lydia Green.

that this project will present an argument and a tool for the continued use of Ikpána by its speakers in all domains, in spite of the pressures put on the language, as outlined below.

Endangered Languages

Due in large part to increased pressures from globalization, over 50% of the world's languages are in danger of disappearing (Crystal 2002). Many factors come together to put them at risk of no longer being used, such as loss of domain for language use, negatives attitudes towards the language, and pressures from more dominant languages. These languages are considered to be endangered and at the extreme end of the spectrum they may have fewer than five native speakers remaining, as is the case with Kawaiisu, a Native American language spoken in Southern California (Green 2009). However, the number of speakers a language has is not the only factor considered when classifying a language as endangered. A language which has close to 10,000 speakers may be considered endangered because it is no longer being passed on to members of the younger generation, as is the case with Central Alaskan Yup'ik, a Native Alaskan language which in 1995 was being learned by children in only 17 out of 68 ethnically Yup'ik villages (Gordon 2005). Within one or two generations it may only be a small percentage of the population which can fluently speak the language of their heritage.

When a language ceases to be spoken or signed (in the case of an endangered sign language) it constitutes a significant loss to the world, both culturally and scientifically. Not only does the culture lose part of its intangible heritage, but the academic world loses an invaluable resource.



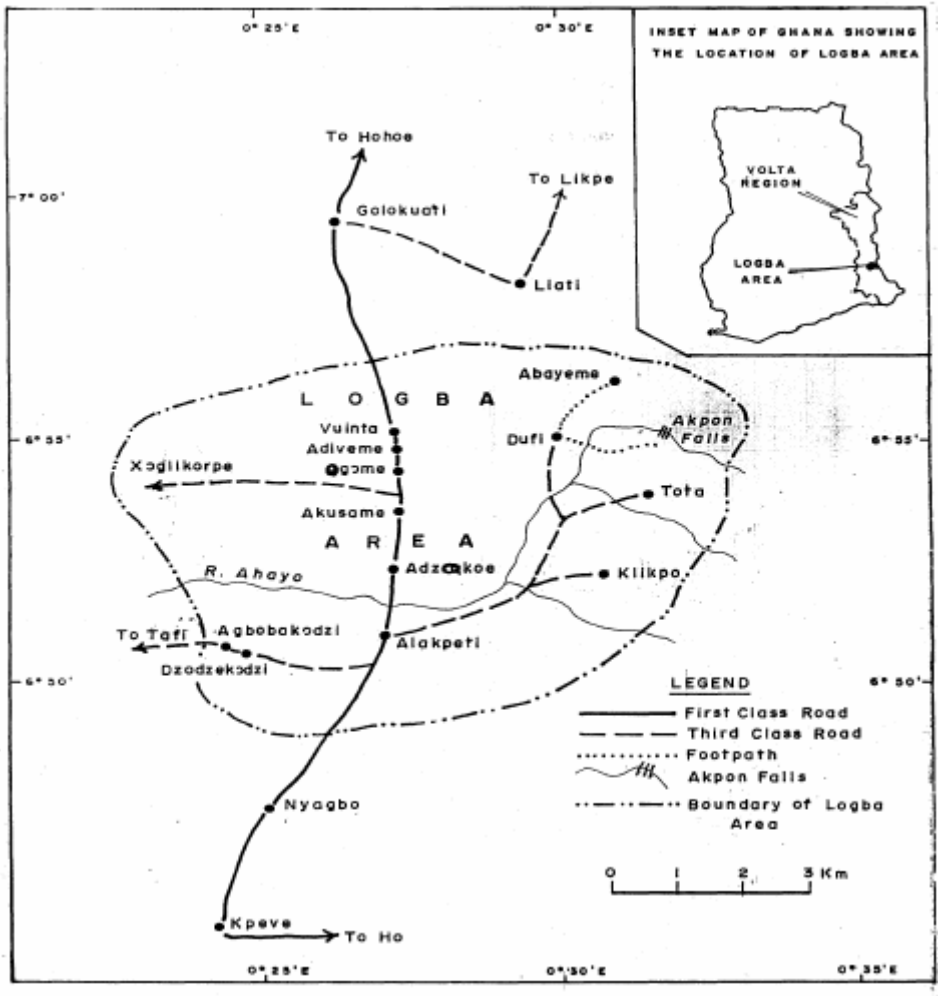
Map 1 Map of Ghana's Languages (Lewis 2009) Note, this map is missing Adamorobe Sign Language.

Ikpána **is listed as "Logba," number 44.**

The Situation in Logba

Spread across several towns and villages in the lush, fertile mountains of Ghana's Volta Region near the border of Togo, there lives a community of about 7,500 people who call themselves Akpanawò. Their neighbors, the Ewe, call them Logba, and this is the term now used by most outsiders when referring to both them and their language, which they refer to as Ikpána (Dorvlo 2008). Like many of Ghana's approximately 67 different languages, Ikpána is considered to be endangered, largely due to the pressures placed on it by Ewe, which is spoken by the majority of the population in the surrounding area (Lewis 2009). Within the Akpanawò community, Ewe is used in the primary education system, in churches, and as a sort of *lingua franca* throughout the wider area. Ikpána is used at home and in certain more "traditional" domains, such as in ceremonies and in council meetings of the leaders of the community. Although a grammatical description of the language has been written by one of my advisors, Dr. Kofi Dorvlo, at present there are no other published works in the language itself and no teaching materials have been developed either in Ikpána or for teaching Ikpána. Knowledge of the language is passed on orally and not formally taught or written. Children are taught using English or Ewe as the medium of education, rather than their mother tongue. At present, 95% of Ikpána speakers are bilingual in Ewe and no one is monolingual in Ikpána (Dorvlo, 2008). With this situation, it is clear that Ewe is putting significant pressure on Ikpána and this can be observed in the degree of lexical borrowing (see discussion below) occurring in the language, particularly in the speech of younger members of the population. As this process continues, there will be a loss of knowledge among the community and the

recordings made as part of this research provide documentation of this knowledge for future use by members of the community.



Map 2 Logba and Surrounding Towns (Dorvlo 2008)

Lexical Borrowing

Borrowing is a natural process among the world's languages, and occurs quite frequently when speakers of different languages come into extended contact with each other. The term is used to refer to the process whereby foreign lexical items (words or phrases) are used by speakers of one language either to refer to completely new concepts or objects which never had their own term in

the language or to replace lexical items which already existed in the language. When foreign terms are used to refer to completely new concepts, such as computers or the Internet, the borrowing does not necessarily encroach on the language, although speakers of some languages make a point of always coining new terms for these things, for example, taking the word for "spider web" in their language and using it to refer to the Internet. However, when the foreign terms replace terms which already existed in the language, such as when the English greeting "Morning!" is used by Ewe speakers despite the previous existence of situations whereby Ewe speakers greeted each other prior to noon, this borrowing constitutes a loss of knowledge among the community. This is especially true of languages, such as **Ikpána**, which are primarily oral (i.e. are rarely or never written).

Language vs. Dialect

Since the majority of the pressure put on **Ikpána** comes from the surrounding, dominant language, Ewe, it is important to note that the two languages are related (see discussion below on classification of **Ikpána**). **Ikpána** is not, however, a dialect of Ewe, as many people I spoke with in the Volta Region mistakenly believed.

Linguists distinguish between "languages" and "dialects" based on a definition of mutual intelligibility. That is, if a person who speaks language A can understand a person speaking language B and vice versa, then A and B are said to be mutually intelligible, and are in fact dialects of the same language. However, if a speaker of language A cannot understand a speaker of language C and neither can that speaker understand the first, then A and C are said to be mutually unintelligible and are defined as separate languages.

The situation, however, is often not so simple, and nations may decide upon their own definitions to suit their political interests, either calling their "language" by a different name than the "language" of a neighboring political entity, despite mutual comprehensibility, or lumping a number of mutually incomprehensible languages all together under the label of a single "language" with multiple "dialects" to create a sense of national unity. Even following a strict linguistic definition is not always easy to do, as languages tend not to exist in clear cut isolation. Rather there may be something of a dialect continuum, with speakers of language A understanding speakers of language B, and speakers of language B understanding speakers of language C, but speakers of languages A and C not quite being able to understand each other. In this case, it might not be clear where to draw the line between language and dialect.

In Ghana, while the individual languages may (for the most part) be officially recognized (to some degree, and in some contexts) as languages, among the general public there is a widespread misunderstanding of what is a language and what is a dialect. Especially in the Volta Region, where **Ikpána** is spoken, a significant number of people I spoke with who were speakers of the region's majority language, Ewe, told me they thought it was interesting that I was learning the "dialect" when I mistook them for local, **Ikpána** speakers and greeted them in **Ikpána**. Although I usually responded by saying that I was in fact really enjoying learning the language, since linguistically it is considered a separate (but distantly related) language from Ewe, this did not seem to convince people. It may have been more effective to speak to them in this "Ewe dialect," expecting them to understand, and then explaining from there that by linguistic definition, either they did not actually

speak Ewe as they claimed, or **Ikpána** is not a dialect. I hope that in the future more of Ghana's population will understand and appreciate the great linguistic diversity which exists throughout its many regions.

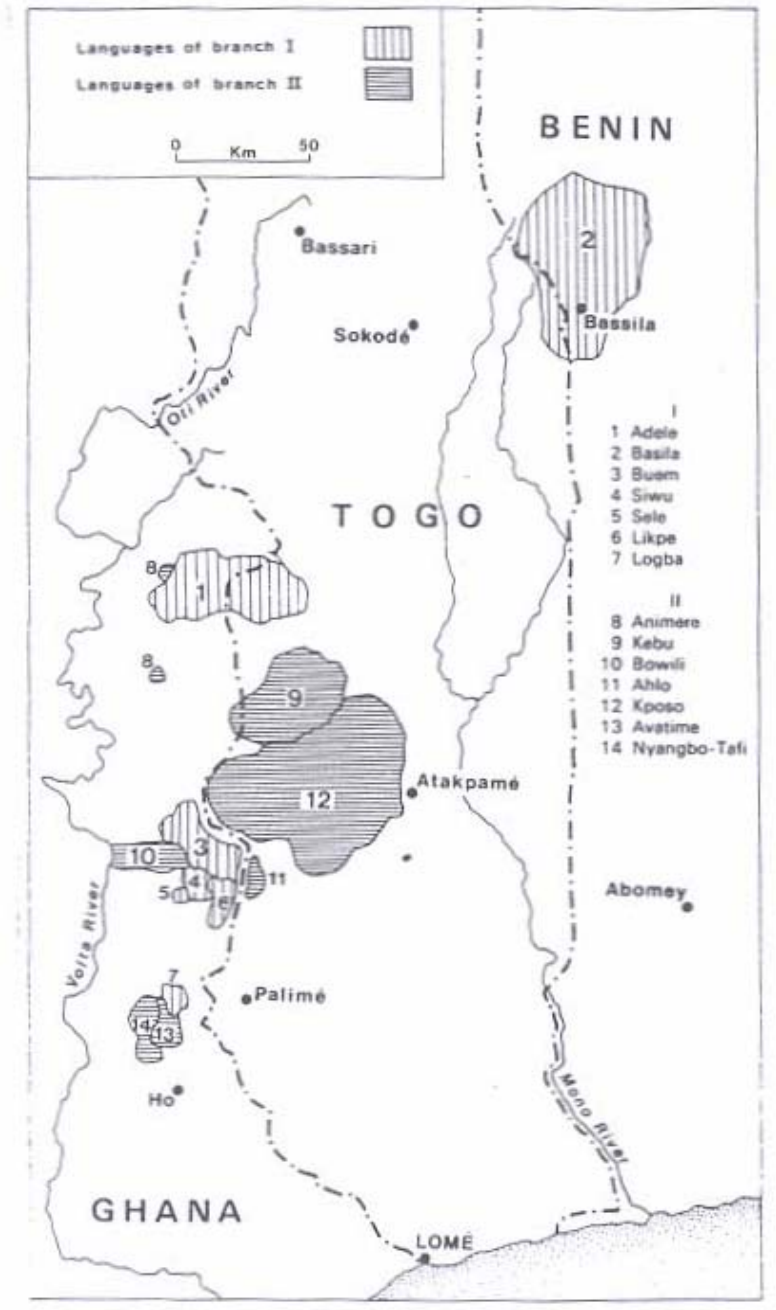


Figure 1 Map showing the distribution of the Ghana-Togo Mountain Languages (from Dorvlo 2008, originally from Heine 1968)

Classification of Ikpána

As mentioned earlier, Ikpána is grouped together with 13 other languages under the title of "Ghana-Togo Mountain Languages," or GTM languages. Classification of the Ghana-Togo Mountain languages remains problematic, partially due to the fact that the languages have not all been adequately described, making comparative analysis of them difficult. The fourteen languages (including Ikpána) which are referred to by that title are all located, as their name suggests, in the mountainous area spanning the political boundaries of Ghana and Togo. The languages have previously been grouped under the title of *Togorestsprachen* (Struck 1912; Westerman 1932, 1954), which has been translated from German into English as "Togo Remnant languages," and also are referred to as Central (or Mountain) Togo (CT) languages (Dakubu and Ford 1988; Blench 2006). For a discussion of the validity of the current classification of these languages as a single grouping, see Blench (2006), who suggests that they may instead be treated as several branches and clusters and recommends that further research into the matter be done.

However, the current published material regarding their classification generally puts the languages into the Kwa branching of the Niger-Congo language family (Stewart 1989), which also includes Akan, Ewe, Ga, and many other languages spoken throughout Ghana (Williamson and Blench 2000). I have included a combination of two diagrams from Blench (2006), the first one demonstrating the distance of the relationship of Ikpána (referred to as Logba) to Ewe, and the second one showing a tentative, revised classification of the GTM languages into separate branches and clusters.

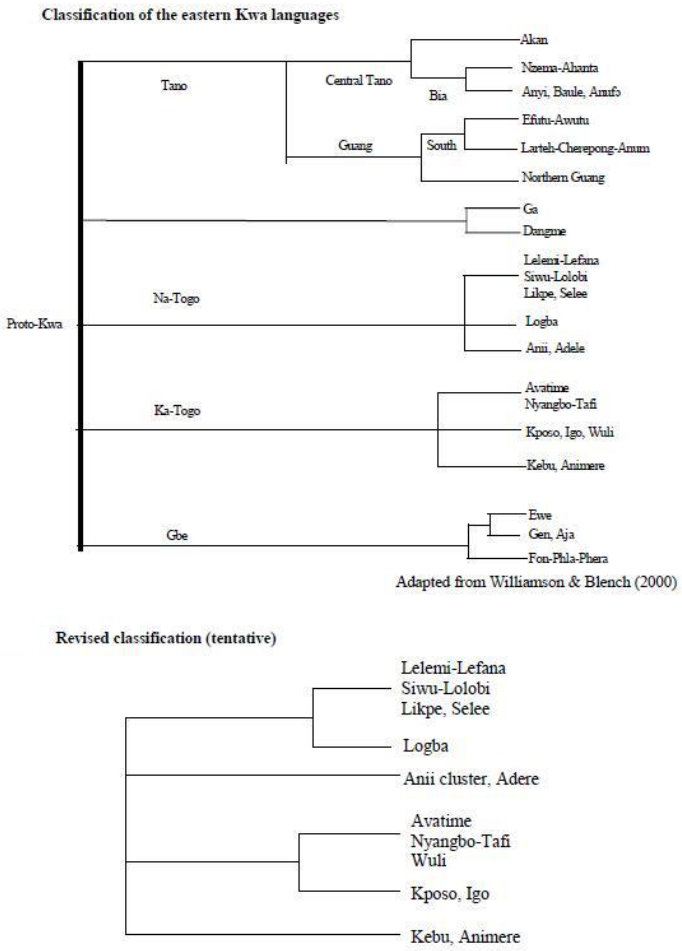


Figure 2 Classification of GTM Languages within Kwa (Blench 2006)

Motivation for Choosing to Study Plant Names

Botanical terms make for an interesting linguistic area to study. Plant names are often descriptive, but over time even descriptive names can become opaque. Communities with longstanding relations often share terms for certain plants, especially common plants or plants sold regularly in the market. Plants which have been introduced into a community may simply be referred to by the same name it was referred to by the community who introduced it, or a new name may be given to it based on certain similarities it shows with other, more familiar plants. Often, the names used by a more dominant linguistic group may begin to replace the names which were

already used by a smaller linguistic group. Sometimes this process can be recorded as it is happening, such as when a borrowed term is the more common one and the original term is more obscure, possibly only known by the elders. In many cases, however, the process has already happened and there is no longer any trace of the original term, if it ever existed. Due to the pressures put on **Ikpána** by Ewe, there has been significant sharing and borrowing of terms between Ewe and **Ikpána**. This project provides a snapshot of the current situation, before more of the original **Ikpána** terms slip into obscurity or disappear from memory entirely.

Motivation for Studying in Logba

Logba was ideal for this research project because the **Akpanawò** have an intimate knowledge of the surrounding plants and their uses, and the area is extremely lush with plant life. The project was spread between three of the Logba towns: Alakpeti (called **Abuda**, meaning "under the mountain"), Klikpo, and Tota (called **Ayotu**, meaning "above **Aya**," which is the **Ikpána** name for Akusame, the town just north of Alakpeti). Alakpeti is considered the commercial center of Logba and is where I stayed. Between Alakpeti and Tota is Klikpo, the capital of Logba. Located at the top of the mountain, seven kilometers from Alakpeti is the largest of the Logba towns, Tota. Between these three locations there is a great diversity of plants, as the changes in elevation create multiple biomes with a fair amount of variation in the plant life to be found there. There are plants, for instance, found at the top of the mountain in Tota which are not found in Alakpeti.

Photo 1 View of Abuda **(Alakpeti, left) and** Aya **(Akusame, right) from the** akpagba (**footpath) between** Abuda **and** Ayotu **(Tota).**

Throughout the Logba area, the plants I saw were the largest I have seen in Ghana anywhere. I was informed by the people living there that the soil is very fertile and size and diversity of the plants there confirmed that for me.

Photo 2 View of the lush Logba greenery

Previous Research

As mentioned before, Dr. Dorvlo has written *A Grammar of Logba (Ikpana),* which contains a grammatical description of the language and a word-list of about 1,600 entries. As mentioned in the introduction of Dorvlo's book, the language is understudied (although that status has certainly gone up since the publication of his book). A previous grammatical sketch of the language was done in German in 1903 (Westermann), and other authors have included the language in their publications about the Ghana-Togo Mountain (GTM) languages as a group, but there is still much work to be done on the language.

Methodology

Getting Started

I had initially come to Ghana with hopes of being able to in some way do a project related to endangered languages research, but since most endangered languages are spoken by small communities in remote areas, it can be difficult to establish contacts and begin a research project without quite a bit of prior effort. I lost some time at the beginning of the Independent Study Project (ISP) period establishing a base for myself in an Ewe-speaking community in the Volta Region where I originally planned to do my ISP on who-knows-what. But then I walked into Dr. Dorvlo's office seeking his opinion on what an interesting aspect of Ewe to study would be. He asked me what I was really interested in and after telling him that I was actually most interested in endangered languages research he told me that he would not let me leave his office without having the opportunity to do just that. We met the next day to discuss a more specific focus (I settled on "plant names," which was an area I had been playing around with since the two-week miniature-ISP period we had finished earlier in the semester) and the next day we left.

Finding Resource People

After the initial difficulty of finding my topic and location, Dr. Dorvlo made everything run quite smoothly for me. Finding resource people was not a problem, because he has been working with the community for the last five years and has established many good relationships with people in the area. People are familiar with him and his work on the language and when we first arrived in

Logba he began introducing me to people, informing them of the reason for my coming, explaining that my work was related to his research and requesting that they support or assist me where possible. Before he left the next day, he made certain that I had a research assistant who spoke both English and Ikpána and had previous experience working with linguistic researchers, housing for the duration of my stay with everything I needed to do my research (a bed, a table, a chair, and a light), an arrangement for me to get vegetarian meals each day, and other contacts I could seek out for assistance or support. With all of that sorted out, he drove away and I was on my own in an exciting new place ready to begin my field work.

Luckily, thanks to Dr. Dorvlo's introduction and the kindness and hospitality of the Akpanawò community, I wasn't really "on my own" at all. I had the support of my home-stay family, Mr. Nelson Howusu (the catechist of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church) and his wife, Margaret, and the friendship, hospitality, and delicious food of the Time Tells family who prepared dinner for me every night. And, every day I knew I could depend on my research assistant, Mawuli, who proved to be extremely helpful and reliable. He acted as my interpreter and guide, since I was essentially an infant coming into the area: I neither spoke Ikpána nor Ewe (the two languages primarily used for communication in the area, although many people also spoke English) and I had a lot to learn about the social and cultural expectations of the community. Mawuli patiently taught me the appropriate ways to greet people in Ikpána (my attempts usually at least resulted in an encouraging, "Oh, you are trying!") and introduced us and the project to all of the people we worked with so that everything ran smoothly.

Alakpeti

As mentioned in the introduction, there are three different Logba communities where we conducted the data elicitation part of the project. The first day of elicitation we recorded in Alakpeti, the second day we were in Tota, and the third day we spent in Tota. However, before the elicitation could begin we first had to make arrangements and meet with people. First, we went and spoke with the okyeame, or "linguist," to ask him which people would be knowledgeable about plants. He gave us several suggestions, so we went and found each person, introduced ourselves (or just me, if they already knew Mawuli), explained the purpose of the project, and asked if they would be willing to share their knowledge and be recorded the next day. We arranged to meet in the morning and the next day everything went smoothly. Before beginning our field work, our first informant, who is a senior fetish priest, poured a libation to the ancestors to ask permission for sharing the knowledge of plant names and uses for the purposes of the project. The ancestors seemed to approve, and we recorded about half an hour of footage from four different informants in the morning and spent the afternoon going through the footage.

Tota

In preparation for our next day of data elicitation, we met with a man from Tota and made arrangements for him to inform certain people in Tota of our arrival the next day, but unfortunately he was returning from a wedding or a funeral and was slightly tipsy. The next day when we arrived in Tota the resource people we were hoping to meet with were unaware of our coming. Thankfully, Mr. Howusu, who originally is from Tota, called his brother and asked him to assist us in finding

appropriately knowledgeable people and after lengthy discussion (which I did not understand) we came to an agreement with two experienced herbalists in the area and, after pouring another libation to the ancestors, were able to record about 50 plants that one day alone.

Klikpo

The last day of meeting resource people was made easier because we were working in Mawuli's hometown, Klikpo, and he made arrangements for us with people he already knew. Whenever anything fell through or we had spare time, Mawuli stepped forward and showed his own, considerable knowledge of the local plants on camera. We were very fortunate on our return to Alakpeti to happen upon our final resource person, the chairman of PROMETRA (Promotion des Medecines Traditionelles, an international organization which promotes the safe and environmentally-friendly use of traditional medicine) Ghana, who spent the rest of our journey telling us the names and uses of the plants found growing along the side of the road. We finished the day with more information than I had expected to gather.

Female Herbalists

Throughout the field work period, there was a strong tendency for all of the recommended resource people to be men, so I made it a point to seek out women when possible. I also sought out a female herbalist to speak with, because one had been pointed out to me previously, but she ended up not being from Logba and we could not find any Akpanadzɛ (female Logba person) herbalist for me to meet. In the future, it would be interesting to interview a female herbalist, if one could be found.

Plant Name Committee

At the beginning of the project, I set out to record 25-50 different plants, with each one cross-checked by three different informants. By the end of the project, however, I had recorded over 100 different plants, with many of them recorded on multiple occasions from different speakers.

In order to verify all of the information, I set up a small Plant Name Committee, which was essentially a group of at least four native speakers of Ikpána, including Togbe Shamoa III (the traditional ruler of Klikpo, also an herbalist and farmer) and Mawuli (who lived for some time with a pharmacist, is a farmer, and seemed to know quite a bit about plants). The other members of the committee consisted of men and women who joined and left the group discussion as their time allowed.

I had compiled a list of all the plant names we had recorded and I went through the entire list, name by name, with the committee and asked the following questions for each:

1. Is this name from Ikpána, Ewe, or some other language?
2. What is the meaning of the name?
3. What is the reason it is called that?
4. Is the plant known by any other names?

Using this method and the combined memories of the committee, I was able to gather a significant amount of information about the origins of the plant names (whether Ikpána or borrowed), the morpheme-by-morpheme breakdown of the names (where that information was still clear), the etymologies of the names, and any alternate names for the plants that were known by those present. The committee was also able to correct a few errors, one in which two plants which

are actually unique plants had been listed under the same name and another in which one plant was listed twice under different names as if it were two separate plants. These were corrected.

The Plant Name Committee proved to be very useful in finding information about plant names, but there were several things I think made the method less than ideally effective. Although the people involved seemed to enjoy the challenge of finding out all of this information for each plant, there is always the danger when running through a long list with people that they will grow slightly bored and may see more value in providing short answers to finish early rather than taking a lot of time to think very carefully about each item. While I believe those involved did make great effort to take their time with each plant, I know that 100 plants is a lot to go through and it is possible that the length of the list may have affected the depth of the information gathered. Also, because the committee was set up in Klikpo, the majority (if not all) of its members were from Klikpo. There may thus be a bias in the information gathered towards the variety of Ikpána spoken in the Klikpo area. In fact, there were times when I was told by members of the committee that one name for a plant was "correct" and another was "incorrect." These value-judgments were based on dialectal variation and not on any linguistically-defined notion of correctness in speech. Because my project was focused on the linguistic properties of the plant names, I pushed the members of the committee to inform me of any "incorrect" names for the plants, in addition to the "correct" ones, and noted who calls the plant what.

Elicitation

For the actual elicitation of the recorded data I used my Sony DCR-HC96 miniDV camcorder to record 11 native speakers of **Ikpána** stating the name of the plant, the use (whether it be practical, medicinal, or edible) of the plant, and the preparation for the use, all in **Ikpána**. After the person finished speaking about the plant I filmed the plant itself, getting as much identifying information as possible on record, such as the leaves, flowers, fruit, seeds, root, etc. We had several methods of finding plants to record. One method was to simply stay in town and find plants growing on the side of the road or in people's yards or gardens. Another method involved a little bit more exploring and required us to go to "the bush" and find plants growing there to record. Due to the great diversity of plant species in Logba, we never had difficulties finding plants to record and we certainly could have recorded far more than we did if we had had more time (although even the amount of data we did gather is far more than I can thoroughly analyze for this short project).

I chose to record the plants in this way based off of my experience working on a related, but much smaller project in an Akan-speaking village in the Ashanti Region as part of our miniature-ISP projects from earlier in the semester. While there, I found that it was most efficient to record the names and uses entirely in the language of interest with no immediate English translation, as the translation takes up quite a bit of time, is distracting, doesn't contribute directly o the goals of the project, and is usually extremely rough anyway. I also found that following a certain structure and explaining this to informants beforehand allowed me to record the names and uses first, concentrating the camera on the speaker, then shift the camera to focus on recording the features of

the plants being discussed without needing any translation in the meantime. There was the occasional miscommunication, but for the most part this structure worked quite well.

After having finished the data collection, however, I now think that a slightly different technique may have been more efficient. Since I was primarily interested in the names of plants, I think it may have been better to record the names and the physical features of the plants separately from the uses and preparations. This would have sped up the elicitation process, as well as the analysis of the data. I also think that asking people what a particular plant is used for as a separate question with as much time as needed to answer would have yielded more diverse and in-depth responses.

Recordings

After recording, each of the four miniDV tapes was locked to prevent it from being recorded over again and carefully labeled with the following metadata: the names of each person recorded on it, the date and locations of the interviews, the title of the project, and an assigned number (1-4) based on the order it was recorded.

I did not use any external microphone to make the recordings, because I purchased my only external microphone, a wired, lavalier/lapel microphone, for a previous research project which involved only sit-down interviews. Because this project involved a lot of walking and hiking it seemed less practical to have a long, wired microphone clipped onto speakers' shirts while gathering the data. However, the sound quality of some of the recordings was unsatisfactory. This was sometimes due to other people walking by on a gravel road during the recording, or because the

informants spoke quietly or looked away from the camera while speaking, but all of those things would not have been a factor if I had been using a better, external microphone. The low sound quality of these recordings made analysis of the tapes difficult at times, particularly when the lights were off all day and we were unable to watch the footage through a television monitor with its enhanced speaker capabilities. Being located next to a school with children playing loudly outside all day made hearing the recordings from the video camera's small speaker very difficult, and the video camera has no headphone jack so that was the only option.

In addition to the audio-video recordings made, Mawuli and I photographed 50 of the plants with a digital camera. The quality and resolution of the photos was much higher than the images from the video camera, and photos are significantly easier to put into a document than videos are.

Analysis

For the analysis of the data, Mawuli and I replayed the recorded footage and I wrote down the following: the name of the plant, the reference time during which the plant was discussed and recorded in the footage, and a rough English translation of the plants' uses and the preparation of those uses. Additionally, the following metadata were recorded at the top of each page of notes for future reference: the name of the speaker, the date and location of the recording, and the tape number.

Because I do not yet fluently speak Ikpána, all of the translations were provided by Mawuli. Also, due to my inability to speak the language, I could not always tell when the name of the plant in question was said, so Mawuli did his best at providing me with spellings of the names of the

plants. Unfortunately, I did not grow up speaking a tonal language, and my past experience with Twi has led me to doubt my ability to correctly mark tone on words and my data is significantly lacking correct tone markings. If I had more time, I would take a list of the plant names back to Logba and record a native speaker who is familiar with the plants and their names saying each of them slowly and carefully. I would then take that recording to a linguist who is more familiar with tonal languages and get the tone markings from her/him.

Findings

Analysis of Plant Names

The amount of data gathered through the course of this project is far greater than I can do justice to in this brief paper. However, I have attempted to analyze the linguistic properties of the plant names as follows in order to illustrate the fascinating diversity of their origins and meanings and also to demonstrate the influence of Ewe and globalization (in the form of commercial agriculture) on **Ikpána**'s botanical lexicon. I have attempted a rough classification of the plant names in the following way:

1. **Ikpána**, or Partially **Ikpána**
    a. Transparent
    b. Opaque
2. Borrowed from Ewe
3. Borrowed due to Agriculture
4. Unclear Origins

At the end of this section I discuss two more aspects of my findings, the process of language shift as can be seen through the existence of both obscure and common names for the same plant, and the secret botanical lexicon known as **Amanyi**.

Throughout these sections certain plant names are used as illustrations, sometimes with photographs. However, for a full list of plants, their uses, the meanings of the names, and the

reference time for the video footage they appear in, see Appendix (bound separately, access restrictions apply).

Interlinear Glossing

In this section, many of the names are written out in a useful format known as an interlinear gloss. The first line of the gloss is usually the Ikpána word with each morpheme (meaningful semantic unit) separated by a hyphen. The second line is a morpheme-by-morpheme breakdown of the Ikpána word, with each morpheme translated into its English equivalent, if one exists. The third line is a free translation into English and is given in quotation marks. If a part of the word is understood by linguists as being present at some underlying level but does not appear in the surface pronunciation of the word, it is written in the second line in parentheses.

Tone

In Ikpána, tone is phonemically contrastive, i.e. the pitch of a vowel or nasal, either high (˝) or low (ˋ) in Ikpána, can change the meaning of the word it appears in. I, however, was unable to mark the tones in my written data because I do not feel qualified to mark them correctly. I have very little background in working with tonal languages and it has been my experience while learning Twi that I do not reliably mark tone correctly. This is a significant gap in my project, but I cannot fix it at this time. It has also been my experience that tone is not nearly as important as it is often made out to be, however, and I think that even without the tones marked there is much value to the data, especially since there are audio-video recordings of each of the plants, where the tone can be heard rather than read.

Ikpána, or Partially Ikpána

Transparent

By my classification, one third of all the plant names I recorded (36 out of 110) are composed of or partially composed of transparent **Ikpána** morphemes. With some degree of certainty, these can truly be said to be **Ikpána** names for plants, as they can be shown to be composed of meaningful **Ikpána** morphemes. However, several of them consist of opaque or borrowed terms combined with transparent **Ikpána** morphemes, and part of the name may have been borrowed and turned into an **Ikpána** word through a productive process of incorporation. Some of the most common morphemes which are tacked onto names (either transparent, opaque, or borrowed) are **ɔyɔ** , meaning "plant" or "tree;" **odo**, meaning "leaf" when used in reference to a plant and "wing" when used in reference to a bird; **ebi,** meaning "seed" or possibly just "small thing;" **nango***,* meaning "big;" and **wutsitsi***,* meaning "small."

Combination of Opaque and Transparent Elements

An example of a name which includes a borrowed or shared term combined with **Ikpána** morphemes is **Zibiɔyɔebi**.

Zibi-ɔyɔ-ebi
zibi-tree-seed
"Zibi tree"

It is not entirely clear to me why some speakers added the morpheme **ebi** onto the names of several plants, because not all speakers did this, and occasionally other speakers would make fun of

those who did. However, it is not unheard of to refer to a plant based on its fruit or seed. For example, in English, a Hazel may be referred to as a Hazelnut Tree, or an Oak may be referred to as an Acorn Tree.

Other plants combine opaque names, which are believed by the Plant Name Committee to be of **Ikpána** origin, with transparent morphemes. An example of this is **Aflaodonango**:

Afla-odo-nango
Afla-leaf-big
"big-leaf **Afla**"

Another example of this is **Anyinyaodonango**:

Anyinya-odo-nango
Anyinya-leaf-big
"big-leaf **Anyinya**"

In this case, **Anyinya** is actually another plant. Both plants grow on a vine, but the leaves of **Anyinyaodonango** are considerably larger than those on **Anyinya** (as is reflected in its name) and they are definitely different plants (see photo 3 and photo 4).

Photo 3 Anyinya **leaves and flowers**

Photo 4 Anyinyaodonango **leaves, flower, and fruit.**

Entirely Opaque/Descriptive Terms

Some plant names are entirely descriptive, such as **Oŋkpanango**, which is a specific type of large vine.

Oŋkpa-nango
rope-big
"big vine[3]"

[3] Note that "rope" is also used by speakers of **Ikpána** to refer to what English-speakers refer to as a "vine"

Warning Names

The names may also give a warning about a particular plant, such as with **Etsikotsyoe Ɔŋvlɛ**, a plant which grows or spreads along the ground and will scratch a person who touches its leaves.

Etsikotsyoe	**Ɔŋvlɛ**
ground	leaf.that.scratches.when.touched

"leaf that grows on the ground and scratches when touched"

Although it may seem strange to a speaker of English that one word can have such a long meaning when translated into English, it is not at all uncommon for one language (in this case English) to use many words to describe what another language (in this case, **Ikpána**) can describe using only one word. It is difficult to do a one-to-one translation of many concepts when going from one language to another. In this case, Ewe also has a single word which it uses to refer to a leaf which scratches a person when touched, **Fiasi** (see discussion below on borrowed plant names).

Relation to Animals

Plant names may also describe a particular relationship the plant has to animals, such as **Akpakpla Afuta**, also called **Akpakpla Avudago**, which is a plant with leaves that frogs have been observed to enjoy hiding under.

Akpakpla	**Afuta**
frog	cloth

"frog cloth"

Akpakpla	**Avudago**
frog	leaf

"frog leaf"

Another such plant is **Gbɛŋgbɛ Avudago**, which is possibly used by the praying mantis in some way, although the Plant Name Committee was uncertain precisely what that might mean.

Gbɛŋgbɛ **Avudago**
praying.mantis leaf
"praying mantis leaf"

Yet another plant example of this is **Adzioyitsi Oŋkpa**, which is a type of vine that bears fruit birds are fond of eating.

Adzi-(ɔ)y(ɔ)-(e)tsi[4] **Oŋkpa**
bird-plant-under vine
"vine under which birds can be found"

Environmental Change

There is one plant name which suggests the possibility of some change in the environment over time. It is called **Axuadzinanto**.

Axuadzi-(u)nanto
chimpanzee-unanto
"chimpanzee **Unanto**"

I was told by the Plant Name Committee that **Unanto** is a tree, and **Axuadzinanto** refers to the fruit. This does not make perfect sense to me, because I have not recorded a plant called **Unanto** and the person speaking about **Axuadzinanto** was referring to the entire plant, not the fruit. However, whatever the meaning of **Unanto**, the plant was said to be called that because the fruit is a favorite of chimpanzees, which I was told are not actually found in the area. The **Ikpána**-speaking community is small and self-contained, as opposed to the community of speakers of a language like English, which is spoken as a mother tongue by people all over the world. From what I understand, there are no speakers of **Ikpána** who live in an area where chimpanzees are common and might be observed

[4] The vowels in the morphemes of this word have undergone changes due to assimilation

enjoying this fruit. Although it is possible that **Axuadzinanto** could be an extremely old name which was brought into the area where the **Akpanawò** now live by their ancestors coming from a place where chimpanzees thrived, it is also quite possible that there actually once were chimpanzees living in the area where the Logba now live, and I have been told by people that that was once the case.

Descriptive of Origin of Plant

Some of the plants tell the story of their place of origin. For example, **Ekpeyowoava**, which was brought by the ancestors from Kpedze, an Ewe town (**Ekpeyo** is the **Ikpána** name for that town).

> **Ekpeyo-wo-ava**
> Kpedze-people.of-herb
> "herb from the people of Kpedze"

Another plant is called **Udanyito**, which was first found on the bank of the river Danyi and was then brought back and planted in Logba by the ancestors. I was told by the Plant Name Committee that the river is not a local river.

> **Udanyi-to**
> Danyi.river-by
> "By the Danyi river"

One plant which has such a name goes by that name only in Tota and is called something different by the other **Ikpána** speakers. It is a specific variety of a more general grouping of fruit trees called **Nyinkle**. The difference in names is due to Tota's high elevation and the subsequent differences in its surrounding biome. Most **Ikpána** speakers call the plant **Ɔdzɔgbe Nyinkle**, meaning "savannah **Nyinkle**," but Tota people call the plant **Agbɔwo Nyinkle**, meaning "Nyinkle of the citizens of Tafi" because there is no savannah in Tota, which is located at the top of a mountain, but

there is in the nearby town of Tafi (called **Agbɔ** in **Ikpána**), and Tota speakers apparently associate the plant with that town.

Most **Ikpána** speakers:	**Ɔdzɔgbe**	**Nyinkle**
	savannah	Nyinkle
	"savannah **Nyinkle**"	

Tota speakers:	**Agbɔ-wo**	**Nyinkle**
	Tafi-people.of	Nyinkle
	"**Nyinkle** of the people of Tafi"	

Photo 5 Nyinkle **fruit**

Clear Etymology

One tree received its name recently enough that most citizens of Logba still remember the story behind it. **Liliɔyɔ** is named after the German, Captain Lily, who planted it in Logba during WWII, according to the story the Plant Name Committee told me.

Lili-ɔyɔ
Lily-tree
"Lily tree"

Unclear Etymology

Some plants are made up of morphemes with clear meanings, but the reason the plant is called that is unclear, e.g. **Ɔgayɔ**[5], or "wife tree," and **Ofuofu**, "nose nose."

Ɔga-(ɔ)yɔ
wife-tree
"wife tree"

Ofu-ofu
nose-nose
"nose nose"

Photo 6 Ofuofu

[5] *Ɔyɔ* undergoes a sound change whereby the first vowel, ɔ, sometimes assimilates with the last vowel of the word preceding it, and appears to simply be dropped. Because of this, many plant names end in *-yɔ*

For the most part, though, it seems that all plant names are simply considered “names” and seem to not have an automatic meaningful designation in speakers’ minds beyond the plants they refer to. This would obviously require further investigation, but is not terribly surprising since most English-speakers probably don’t associate a strawberry with “straw” anymore, but could tell you what “straw” and “berry” both mean, if asked.

Male or Female Plants

Some plants are recognized as having both male and female individuals. The morphemes **osa** or **dze** may be added to the generic name of the plant to specify whether the plant is male or female. This is illustrated by **Bafunuba Osa**, the male papaya, which does not grow edible fruit but is important medicinally.

Bafunuba	**Osa**
papaya	male
“male papaya”	

Photo 7 Bafunuba Osa **"male papaya"**

Dialectal Variation

There is a noticeable degree of dialectal variation between the different towns and villages where **Ikpána** is spoken. I only recorded speakers from Alakepti, Tota, and Klikpo, so the variations I recorded are limited to those areas. Further research would need to be done to determine precisely how each name is pronounced throughout all of the **Ikpána**-speaking communities. Some of the information I have about who pronounces a name in what ways is based off of the actual recordings I made during my field work, but some is also from the combined memories of the members of the Plant Name Committee.

For example, there is one plant which is called **Ademedeme** by two speakers, Daniel Koku (from Tota) and Togbe Shiamoa III (from Klikpo), but is called **Damedame** by one speaker, Kudzo (from Alakpeti).

Tota and Klikpo: **Ademedeme**
slippery

Alakpeti: **Damedame**
Dialectal variation in pronunciation, meaning opaque

Although I was told by the Plant Name Committee that **Damedame** is the more common pronunciation of the two, it is **Ademedeme** which still maintains a clear, descriptive meaning: "slippery," so called because when the entire plant is ground it becomes very slippery, like okra (I have not personally tested this).

The plant also has a more obscure name, known only by the elders and used primarily by their elders, who used the plant as a broom to sweep the home: **Afanugbafiɔŋfio**.

Afanu-gba-fioŋfio
home-sweep-broom
“Broom for sweeping home”

Opaque **Ikpána** Names

There are a number of plant names which were categorized by the Plant Name Committee as **Ikpána** names, but which are now completely opaque. Because the meaning of the name is not transparent and it cannot be broken down into individual morphemes, the only basis I have for classifying them as **Ikpána** is the combined, native-speaker judgments given to me by the members of the Plant Name Committee. Examples of this include **Atandre** (pineapple), **Oklami**, **Kpukpo**, **Igbisɔ**, **Toŋka** (hot pepper), **Tɔtrɔbɔ**, and **Udzi**, which I have been told has the same tone as the word for “broom” (**údzì**), as opposed to the word for “heart” (**udzì**) or “rag used for carrying loads on one’s head” (**udzí**). Speakers informed me that although the tone may be the same (I have not been able to verify this), the plant name does not mean “broom.”

Photo 8 údzì **"broom"**

There were several plant names which I was told were **Ikpána** which I found out later were actually shared terms, used by Ewe and/or Akan speakers as well. The Plant Name Committee classified them as **Ikpána** because they have been incorporated phonologically into the language, for example, or “kola nut tree,” which is pronounced /bisi/ by most Ewe speakers (Southern Ewe speakers may be an exception), but undergoes palatalization in **Ikpána** to be pronounced as /biʃi/ (/ʃ/

is pronounced like "sh" in English). The orthography used for the language does not mark /ʃ/ separately because the sound is not phonemically contrastive (i.e. the sound will never contrast meaningfully with another phoneme in the language) and only appears before the high front vowel /i/. It can be assumed to be caused through a regular process of palatalization, whereby the position of the tongue when making the vowel /i/ causes the alveolar fricative /s/ to become the palatal fricative /ʃ/ in speech. This means that the word would be pronounced /biʃi/ but spelled **Bisi**, and it is the pronunciation which separates the Ewe word from the **Ikpána** word in the minds of the members of the Plant Name Committee.

Interestingly, at least one of the speakers I recorded pronounced the word as /bisi/, using the Ewe pronunciation over the **Ikpána**.

Discussion of Noun-Class Markers as Argument for Borrowing

Many of the world's languages make use of some sort of noun class system, where nouns are classified into various groupings. In languages which have only two or three distinctions, this is often termed "grammatical gender" and may manifest itself in the articles used (e.g. German: **der** – masculine, **die** - feminine; and **das** - neuter; or Spanish: **la** – feminine, **el** – masculine). The groupings may seem somewhat arbitrary or can sometimes be shown to be at least loosely based on shared characteristics of the nouns, but they often have nothing at all to do with any sort of inherent "gender" of the nouns. In many Niger-Congo languages, the number of classes may be much higher than two or three, reaching upwards of 10-20, depending on how they are counted (Zawawi 1979). In **Ikpána** the noun class manifests itself in the form of a prefix, called a noun-class marker,

attached to the beginning of a word. When these nouns appear as subjects, the noun class also requires certain markers to appear on the verbs. **Ikpána** has a limited set of noun classes and all of the markers which appear at the beginnings of the nouns are either vowels ([a], [i], [u], [o], [ɔ], [e], or [ɛ]) or nasals ([n],[m], or [ŋ], depending on the following consonant) (see table below, from Dorvlo 2008). Because of this noun-class system, it is reasonable to argue that nouns which do not begin with a vowel or a nasal are borrowed terms. After I suggested this to Dr. Dorvlo, who knows considerably more about the noun-class system in **Ikpána**, he agreed with my hypothesis. I think the question needs further analysis, but it is certainly something worth looking into. One thing to note is that although nouns beginning with non-nasal consonants may be borrowed terms, they may have been borrowed long ago and since been completely incorporated into the language, so that a plant may be named with an original, descriptive, **Ikpána** name composed of words or morphemes that were borrowed in the distant past. It is difficult to determine.

SINGULAR	PLURAL
a-	N (nasal - determined by place of articulation of following consonant)
u-	e-/ɛ
e-/ɛ	N
o-/ɔ-	i

Table 1 Noun-Class Prefixes in Ikpána (Dorvlo 2008)

Borrowed from Ewe

About 14% of the terms can with a high degree of certainty be said to be borrowed from Ewe. I consider these names to have been borrowed from Ewe, rather than simply shared with Ewe, because the names can be broken down into morphemes which have **Ikpanà** counterparts. For example, the plant **Asisigbe**, which is a plant whose root smells the same as a particular type of large, black ant when both are squished (Mawuli demonstrated this for me, and it is true – they both have the same very distinctive odor).

Ewe: **Asisi-gbe**
particular.type.of.black.ant-leaf

The very same ant is called **Atele Godzo** in **Ikpána**, which also has its own words for "leaf," either **odo** or **avudago**. If the term were simply a shared name, it is conceivable that the morphemes could have been translated from one language to the next and the **Ikpána** word for the plant would be something like **Atelegodzodo**, but when I suggested that to the Plant Name Committee, they laughed and shook their heads. It is called **Asisgbe**.

Many of these names are highly descriptive and have interesting etymologies, similar to the **Ikpána** names discussed above, for example, **Gboloba**.

Ewe: **Gbolo-ba**
harlot-mat
"harlot's mat"

This plant has large, broad leaves which can be spread upon the ground and slept upon. The plant apparently gained a reputation for being used as the bed of prostitutes and that is reflected in its name.

In addition to these, there are a number of opaque names which the Plant Name Committee classified as Ewe. They may have a meaning of some sort in Ewe, but since the focus of my project was on **Ikpanà** I did not spend a lot of time discovering the origins of the Ewe terms. If the Plant Name Committee did not know the meaning, then neither do I. These words may or may not actually be Ewe, as (to my knowledge) they cannot be broken down into clear morphemes. Examples of these are **Ahama**, **Axuaglo**, **Dameleadzongɔ**, and **Nyibɔ**, They had no known **Ikpanà** counterparts.

Borrowed due to Agriculture

Some of the plants which were recorded are exotic species, often introduced into the area due to agriculture. These include cocoa, coffee, bamboo, mango, moringa, tomato and guava which are called, respectively: **Koko**, **Kɔfe**, **Pampro, Mangɔ, Moringa**, **Tomato** and **Agowa**. Many of the names have undergone slight phonological changes, and may have been acquired directly from English or through neighboring languages such as Ewe. While the plants may have been introduced to Ghana by English-speaking people, one should note that the English language borrowed most of them from other languages at some point, and the names are not of English origin either. This area requires further research and exploration. Also of interest is the effect which these imported plants may be having on the local plant life, and whether the exotic plants are threatening the indigenous ones. A future project may discuss in greater detail the ecolinguistic situation of the area, discussing the parallels between linguistic diversity and biological diversity.

Obscure vs Common

Many of the plants are known by multiple names, where one name may be commonly known and used, but there also exists another or several other names which may only be known by elders and have rarely been used since their parents' or grandparents' generations. These names indicate language shift that began generations back and is only currently really surfacing, as the younger generation may be completely unaware of the more obscure names (this needs further investigation, with intergenerational comparisons looked into more closely). In these cases, the common name may be borrowed or an opaque **Ikpána** term. In some cases it is unclear.

For example, **Agbeḍi**, is the common word used for cassava (a plant with a starchy, edible root). The term sounds similar to the Ewe word for cassava, **Agbeli**, meaning "there is life," and at least one of my informants referred to the plant by the Ewe name. The plant, however, also has a more obscure **Ikpána** name, **Onyauloli**, which seems to only be known by elders. The name is descriptive and is made up of two morphemes.

> **Onya-uloli**
> Onya-root
> "Root of **Onya**"

Onya is a type of tree with small, yellow, edible fruit. It is also called **Aglago**, and its root supposedly resembles the root of **Agbeḍi/Onyauloli** (I have not personally verified this). It is interesting that this particular plant would be called after **Onya**, however, because cassava is widely cultivated as a very important food source. It is used in preparing **fufu**, one of Ghana's staple dishes. The fact that this food item was named *after* a less commonly eaten/used tree (the people I asked in

the community did not seem to particularly enjoy the taste of **Onya** fruit, although I enjoyed it) indicates that the plant was not always so important as a food source and may have been imported into the area. It is likely that when the ancestors of the current speakers of the language first encountered cassava, they gave it a descriptive name based on the plants they were already familiar with, but as future generations interacted more and more with neighboring Ewe-speakers in the market they picked up on a shared term for the plant, based on the Ewe name.

Photo 9 Onya **fruit**

Photo 10 Seed of Onya **after the fruit has been eaten off of it, demonstrating scale**

Amanyi – Secret Botanical Lexicon

On the last day of my data collection, I learned of a secret lexicon of plant names, called **amanyi**, which is sometimes translated as the "botanical name" or "back name." I was unable to find out as much as I wanted to about these names due to time constraints. However, from what I learned about them, they are known only by herbalists – regular people cannot typically know them, because they are powerful words. An apprentice to an herbalist must first demonstrate her/his ability before being taught the **amanyi**. Some of the names may actually be the same as the common name for the plant, but some of them are kept a secret. The names are said to be **Ikpána** names, although they are not necessarily descriptions or phrases – they are simply names.

They are considered to be powerful because if a certain process is performed (such as sticking a coin under the plant or approaching it while unclothed) and the name of the plant is invoked, then the plant will provide the invoker with certain powers when parts of the plant are used in particular ways. Since I have not yet proven my skills as an herbalist, I was not allowed to know the full details, but perhaps someday a linguist will prove her/his skills and have the opportunity to study the linguistic properties of these secret names in a way which keeps their mysteries secure.

Conclusion

This project is a preliminary look at the plant names and uses in Ikpána. A significant amount of further, in-depth research needs to be conducted to verify the current data, to collect a more comprehensive corpus of information, and to study the meanings and etymologies of each of the plant names in greater details. The project would benefit greatly from a more systematic, statistical analysis of the frequency of borrowed terms in comparison with original, Ikpána terms. As it is, the estimations made in this paper are rough, due to the difficulty of classifying names of uncertain origin and names which are a combination of borrowed and Ikpána terms, as well as the added complexity of plants with multiple alternate names.

But even from this small sample, it is clear that there is quite a bit of linguistic pressure put on the language by Ewe, and also to some degree the larger effects of globalization (particularly commercially exported agriculture). This can be shown in the botanical domain of the language, which in addition to containing many beautiful and interesting Ikpána names also contains many borrowed Ewe names and borrowed agricultural names. I have given justification for the classification of these Ewe names as being borrowed by analyzing the morphemes of the names. I also propose that the names beginning with non-nasal consonants are borrowed, due to Ikpána's system of vowel/nasal noun-class prefixes. The influence of globalization on the language is also demonstrated through the many names borrowed due to agriculture.

A situation of language shift in action can also be observed in the language as demonstrated in the plants which have multiple names, where one is Ikpána, but not commonly used or widely

known, and the other is borrowed and the most common name for the plant. It is conceivable that within a few generations the more obscure of these names may be lost entirely.

An area of further research is briefly touched upon: Amanyi, or the secret lexicon of plant names. It would be interesting to look further into their linguistic properties, while still respecting their secrecy.

In the future, this project could be turned into a useful, multimedia project which combines the video footage, images, informant information, plant names and meanings, and the medicinal and practical uses and preparations of the plants. This could be a valuable resource to future generations seeking to learn more about their language, the surrounding plants, and the uses and cures which can be found in the surrounding flora.

It is in the interests of the community for a very structured and carefully planned research project to be conducted which not only documents the remainder of the plant names, but also goes into greater detail about the medicinal value of the plants. This would require a great deal of care, as much of this information is sensitive and could potentially be taken advantage of by pharmaceutical companies seeking to make a profit at the expense of the community from which that information came. Such a project would require more specific details regarding the preparation, quantities, and dosages of the cures involved, as well as careful taxonomic identification of the plants. Because this project was focused primarily on the linguistic properties of plants in Ikpána, the data gathered was weighted in the direction of the Ikpána names for plants and the reasons why they are called that. The descriptions, video recordings, still images, usages, cure preparations, and other such

information which were gathered during the course of this research are thus not the main focus of the project. As a linguistic researcher, however, I feel that it is extremely important for the research to be valuable both to the academic community (i.e. to linguists) and also to the local community (i.e. to Logba). In this case, documentation of the plant names, the physical characteristics of the plants, and the descriptions of how they are used can be both academically and culturally valuable, especially since the recordings are entirely in **Ikpána**, with rough English translations of the uses provided.

Most of the information in this research paper is an analysis of original data gathered during the course of the field work period for this project. This original research is supplemented by my knowledge of linguistics based on my previous coursework, readings, and prior research experience working with speakers of endangered languages in Alaska and Southern California. The project is extremely limited in order to meet the requirements of the academic program giving me credit for the completion of this coursework, but I hope to continue the project in the future and do a more thorough job. Overall, this project, even in its small scale and short duration, was a dream come-true for me. Aside from having the opportunity to do original research, learn a new language, and spend the entire day learning about plants, I also was able to spend a lot of time in nature, surrounded by lush greenery and fresh air, all while working with wonderful, knowledgeable people who care about their beautiful language.

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Informants

Mathias Kwasi Asemsro. Pharmacist and nurse tutor (last 26 years). Interviewed on 20 Nov., 2009 in Logba Alakpeti about Medical Terms.

Togbega Dabra VI. *Unansanango* (Paramount Chief of Logba Traditional Area), Superintendent Pharmacist for Lifedoor Pharmacy, CEO/Projects Director of PROMETRA Ghana, Managing Consultant for Kayus LTD (Natural/Herbal Health Services). Born 31 May, 1950. Interviewed on 27 Nov., 2009 in Accra about project as a whole and access restrictions.

Plant Resource People (recorded on video):

Alex Samah. Farmer and senior fetish priest. Born in 1959 in Logba Alakpeti. First language: *Ikpána*. Other languages: English, Ewe, and French. Interviewed on 16 Nov., 2009 in Logba Alakpeti.

Daniel Kofi Agana. Farmer, *odikro* (gong-gong beater), and formerly a driver. Born 1937 in Logba Klikpo. First language: *Ikpána*. Other languages: Ewe, and English. Interviewed on 18 Nov., 2009 in Logba Klikpo.

Daniel Koku Asigbetse. Senior herbalist and farmer. Born 1942 in Logba Tota. First language: *Ikpána*. Other languages: Ewe, Twi, and English. Interviewed on 17 Nov., 2009 in Logba Tota.

Elizabeth Yawa Anansah. Gardener and trader. Born in 1957 in Logba Tota, but has been living in Logba Klikpo for the past 30 years. First language: *Ikpána*. Other languages: Ewe, and English. Interviewed on 18 Nov., 2009 in Logba Klikpo.

George Ahorhorlu. Farmer. Born in 1953 in Logba Alakpeti. First language: *Ikpána*. Other languages: English, and Ewe. Interviewed on 16 Nov., 2009 in Logba Alakpeti.

Kudzo Yeboah. Herbalist, chairman of PROMETRA Ghana. Born 1 Oct. 1956 in Logba Alakpeti. First language: *Ikpána*. Other languages: Ewe, Ga, English, and Twi. Interviewed on 18 Nov., 2009 on road from Logba Klikpo to Logba Alakpeti.

Lawrence Kwasi Ogordor. Herbalist and farmer. Born around 1914 (uncertain) in Logba Tota. First language: *Ikpána.* Other language: Ewe. Interviewed on 17 Nov., 2009 in Logba Tota.

Mabel Kodzokpo. Gardener and seamstress. Born 9 Nov., 1966 in Logba Tota. First language: *Ikpána*. Other languages: Ewe, and English. Interviewed on 16 Nov., 2009 in Logba Alakpeti.

Manfred Obuabre. Herbalist, farmer, *odikro* (gong-gong beater), and Togbe. Born 11 Nov., 1933 in Logba Alakpeti. First language: *Ikpána*. Other languages: English, Ewe, and Avatime (mother from that area). Interviewed on 16 Nov., 2009 in Logba Alakpeti.

Mawuli Kormla Kahia. Farmer and photographer/videographer, also lived with pharmacist. Born Oct. 1974 in Logba Klikpo. First language: *Ikpána.* Other languages: Ewe, and English. Interviewed on 18 Nov., 2009 in Logba Klikpo.

Togbe Shamoa III. Herbalist, farmer and Togbe of Logba Klikpo. Born 1937 in Logba Klikpo. First language: *Ikpána*. Other languages: Ewe, and English. Interviewed on 18 Nov., 2009 in Logba Klikpo.