The Form and Function of English Loanwords in Akan

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ABSTRACT

This paper provides a linguistic analysis of English loanwords in Akan (Niger Congo, Kwa). Using data from the sporting, political and socio-economic domains, we consider phonological and morphological issues that pertain with English loanwords in Akan. Additionally, the paper investigates the specific semantic sub-domains of these words. Phonologically, we note that the loanwords comply with the vowel harmony rule in Akan. Also the English short neutral half-open vowel /ʌ/, the schwa vowel /ə/ and the back open rounded vowel /ɒ/ are replaced with more familiar Akan vowels. Furthermore, loanwords with consonant clusters are adjusted by either insertion or deletion. Morphologically, we observe that English stems are borrowed with various inflections from Akan. Semantically, we note that Akan has borrowed from the domains of security, soccer, health, governance, education and other specialized fields. Finally, we recognise that Akan speakers borrow to fill lexical and semantic gaps, for simplicity and for prestige.

Keywords: Akan, Loanword, Morphology, Nativisation Processes, Phonology.

1. INTRODUCTION

The present paper examines the phenomenon of borrowing in Akan (Niger-Congo, Kwa). It considers certain phonological and morphological features of English loanwords in Akan. Additionally, semantic sub-domains that Akan speakers have borrowed words from are discussed.

English and Akan are arguably the two prominent languages spoken in Ghana. The former, apart from being a major world language is the only official language of Ghana, while the latter is the most prominent indigenous language, with almost half of the population of the country using it as an L1 and a lot more using it as a lingua franca in various social, cultural, religious and economic contexts (Anyidoho and Dakubu 2008). Certainly, close interaction between these two languages is rife in various sectors. According to Lewis et al. (2013), Akan serves as one of the languages with wider communication in Ghana. They further claim that Akan is also used as the de facto national working language in Ghana. Adika (2012: 151) states that, "Akan (especially Twi) is spoken by people across Ghana

as a second language and used as a medium of cross-ethnic communication". Akan has had a very long contact with the English language from the time of colonization up to date.

Lingua francas are neutral languages which are used for communication between groups who do not speak each other's languages and these languages may be contact languages (cf. Thomason 2001; Matras 2009). English is widely used as a lingua franca by educated Akan speakers with other non-Akan speakers, and Akan has borrowed heavily from English (cf. Ghana Notes and Queries 9, 1966). Due to the contact nature of borrowing, and because languages are easily accessed when they come together, it is common for Akan speakers to borrow into their language items from English, a language which Akan has so much contact with.

This paper examines the phonological strategies that Akan speakers adopt to simplify vowels and syllable structures. It also analyses the morphological strategies that speakers adopt to inflect loan nouns and verbs. The paper finally explores the specific semantic sub-domains that Akan has borrowed from.

The rest of this paper is structured as follows: Section 2 distinguishes loanwords (borrowing) from code-switching. Section 3 provides information on the methods and the data used for this study. Section 4 presents the phonological features. Section 5 discusses syllable structure modification strategies. Section 6 is the discussion on the morphological features. Section 7 examines the semantic domains of borrowed words in the language. The final section 8 provides a summary of the discussion.

2. BORROWING VERSUS CODE-SWITCHING

The focus of this paper differs in many respects from other contact situations such as code-mixing and/or code-switching, in that, in code-switching and/or code-mixing people who switch back and forth between languages are more or less aware of their behavior, or at least they know that they make use of two (or more languages). But in loanwords study, we realise that the speakers of the target language use elements from other languages when they think, or are even sure, that they use only one language. This point is made by Wohlgemuth (2009: 53) when he states that "well-established, "old" loanwords, for example, may not even be perceived by speakers of the recipient language as something that originated in another language." Another difference is that while borrowing is concerned with words, code-switching is not necessarily concerned with single words but rather structures (cf. Heath 2013; Rouchdy 2002; Aktürk-Drake 2015). Finally, in code-switching the speaker who switches must necessarily be a bilingual but loanword usage does not require the users to be bilinguals, although bilingual speakers also use loanwords. Monolinguals are very able to use loanwords, however they do not code-switch (cf. Apenteng 2013). To avoid instances of mixing code-switched data with loanwords in this paper, preference is given to

monolingual data over bilingual ones even though bilingual data is considered when they corroborate monolingual data. Heath (1984: 368) states;

> Probably the most significant contribution of recent language contact studies has been a determined attack on the problem of code-switching (CS) as distinct from borrowing. In principle, the distinction is that CS involves alternate use of two distinct languages (some authors extend CS to apply to dialect and/or register switching as well), while borrowing represents use of partially or fully adapted forms of L2 origin in L1 (Borrowing is the term both for the process of incorporation and also for the result in corporate form).

The argument is that whether the phenomenon is characterized as code-switching or borrowing, it deals with the usage of language from two different sources. Also, one of the languages becomes the dominant one and the other the subordinate one. Our argument is that, the two, are not necessarily mutually exclusive since they both result from language contact situations.

3. METHODS AND DATA

This study identified loanwords in the Akan language from recorded and transcribed speech of ten native Akan speakers of Akyem Nkwantanang (a suburb of the Kwaebibirim District of the Eastern Region of Ghana) through focus group discussions and interviews. Nkwantanang is an indigenous Akan speaking town (with Akyem as the dominant dialect of the area). The people of Nkwantanang are largely farmers. In order to ensure that the data were enough and fairly representative, the researchers considered the following variables; gender, age, literacy as well as monolingual (without formal education) and bilingual (with formal education) representation in the selection of the respondents. The reason for the fair representation of the above variables was because the various groups do not share the same social interest, and also their ideas and speech characteristics differ. The respondents comprised four monolinguals (two males and two females) and six bilinguals (three males and three females). Among the ten were also four older persons (45–60yrs) and six younger ones (17–44yrs). Even though the bilinguals constituted a higher number (six) of the respondents interviewed, more than eighty percent (80%) of the data discussed are from the monolingual speeches.

The interviews covered socio-economic issues – such as palm oil production and sale (one of the main economic activities in the town), and living conditions and lifestyles in Akyem Nkwantanang. Also, people of different occupational backgrounds (a cobbler, hairdresser, welder, seamstress and a farm-hand) were also interviewed on the specific functions they perform in their individual professions, the materials and products they use, the kind of customers they serve and the amount of money they charge for services rendered. The focus group

discussion covered biometric registration and verification, as well as steps toward ensuring a peaceful 2012 general election of Ghana. There were also discussions on two local football league teams-Kumasi Asante Kotoko and Accra Hearts of Oak, as well as two English Premier League teams-Manchester United and Chelsea. The discussion was on which one of the teams was better. The respondents were also asked to mention names of football officials, and described the specific roles they play on the field. The deliberations were audio-recorded, subsequently transcribed, and selected for analysis.

Dialectal variations of Akan are outlined and specified in the study. This is done to identify phonological dialectal variations at the lexical level. The respondents were selected based on their competence in the Akan language, determined through interactions with the majority of inhabitants and also based on the biographical data we took from them. For the bilingual data, the selected lexical items were those that were corroborated by the monolingual data and had undergone nativisation and adaptation processes such as alternation of sounds and the application of specific features such as ATR harmony, rounding harmony, tone assignment, free variance, and syllable structure adjustment. This is to enable us present a representative data (monolingual and bilingual) of Akan speakers. The subsequent sections present a discussion of the data.

4. PHONOLOGICAL PROCESSES

This section considers the various phonological processes found in the data. The processes identified are vowel harmony, nasalization, deletion, vowel simplification and syllable structure modification. Among the vowels that are treated are; the short neutral half-open unrounded vowel /ʌ/, the schwa vowel /ə/, and the back open rounded vowel /ɒ/. Akan words that are borrowed from English with such unfamiliar sounds are replaced with more familiar Akan vowels. The sub-sections that follow discuss the replacements (strategies) for the English vowels in the loanwords.

4.1 VOWEL HARMONY

The Akan language exhibits ATR vowel harmony (Dolphyne, 1988). This means that in any Akan word of two or more syllables, only the vowels of one set may occur. The two sets are as follows;

Set I (Advanced Tongue Root Vowels) - /**i, e, æ, o, u** /

Set II (Unadvanced Tongue Root Vowels) - /**ɪ, ɛ, a, ɔ, ʊ** /

The following examples from Dolphyne (1988: 18) are illustrations in support of the point made above. The examples in set I contain only advanced tongue root vowels, while those in Set II comprise unadvanced (retracted) tongue root vowels. Consider the following:

Set I	**Set II**
1a. **efie** 'house/home'	1b. **ɛfɪ(ɛ)** 'vomit'
2a. **owuo** 'death'	2b. **ɛwʊɔ** 'honey'
3a. **ædi** 'outside'	3b. **adɪ(ɛ)** 'something'

Sometimes a borrowed word may contain vowels that are found in both English and Akan, however some of the vowels still get replaced as part of the nativization process. This is as a result of an attempt to make the loanword comply with the vowel harmony rule in Akan. Consider the three examples below:

Akan	**English**	**Word**
4. [**sístè**]	[sɪksti]	'sixty'
5. [**fíftè**]	[fɪfti]	'fifty'
6. [**rɛ́kɔ̀sʊ̀**]	[rekɔ:dz]	'records'

The first two Akan examples above show that even though Akan has the unadvanced high front unrounded vowel /ɪ/ and its advanced counterpart /i/, first, the advanced vowel /i/ is lowered and realised as /e/ in the Akan example. Second, we notice a regressive harmony process which replaces the unadvanced /ɪ/ vowel with its advanced counterpart /i/ in the first syllable. This is done to help realise an Advanced Tongue Root (ATR) harmony in those words, which fits the Akan vowel harmony rule. In the first syllable of example (6), the front mid-high unrounded vowel /e/ is replaced with the unadvanced front mid-low unrounded vowel /ɛ/ in the loanword in consonance with the –ATR vowel /ɔ/ in the second syllable.

4.1.1 Simplification of the /ʌ/ vowel

The short neutral half-open unrounded vowel /ʌ/ is replaced with two different vowels; /ɔ/, and /a/, in different contexts when it occurs in Akan words borrowed from English. The first replacement of the /ʌ/ vowel, as found in the Akan data, is with the back half-open rounded vowel /ɔ/. This is illustrated in examples (7) to (9) below:

Akan	English	Word
7. [**rɔ́bà**]	[rʌbə]	'rubber'
8. [**dʊ̀rɔ́m**]¹	[drʌm]	'drum'
9. [**nɔ́mà**]	[nʌmbə]	'number'

The second replacement of /ʌ/, as found in the Akan data, is with the central low vowel /a/. In some cases the /a/ vowel is lengthened, as in (12); a feature which is not present in the original. The following are illustrations:

Akan	English	Word
10. [**hándʊ̀rɛ̀dì**]	[hʌndrəd]	hundred
11. [**ádà**]	[ʌðə]	either
12. [**kàápʊ̀**]	[kʌp]	cup

4.1.2 Simplification of the English schwa vowel /ə/

The English schwa vowel is a sound that has a number of replacements when it occurs in Akan loanwords. Examples (13–15) replace schwa with /a/. All the examples below are from Akan monolingual speeches:

Akan	English	Word
13. [**wɛdà**]	[weldə]	'welder'
14. [**ádà**]	[aɪðə]	'either'
15. [**sódʑà**]	[soʊldʒə]	'soldier'

On the other hand, in examples (16) to (18), schwa is replaced with the back half-open vowel /ɔ/. The following examples attest to this point:

Akan	English	Word
16. [**gàlɔ́ǹ**]	[gælən]	'gallon'
17. [**kɔ̀m̀púùtá**]	[kəmpʲu:tə]	'computer'
18. [**sɔ̀pɔ́ɔ̀tá**]	[səpɔ:tə]	'supporter'

Examples (19) to (21) below also replace schwa with the front half-open unrounded vowel /ɛ/.

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¹ Note that even though Akan has Cr syllable type (cf. Dolphyne 1988; Abakah 2005), in example (8), there is an insertion of the unadvanced vowel, /ʊ/ between /d/ and /r/. This is could be accounted for as an adaptation strategy that Akan speakers resort to in loanword acceptability to distinguish it from native Akan words.

Akan	English	Word
19. [**hándʊ̀rɛ̀dì**]	[hʌndrəd]	'hundred'
20. [**pìrɛ́sídɛ́ntì**]	[prezɪdənt]	'president'
21. [**sɛ́kɛ́ĩ**]	[sekənd]	'second'

In addition to the above, the schwa is replaced with the high front unadvanced vowel /ɪ/ in examples (22) to (24) below.

Akan	English	Word
22. [**bálì̀**]	[bærəl]	'barrel'
23. [**náɕìnàà**]	[næʃənl]	'national'
24. [**màatɛ kɔ́míɕìnà**]	[mætʃ kəmɪʃənə]	'match commissioner'

Example (22) illustrates a replacement of /r/ with /l/ and a deletion of a word final alveolar lateral. This is because /r/and /l/ are free variants in Akan. Also, Akan does not have a syllable type which has an alveolar lateral at coda position.

Examples (25) and (26) however replace schwa with the half-close back rounded vowel /o/. This reflects the close letter to sound correspondence in Akan. Examples are as follows:

Akan	English	Word
25. [**pòlîsìní**]	[pəli:s]	'police'
26. [**kólàpʊ́sí**]	[kəlæps]	'collapse'

There is an epenthesis of the unadvanced back high rounded vowel /ʊ/ adopted to break a consonant cluster of a voiceless bilabial plosive and an alveolar fricative as attested in example (26). This was done to achieve a CV syllable type, which is typical of the Akan language.

Finally, schwa is replaced with the high front advanced unrounded vowel /i/. Only one example was obtained for this group, and it is illustrated in example (27) below:

Akan	English	Word
27. [**rɛ́fírì̀**]	[refəri:]	'referee'

The example above portrays no syllable structure adjustment because the syllable structure of the source language exhibits a preferred Akan syllable type (CV).

4.1.3 Simplification of the English /ɒ/ vowel

From the data collected, the English back open rounded vowel /ɒ/ is replaced with the back half-open rounded vowel /ɔ/. This is because the /ɒ/ sound is not found in Akan, so the Akan speakers replace it with a familiar sound. The supporting examples are as follows:

Akan	English	Word
28. [kwɔ̀lìfáì]	[kwɒlɪfaɪ]	'qualify'
29. [kwɔmέntírì]	[kɒməntri]	'commentary'
30. [ɔ̀fwʊ́sáàdì]	[ɒfsaɪd]	'off-side'

One strategy manifested in the data above is an insertion of the unadvanced high front unrounded vowel /ɪ/ between /t/ and /r/ of the final syllable of example (29) and the /ʊ/ vowel to break a cluster of /f/ and /s/ of the second and third syllables of example (30).

4.2 SYLLABLE STRUCTURE MODIFICATION

Dolphyne (1988: 52–53) identifies three main syllable types in Akan, namely:

i.   Vowel only – V: ò-bí 'somebody'
ii. A consonant and a vowel – CV: dá 'sleep'
iii. A syllabic consonant – C: n – ń-sá 'alcohol', m – só-m 'hold it', ŋ – ò-dá-ŋ́' 's/he turns it over' (Ak.), n – ò-dá-ń 's/he turns it over' (Fa.), r – ò-fέ-ŕ 's/he is shy' (Fa.).

There were two instances where CVC syllable types were found in the data from Akan monolingual speeches. Consider the italicised words in the two sentences exemplified in (31) and (32) below[2]:

31. **m-feɛ   deɛ   m-a-n-hyɛda   a-m-mɔ**
    PL-year   TM   1SG-PRF-NEG-intentional   CONS-NEG-beat
    deeti   no   *bɛ̀t*   bɛyɛɛ…
    date   DET   *but*   about…
    'I did not note the exact date, but it is about …'

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[2]   Abbreviations used in this paper are as follows; 1 – First person, 2 – Second person, 3 – Third person, [́] – High Tone, [̀] – Low Tone, ADV – Adverb, Ak. – Akuapem, CM – Clause Marker, CONS – Consecutive, DEF – Definite, DEG – degree, DET – determiner, Fa. – Fante, FUT – Future, INANIM – Inanimate, INDEF – Indefinite, NEG – Negative, PERS – Person, PRF – Perfect, PROG – Progressive, PST – Past, SG – Singular, TM – Topic Marker.

32. **ɔno   sɛ   wo-fa   ne   ho   tann   koraa a   ɛndeɛ *gyɛ́ɛ́s***
     3SG   CM   2SG-take   3SG   body hate   DEG   CM   then *just*

    sɛ   asɛm   bi   kɛkɛ   na   ɔ-ɔ-ka   no.
    CM   issue INDF.DET   DEG   FOC   3SG-PROG-say   DEF.DET

    'If you develop any hatred towards him, it is just an ordinary issue that he is addressing.'

Akan does not have a syllable with the voiceless alveolar plosive /t/ and the alveolar fricative /s/ sounds at word final position, but there is an occurrence of such syllable type in an Akan loanword, in (31), where a monolingual used /**bɛt**/ 'but' to contradict a statement he made earlier, when he was trying to recount the number of years he has been in his cobbling business. This shows that there is the tendency, even if it is uncommon, for some features of the source language to be retained in the loanword. This implies that, it is not always the case that phonological features of the target language influence the final output of the loanword. Adomako (2008) makes a similar observation for bilingual speakers' forms.

In spite of the above, there is an extent to which non-native features can be retained in a loanword. For example, a consonant cluster occurring in the coda position is unacceptable in Akan. The reason for this is that, a consonant cluster is a dispreferred sequence in Akan, and generally, speakers mostly avoid such forms. English words with consonant clusters loaned into Akan are adjusted by either insertion or deletion. In the examples below, the italicised consonant clusters are either broken up or deleted in the Akan. The deletion is basically to make the borrowed word conform to the most common syllable structure (CV) in the target language. The examples below attest to this:

	Akan	**English**	**Word**
33.	[**làà sóó**]	[lɑ:*st* ʃoʊ]	'last show'
34.	[**bɔ́gà pùrúùfù**]	[bɜ:*glə*ri *pr*u:*f*]	'burglary-proof'
35.	[**fáá*tì*rì**]	[fæ*ktr*i]	'factory'

The Akan example in (33) exhibits compensatory lengthening, where an English long vowel and a diphthong are replaced with two vowels of the same quality, in each case.

5. MORPHOLOGICAL FEATURES

This section discusses the morphological nativisation of Akan borrowed words. Section 5.1 deals with nominal inflections, while section 5.2 focuses on verbal inflections. The general observation is that English stems that are borrowed are subjected to the inflectional rules of Akan.

5.1   NOMINAL INFLECTION

Even though Akan has a pretty complex morphology for marking singular and plural, the borrowed words are subjected to just a few of these inflections.

5.1.1 Singular inflection

Akan has three main ways of morphologically marking singular number. The first is by the use of the prefixes; *e-, ɛ-, ɔ-, o-, a-*, and *i-* (in the Fante dialect). The second is by the use of the *-ni* suffix, and the third is by the use of the prefixes; *o-* and *ɔ-* together with the *-ni* suffix (Dolphyne 1988). Examples of words with the prefixes are ɛ-kɔm 'famine', o-bi 'somebody', a-ba 'seed', i-dan 'house' and ɔ-ba 'child'. Examples of words with the suffix are Asante-ni 'an Asante person' and Togo-ni 'a Togolese'. Examples of words with prefixes and suffixes are o-sigya-ni 'a spinster' and ɔ-kwantu-ni 'a traveller'.

English, on the other hand, has no overt morpheme for marking singularity. Singularity in English is implied in the bare form of the noun. This is attested in the English words 'bus', 'knife' and 'plate'

Only one of the three main ways of morphologically marking singular number in Akan is manifested in the data. This has to do with the singular person suffix -*ni*. The semantic domain of such borrowed words, as observed in the data, involve the profession noun *télà-ní* 'a tailor', example (37), and an agentive noun **NPP-ní** 'NPP person', example (36).

> 36. **NPP-*ní***   37. **télà-*ní***
>   NPP-PERS.SG   tailor-PERS.SG
>
>   'NPP person'   'tailor'

From the above examples, borrowed nouns hardly take the singular person prefixes e-, ɛ-, ɔ-, o-, a-, and i- (Fa). Akan speakers make conscious effort to omit the singular prefix in the borrowed nouns.

5.1.2 Plural inflection

Akan marks plurality through the use of prefixes, suffixes and a combination of prefixes and suffixes (Dolphyne 1988, Agyekum 2010). Nouns with the *e-, ɛ-, ɔ-, o-* and *i-* prefixes in the singular mostly take the *a-* plural prefix[3]. Singular nouns with the prefix *a-* take a homorganic nasal plural prefix. Consider the following examples below:

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3   This is a general rule with quite a number of exceptions. For example, the plural of (ɔ)**ba** 'child', (ɔ)**baa** 'girl', (ɔ)**barima** 'boy', and (**o**)**nipa** 'human being', 'sibling' is **mma** 'children', **mmaa** 'girls', **mmarima** 'boys' and **nnipa** 'human beings' respectively.

Singular	Plural	Gloss
ɛ-dan	**a**-dan	house
ɔ-ko	**a**-ko	battle
a-deɛ	**n**-neɛma	thing
a-boa	**m**-moa	animal

Some nouns in Akan are however marked for plural number through the use of the *-fo(ɔ)* suffix. **Examples include maame-fo(ɔ) 'women' and papa-fo(ɔ) 'men'** Another group of nouns use a combination of a vowel or nasal prefix (*a-/N-*) and the *-fo(ɔ)* suffix to mark plural number. Examples are a-kua-fo(ɔ) 'farmers' and m-panim-fo(ɔ) 'elders'. Another type of pluralisation in Akan is with the *-nom* suffix which is usually attached to kinship nouns (cf. Dolphyne 1988). Examples are nana-nom 'chiefs/kings' and agya-nom 'fathers'. Some Akan nouns also take a combination of the **a-** prefix and the -**nom** suffix. Example is the plural of **onua** 'sibling' which is **a-nua-nom** 'siblings'.

Plural formation in English is done primarily through morphological means with the exception of irregular nouns. This is done by simply suffixing -**s** to the stem of the noun. This can be realised as [*s*], [*z*] and [*ɪz*] depending on the phonological shape of the last segment to which it is attached. /s/ is attached to voiceless sounds apart from /s/ and /ʃ/, /z/ is attached to voiced sounds aside from /z/, and /ɪz/ is attached to sibilants.

Even though Akan has this complex morphology for marking plurals, speakers exhibit only three of the forms in the loanwords. The first is with the attachment of the -nom suffix to the borrowed stems. The second are those stems that take the -foɔ suffix. The final ones are those that take the a- prefix and the -foɔ suffix.

5.1.3 Plural marking with the *-nom* suffix

One of the plural affixes which are assigned to Akan borrowed words is the *-nom* suffix. Consider example (38):

38. **Yɛ-hu**   nnipa bi   te   sɛ   *rèfíréè-nóm, lànsèmán-nóm, kɔmɛnteeta*
    3PL-see   people DET   look   like   referee-PL linesman-PL   commentator

    'We find people such as referees, assistant referees, commentators,…'

The function of this suffix in the context of the loanwords is more of inclusiveness, but the same cannot be said of the *-fɔɔ* suffix even though the two mark plurality. This is because even though the plural forms *'referee-fɔɔ'* 'referees' and *'lanseman-fɔɔ'* 'linesmen' are acceptable, they will not necessarily indicate inclusiveness as we find in *rɛfiree-nom* and *lanseman-nom*. This means that, the *'-nom'* suffix goes beyond expressing plurality in the context of native and borrowed Akan words[4]. As observed from the data, this morpheme mostly occurs with nouns relating to sports. When used, it refers to people of similar statuses of the noun that *-nom* is attached to. It can thus be translated as 'and others like X', or 'the likes of X', where X is used as a variable to represent the NP that *-nom* is attached to. From the data (see 38), *-nom* occurs with *rɛfiree* 'referee' and *lanseman* 'linesman' which refer to football officials.

5.1.4 Plural marking with the *-fɔɔ* suffix

The other way of marking plurals on borrowed words in Akan involves the use of (only) the *-fɔɔ* suffix. The first stem to which the suffix is attached is a full form English occupation noun *wɛda* 'welder', example (39). The other stem is a company name **Leva Bladɛse** 'Lever Brothers', example (40). The processes involved are two: plural formation with **wɛda** and the creation of an occupation noun involving more than one referent, since the referent that is used is the plural suffix **-fɔɔ**. Consider the following:

39. **wɛ́dà-*fɔ́ɔ̀***	40. **Lévá blàdɛ́sè-*fɔ́ɔ̀***
welder-PL	Lever brothers-PL
welders'	'workers of Lever Brothers'

Example (40) **Lévá blàdɛ́sè-*fɔ́ɔ̀*** 'Lever Brothers workers' above exhibits an instance of a borrowed English form plus its original English plural marker which has an Akan plural suffix attached. Such forms exhibit double plurality (see Amuzu 2009). In this study, this is given an alternative analysis. The word *'lévá blàdɛ́sè'* is construed as a singular concept (constituting a company name) by Akans. Thus, the *'se'* is treated as being part of the borrowed stem, and constituting a singular concept. Thus, Akan speakers pick the whole English form/base and attach the Akan suffixes (**-ni** or **-fɔɔ**)[5].

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[4]   The function of **-nom** in these loanwords can be likened to its role in a word like **nananom** 'chiefs'. Even though **-nom** is noted as a plural suffix for kinship terms, **nana** in **nananom** (translated as chiefs) is not a kinship term. Note that **nana** can be translated as either chief (non-kinship term) or grandparent (kinship term). **Nana** as 'chief' is not a kinship term, even though, **nana** as 'grandparent' is clearly a kinship term. However, whether **nana** is 'chief' or 'grandparent' it takes the well-known kinship plural marker **-nom**. We acknowledge the plausibility of the cultural and historical connection between these two meanings, however synchronically, they are considered as two separate words in the language.

[5]   This depends on the number of referents involved, whether one or more.

A profession noun '*lévá blàdɛ́sè-foɔ*' is created (animate entities: people who work with the company) out of an entity '*lévá blàdɛ́sè*' (inanimate entity: a place of work).

5.1.5 Plural marking with a combination of the prefix *a-* and the suffix *-foɔ*

Another way of marking plural on the borrowed stems involves the combination of both the prefix *a-* and the suffix *-foɔ*. In Akan, plural formation is done by attaching prefixes and suffixes to the stem and this is seen to apply to the borrowed words. The plural formation rule of the target language is followed. This implies that number marking with both prefixes and suffixes is evident in Akan borrowed words in terms of plural number, but not necessarily so for singular number marking. The marking of plurals on the borrowed nouns with only the prefix is not possible. As seen in examples (41) and (42), the borrowed stems *sogya* 'soldier' and *tikya* 'teacher' have the prefix *a-* and the suffix *-foɔ* because they are in the plural form. Note however that for borrowed nouns, the plural prefix is optional. Thus the speaker may choose to indicate plurality either by both the prefix *a-* and the suffix *-foɔ* or by the suffix *-foɔ* alone.

41. *à-sógyà-fóɔ̀*	42. *à-tikya-fóɔ̀*
PL-soldier-PL	PL-teacher-PL
'soldiers'	'teachers'

5.2 VERBAL INFLECTION

It is not only nouns that are borrowed. One can find verbs that are borrowed and nativised. Borrowed verbs are subjected to the various tense-aspect-mood-polarity inflections in Akan. This means that generally English stems are retained and the grammatical (tense, aspect, mood) forms of the target language (Akan) are attached. They include the marking of present, past, future tense, perfect and progressive aspects, and negation.

5.2.1 Present tense marking

Akan does not have an overt morpheme for marking present tense in the language. Thus, it is realised in the bare form of the verb in question. English morphologically marks the simple present tense only on verbs which occur with the third person. The morpheme used is the suffix *-s* which has the two spellings *-s* and *-es* and three spoken realisations (cf. section 5.1.2).

The stem of the borrowed verb is maintained when it expresses present tense. In other words, the verbs borrowed into Akan have their bare form retained when they mark present tense. The examples below attest to this:

43. Oduro **tàà̀kɪ́**   yie   wɔ   akansie   mu.
    Oduro tackle.PRS   well   COP   match   in

    'Oduro tackles well during football matches'

44. Kotoko-foɔ   **rɔ̀bʊ̀**   Haase-foɔ mmere   dodoɔ no   ara.
    Kotoko-PL   rob.PRS   Hearts-PL time   Adv   DET   DEM

    'Kotoko robs Hearts[6] most of the time'

45. A-tikyaa-foɔ   taa   **tɕɛ́ɛ̀kɪ̀**   wɔn   sukuu-foɔ.
    PL-teacher-PL   often   check.PRS   3PL   student-PL

    'Teachers often discipline their students'

5.2.2 Past tense marking

Past tense marking in Akan takes different forms, depending on whether the verb is followed by a complement or not, as well as the final sound that ends the verb (whether it is a consonant or vowel) (cf. Osam 2003; Adu-Amankwah 2003). When a verb is followed by a direct object or an adverbial, the past occurs in the form of lengthening of the final vowel or consonant (which has a low tone) of the verb stem. Some examples are; *bɔ̀-ɔ̀* 'hit', *yí-ì* 'took, and **pám̀-m̀** 'sewed'. When the verb is at clause final, the past is realised by a low tone vowel (/ì/ or /ɪ̀/) suffix that agree with the verb stem in terms of ATR harmony. Asante uses the *-yɛ* suffix to mark past in the same context. Examples include; *ká-è* / *káá-yɛ̀* 'remembered', *bú-ì* / *bùù-yɛ̀* 'broke' (cf. Osam 2003: 5–7).

In English, the past tense morpheme on regular verbs is the suffix *-ed*. This suffix has three spoken realisations: /ɪd/ (after bases ending in /d/ and /t/), /d/ (after bases ending in voiced sounds other than /d/) and /t/ (after bases ending in voiceless sounds other than /t/) (cf. Quirk and Greenbaum 2000).

In conformity to the rules in Akan, the past tense suffix assigned to Akan borrowed verbs is not specific. There is lengthening of the final vowel for verbs with direct objects or adverbials as attested in examples (46) *yúùsú-ú* and (48) *kòlàpòsí-í*. Additionally, in the Asante, the suffix **-yɛ** is used for verbs at clause final positions in examples (47) *yúùsúú-yɛ̀* 'used' and (49) *kòlàpòsíí-yɛ̀* 'collapsed'. Numbers (46) to (49) are exemplifications of the above observations:

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6   Kotoko and Hearts, formally known as Kumasi Asante Kotoko and Accra Hearts of Oak are the two top leading football teams in Ghana.

46. ... **yúùsú-*ú*** atere no
use-PST spoon DET

'… used the spoon'

47. ... **yúùsúu-*yɛ̀***
use-PST

'... used'

48. ... **kòlàpòsí-*i*** nnera
collapse-PST yesterday

'... collapsed yesterday'

49. ... kò**làpòsíí-** *yɛ̀*
collapse-PST

'... collapsed'

5.2.3 Future marking

The future marker in Akan is the prefix '*bɛ-*', and so, in order to indicate that an action or event will take place in the future, the prefix *bɛ-* is attached to the verb stem. Future time in English is not expressed through the use of bound morphemes as observed in Akan. Alternatively, several strategies are resorted to in denoting future time. Future time is depicted by way of modal auxiliaries, simple present forms or progressive forms. Such forms include '*will*', '*shall*', '*be going to +*
infinitive' and others (Quirk and Greenbaum 2000: 47-48).

The English verb stems that are borrowed into Akan are prefixed with the affix *bɛ-* when they are used to express future tense. Examples (50) and (51) attest to this:

50. Ɔ-*bɛ́*-sɔ́pɔ̀ɔ̀tò   **no**
3SG-FUT-support   3SG

'S/he will support him/her'

51. **Obi**   *bɛ́*-**wîìní** **pɛɛ**
somebody FUT-win definitely

'somebody will definitely win'

5.2.4 Perfect aspect marking

The perfect aspect in Akan is morphologically marked with the prefix *a-* (Dolphyne 1988). Examples of perfect inflection in Akan are the verbs **ɔ-*a*-kasa** 's/he has spoken', **yɛ-*a*-didi** 'we have eaten', and ***a*-muni** 'it has rolled'.

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English distinguishes between two perfect forms: the present and the past. The present is marked with have/has + the past participle (en) form of the verb, while the past is indicated by had + past participle form of the verb (cf. Carnie 2013). Examples are: 'Mary has eaten' and 'I had worked'.

English borrowed stems into Akan are prefixed with the Akan prefix '*a-*' to express the perfect aspect. From the data, we realise that the perfect marker and the verb it occurs with combine with the subject pronoun. This is because, in Akan, pronouns are considered as prefixes in such contexts. The affix for marking perfect aspect is prefixed to the verb stems. Examples (52) to (55) below illustrate this:

52. **m-*à*-dɛ̀kùlétí**
    1SG-PRF-decorate

    'I have decorated'

53. **wò-*à*-sɔ̀pɔ́ɔ̀tó**
    2SG-PRF-support

    'You have supported'

54. **ɔ̀-*à*-wîìní**
    3SG-PRF-win

    'S/he has won'

55. **mò-*à*-dwɔ́ɔ̀né**
    2PL-PRF-join

    'You have joined'

5.2.5 Progressive aspect marking

Akan uses the prefix *re-* to mark progressive aspect (cf. Agyekum 2010). In the Asante dialect, the vowel preceding the verb stem is lengthened as a substitute for the *re-* progressive aspect (cf. Osam 2004). Examples are found in the forms: **me-*re*-kasa** pronounced as /**mɪ-ɪ-kasa**/ 'I am talking', **ɔ-*re*-muni-muni** pronounced as /**ɔ-ɔ-muni-muni**/ 's/he is rolling' and **wo-*re*-didi** pronounced as /**wu-u-didi**/ 'you are eating'.

The progressive form in English is morphologically marked with the present tense form of the verb + *-ing* suffix. English marks progressive on dynamic verbs. These verbs include activity verbs, process verbs, verbs of bodily sensation, transitional event verbs and momentary verbs. Examples include '**slic-*ing*'**, '**chang-*ing*'**, '**feel-*ing*'**, '**arriv-*ing*'** and '**tap-*ing*'** (Quirk and Greenbaum 2000: 46–47).

The borrowed stem is prefixed with the progressive affix *re-* which is realised by lengthening of the pronoun in NP subject position. This is corroborated in Osam (2004), who observes that Asante speakers of Akan realise the progressive

prefix as lengthening of the vowel of the preceding syllable. In the case of the borrowed verb, the data show that pronouns, progressive aspect and the borrowed verbs combine as one form (consisting of different morphemes). This conforms to the Akan grammar rules. In the source language (English), however, only the verb and progressive suffix combine. The pronoun occurs separately from the verb (and its inflection). The examples in (56) to (59) below show how the progressive aspect is marked on Akan loan verbs.

56. **ɔ̀-ɔ̀-dɛ̀kùlétí**
    3SG-PROG-decorate

    'S/he is decorating'

57. **ɔ̀-ɔ̀-dɔ́ɔ̀gyí**
    3SG-PROG-dodge

    's/he is dodging'

58. **ɔ̀-ɔ̀-gyɛ́ɛ̀gyí**
    3SG-PROG-judge

    's/he is judging'

59. **ɔ̀-ɔ̀-táàmʊ́**
    3SG-PROG-time

    's/he is timing'

In example (56), the progressive prefix *ɔ-* combines with the borrowed verb *dɛ̀kùlétí* 'decorate' to realise an ongoing act of decoration. In (57), the prefix combines with another borrowed word *dɔ́ɔ̀gyé* 'dodge' to express an ongoing act of dodging. The same combination of the progressive prefix and borrowed verbs to express ongoing acts/events is accounted for in examples (58), and (59) above.

5.2.6 Negation

Akan has a negative particle *N-* which is prefixed to the stem of a verb. This prefix is homorganic with the initial consonant of the stem it is attached to. Negation in English is expressed through the use of the auxiliary verb + not; '**have not**', '**did not**', and '**was not**'. An example is '**don't worry**'. The infinitive and -*ing* forms are as well used: '**not to worry**', '**not working**' (Swan 1988: 215).

The data exhibit a similar trend as found in Akan. This is because the borrowed verbs are negated by prefixing them with the negative affix *N-*, which is homorganic with the initial consonant of the borrowed stem it is prefixed to. This is attested in the examples (60) to (63) below:

60. **Kɔtɔkɔ   n-taa   *ǹ-lúùsù***
    Kotoko   NEG-ADV   NEG-lose

    'Kotoko does not often lose their matches'

61. **Yɛ-ɲ̀-yúùsù   kora   biom**
    3PL-NEG-use   calabash   again

    'We don't use calabash anymore'

62. **Ataadeɛ   no   *ŋ̀-kɔ̀ɔ́sʊ́*   saa**
    dress   DET   NEG-cost   DEG

    'The dress is not too expensive'

63. **Me-*m̀-móòdù*   ɛno   bi**
    1SG NEG-mould   3SG.INANIM   some/kind

    'I don't mould that kind/type'

In (60) the negative combines with the verbs *lúùsù* 'loose' which begin with the alveolar lateral /l/. Because of that, the negative prefix which precedes these verbs also has the alveolar place of articulation. In the case of example (61), the verb *yúùsú* 'use' also takes a palatal nasal in pronunciation due to the palatal approximant /y/.

From the discussion above, loan nouns and verbs take Akan morphology. Akan speakers, in the borrowing process, retain English stems while all grammatical forms are taken from Akan. These forms include the singular and plural person prefixes and suffixes, the past tense suffix and the plural, perfect, progressive and the negative prefixes.

6. SEMANTIC DOMAINS

For the domain of borrowing, it was found out that Akan has borrowed from education, governance, sports (particularly football), agriculture, religion (Christianity), politics, health, security, and other specialized fields such as: welding, sewing, shoe making, hairdressing, among others.

For education, the areas in which words have been borrowed include official names, uniforms, and stationery. The specific areas within sports that Akan has borrowed words from include names of football officials and football terminology. In agriculture, the areas of borrowing include machinery, farm tools, and farming materials. Specific areas in welding that words have been borrowed into Akan include welding tools, safety materials and profession names. From the domain of sewing, Akan has borrowed lexical items relating to different fabric names, as well as dress types and styles.

With hairdressing, Akan has borrowed words of different product names, hair styles, relaxing creams, different wigs and weave-on. Politics has specific items

such as party names, electoral officials, and electoral terminology. Akan words borrowed from the health sector comprise health practitioners and names of medicines. There are also names of ailments and health facility names. Areas within the security domain include official names and names of ammunitions.

Sport (football) was the domain that recorded the highest number of loanwords. Getting native Akan words to express the various football terms is a very difficult task for the Akan speaker. As a known norm, language speakers always go in for the easy way of doing things rather than the difficult ones; they would rather borrow the English words along with their meanings than spend effort to create Akan versions of the football terminologies.

The motivations for borrowing of lexical items from the source language (English) into Akan as observed in the study are; to fill lexical and semantic gaps, for reasons of simplicity and also for prestige. This is because some of the loanwords had no equivalent indigenous Akan words. Examples of words loaned to fill lexical and semantic gaps include; ***rɛkɔso*** 'records', ***rɔba*** 'rubber', ***durɔm*** 'drum (i.e. barrel)', ***nɔma*** 'number', ***galɔn*** 'galon', ***rɛfirii*** 'referee', ***bɔga puruufu*** 'burglar proof' and ***faatiri*** 'factory'. Other loanwords had Akan equivalents but these were expressed in the form of serial verb construction (SVC), reduplication and phrases, therefore simple lexical English equivalents were used. For example ***kolapuse*** 'collapse' replaces ***twa hwe*** which is an SVC. Some loanwords such as; ***taaki*** 'attack', ***dɛkuleti*** 'decorate', ***taamo*** 'time' and ***atikyafoɔ*** 'teachers', are used instead of the reduplicated Akan forms; ***taataa, siesie***, ***tetɛ*** and ***akyerɛkyerɛfoɔ***. The final sets of examples are loanwords that are used instead of their equivalent Akan phrases. They comprise; ***yuusu*** 'use', ***gyɛɛgye*** 'judge', ***sɔpɔɔto*** 'support' and ***nkɔɔso*** 'it does cost much/ it is cheap' instead of ***'fa biibi yɛ***, ***bu* atɛn**, ***taa akyi*** and ***ne boɔ nyɛ den*** respectively.

7. SUMMARY

This paper has shown that loanwords in Akan undergo phonological and morphological adjustments. The phonological adjustments include vowel harmony, simplification of vowels that are not found in the Akan sound system, and syllable structure modification strategies (deletion and insertion). On the typology of epenthetic vowels as presented by Uffmann (2001) and Lombardi (2003), this work places Akan in the category which favours the high front and back vowels, /i, ɪ/ and /u, ʊ/ on the grounds of vowel harmony as well as the rounding or spreading qualities of the vowel sounds contained in the borrowed stem. In the area of morphology, we have established that borrowing of nouns and verbs is restricted to English noun and verb stem with the various inflections taken from Akan. Among the complex Akan inflections, only few of them are attached to the borrowed words. Those that are attached to the borrowed nouns are the affixes ***-ni***, ***-foɔ***, ***(a-)-foɔ***, and -***nom***. For the borrowed verbs, the affixes which are attached to the stems are syllable final vowel lengthening, the Akan future

prefix *bɛ-*, the *a-* perfective prefix, the *re-* progressive prefix, the homorganic negative nasal prefix *N-* and the *bɛ-* motional prefix. From the above, we attest that nominal and verbal inflections on the borrowed stems come from the target language-Akan. Finally, we note Akan speakers borrow English words to fill semantic gaps, for simplicity and also for prestige.

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