# The internal structure of nouns and noun phrases

Nouns	Prefixes	Suffixes
Animate (groups) Kinship		- fo(ɔ) - nom
Singular	e, ε, a, o, ο, m, n -	- e, ε, ο, ɔ after oral high vowels
Plural	a, m, n -	- e, ε, ο, ɔ after oral high vowels

The nominal prefix consists of one of the following vowels:

e- (or ñ-, depending)

e- Dän (din) 'name'

ñ- müé [ñàmîé] 'rice'

o- (or õ-, depending on vowel harmony)

o- nuaá 'sibling'

õ- wõá 'snake'

a-: a- dwuáma 'work'

n-: n- sæé 'alcoholic beverage'

Some nouns of this class occur without an overt prefix.

kaáaà 'car'

Very often, though not always, the prefix of the singular form and of the plural form of a noun are different:

#### 2. Stem + suffix

A subclass of nouns denoting humans, mostly serving to identify a person's origin, his or her membership in a group, or his or her function in society, are composed of the nominal stem followed by the nominal suffix -foo

Some nouns have both a prefix and a suffix

a- buro- -foo 'white persons'

Noun suffixation has several functions:

- -nominalisation different types- e.g. nomen agentis
- diminutives
- -numerus for kinship noun

Note: Akan nominal inflection is well documented and exemplified, and might be helpful for learning nominal subtypes such as kinship terms, diminutives, possessive phrases and most likely more.

#### **Pronoun**

### Pronominal clitics versus possessive pronouns

me occurring before a noun with the meaning 'my' is written as a separate word:

me dän (din)

my name

me occurring at the beginning of a verb and meaning 'I' is written in one word together with the verb. It is called a personal prefix.

me- firi [mfiri]

### I come from/leave

However when the noun that follows starts with an 'a' the possessive is cliticized (here only shown for the singular):

English	Akan (Twi)	Example
1P.SG	Me	M'adaka My box
2P.SG	Wo	W'afuo Your farm

3P.SG (animate)	Ne	<b>N'adwene</b> His/her mind
3P.SG (neutral)	Ne	N'ani Its eyes

### The personal pronouns:

PERSON/NUMBER	Akan (Twi)	Example with a person pronoun clitic
1st person singular	Ме	<b>Me</b> didii ntεm I ate early
2nd person singular	Wo	Wosuu nna dodoo sɛn? How many days did you cry?
3rd person singular	Эno	Orekotwerε nsohwε He/she is going to write an exam
3rd person singular neutral	Eno	Eforo dua It climbs trees
1st person plural	Yεn	<b>Υε</b> asi gyinaeε We have concluded
2nd person plural	Мо	<b>Mo</b> asesa kwan no You have changed the way
3rd person plural	Won	<b>W</b> otu anadwo They fly at night

The Akan noun phrase

# [(POSS) NOUN (ADJ\*)(DET|NUM) (QUANT) (DEM) (Srel)]

Figure 1 Syntactic Template of the Akan noun phrase

Not further shown, but note that **adjectives** agree with nouns in number.

### Ataades tuntum feefe yi ye me dea

"This beautiful black dress is mine"

ataades tuntu fsefs yi ye me dea

dress black beautiful DEF is my thing

N ADJ ADJ DEM COP PNposs N

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# More Complexity

### Nominalization:

Noun from verb/adj.: normal pref+suff + suff: - ni/ fo(o)

### Partitives:

Koàfàì tố neà kaáaà noá 'bä. Kofi sells some of his cars

AliAkan (Universität Zürich)

http://www.akan.org/akan\_cd/ALIAKAN/course/U2-sound.wave/KOFITONNEKAANOBI-201298.WAV

Kofi tonn ne kaa no bi Kofi sold some of his cars