

# SEMANTIC DIVERSITY IN EWE WORDS<sup>1</sup>

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After mentioning orthographic words in Ewe (which may be either less than or more than lexical items), the sublayers of semantic analysis are presented with their detailed components. Then, those semantic categories which are realized by grammatical items in Ewe are specified in general terms.

Attention is then focussed on the four lexical word classes. ADJECTIVES usually realize states, usually without any overt semantic thing (apart from the qualified noun). VERBS may realize states, processes, or actions, with which varying numbers of semantic things are obligatory as participants, even if covert. Thanks to nominalization, NOUNS may realize exactly the same as the verbs just mentioned on the one hand; while on the other hand they may realize semantic things of various kinds, combined with a considerable variety of overt supporting predicates and things; some single nouns may even realize two or more semantic propositions in various relations to each other. ADVERBS may realize single circumstantial roles in a proposition, or they may realize some other proposition in the background of the main one.

A few examples are finally given of the same semantic structure expressed by more than one different word of different word classes.

Après avoir évoqué les mots orthographiques en ewe (lesquels peuvent ou non dépasser les lexèmes) les couches sous-jacentes de l'analyse sémantique sont présentés avec leurs composants détaillés. Ensuite, les catégories sémantiques qui donnent lieu à des unités grammaticales sont spécifiées en termes généraux.

L'accent est ensuite mis sur les quatre classes lexicales renfermant des lexèmes. Les ADJECTIFS désignent des états et sont souvent sans aucune chose sémantique explicite (en dehors du substantif déterminé). Les VERBES peuvent désigner des états, des procès, ou des actions par rapport auxquels des nombres variables des choses sémantiques figurent obligatoirement comme actants, même si ceux-ci sont implicites. Grâce à la nominalisation, les SUBSTANTIFS peuvent désigner exactement ce que désignent les verbes que nous venons d'évoquer; d'autre part, les substantifs peuvent désigner des choses sémantiques variables en liaison avec plusieurs types de prédicats et des choses explicites qui les accompagnent; certains substantifs individuels peuvent même représenter deux propositions sémantiques ou plus entretenant entre eux des rapports différents. Les ADVERBES peuvent jouer des rôles circonstanciels uniques dans une proposition ou peuvent fonctionner comme une autre proposition suivant la proposition principale.

Enfin, nous donnons quelques exemples où une même structure sémantique est exprimée par des lexèmes différents relevant de classes lexicales différentes.

## 0. INTRODUCTION

For the sake of linguistic analysis, a language can be conceived of as consisting of three major layers or levels (Halliday 1970, 1978; Chafe 1970; Leech 1981) given in (1) and diagrammed in (2).

### (1) SUBSTANCE

graphological level	'spelling'
phonological level	'sounding'

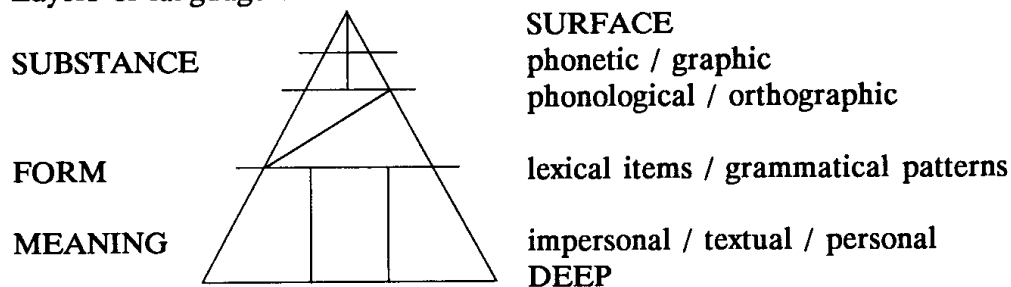
### FORM

lexical and grammatical levels	'wording'
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### MEANING

semantic level (with sublayers)	'meaning'
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### (2) Layers of language structure



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From the full grammatical framework for Ewe, in terms of the sentence, clause, phrase, word, and morpheme ranks (Ansre 1966; Duthie 1988, 1994), we can establish the following WORD CLASSES in terms of common syntactic patterning of words within phrases. These classes fall into two broad groupings, one whose classes contain (closed-class) GRAMMATICAL ITEMS, and the other whose classes contain (open-set) LEXICAL ITEMS.

The two broad groupings of word classes for Ewe are in (3).

(3)	GRAMMATICAL ITEMS	LEXICAL ITEMS
<i>functioning within:</i>		
the verbal phrase	verbal auxiliaries	verb
the adjunct phrase	preposition	adverb
the nominal phrase	pronoun, quantifier, demonstrative pluralizer, intensifier, locative	noun, adjective
<i>as particles within:</i>		
the nominal phrase	possessive, linker, topicalizer, focalizer	
the clause	negative, mood-marker, conjunction	
the sentence	question-marker, addressive	(interjection)

The word classes of lexical items will be treated individually in four later sections in respect of their semantic complexity and diversity. Section 2, however, will deal with the grammatical items in relation to the overall semantic framework, which is there displayed as a point of reference for all the following sections.

## 1. WORD STRUCTURES

### 1.1 PHONOLOGICAL STRUCTURE OF WORDS

Although our interest in this paper is in the semantic structure of the words in the above listed word classes, the same words can be studied from other points of view. For example, we could study their phonological structure.

We would find that several grammatical items have the minimum phonological structure, consisting of only tone and nucleus, symbolized TV, i.e., some auxiliaries, some pronouns, one demonstrative and focus-marker, part of the negative, one mood- and question-marker.

The commonest phonological structure, consisting of margin and tone and nucleus, CTV, covers almost all the other grammatical items, except quantifier, some intensifiers, some locatives, some conjunctions and addressives.

The phonological structure of VERBS is given in (4) and excludes verbs consisting of two separable morphemes such as *ɲlɔ bé*.

(4)	CTV	CCTV	CTV CTV	CTV CCTV
	tó	dzrà	sú bó	gòglò

ADJECTIVES have the same four phonological structures: *gã*, *swɛ*, *yéye*, *goglo*, plus the structures in (5). (This excludes adjectives compounded from more than one other word class.)

(5)	CCTV CTV	CTV TV	CTV CTV TV	CTV CTV CTV
	tsrá lé	nyú í gba a	bɔ bɔ ɛ tótóe	vónóvó

ADVERBS have the same structures as in (4) and (5): *tsã*, *pra*, *kábá*, *fũũ*, *kpao*, *kotoo*, *tsakpoli* plus the structures in (6). There are also repetitions of several of these structures for the purpose of intensification.

- |     |       |         |           |           |        |
|-----|-------|---------|-----------|-----------|--------|
| (6) | CTVC  | CTVVV   | CCTV CTVV | CTV CCTVV | TV CTV |
|     | kpa m | v í í í | kli tsaa  | te gblee  | á z̄s  |

The commonest phonological structure of NOUNS is in (7), but the prefix is also found in other structures as in (8).

- (7) TV CTV  
a tí  
e te  
ŋ dɔ

- |     |            |         |                 |
|-----|------------|---------|-----------------|
| (8) | TV CCTV    | TV CTVC | TV CTV CTV      |
|     | a kpl̄s    | a tam   | a gbeli         |
|     | e fia      |         | cf. a kpɔ kpl̄s |
|     |            |         | a hu hoe        |
|     | CTV CTV    |         | a bleŋ gɔ       |
|     | ye vú      |         | CTV CTV CTV     |
|     | nȳɔnu     |         | vi vi t í       |
|     | cf. fe tri |         | li li kpo       |
|     | ko klo     |         | cf. klo sa lo   |
|     | yle tí     |         | gɔ vi na        |

In other words, the phonological structure of nouns is very diverse, even excluding all nouns derived from other sources (which are also very numerous and diverse).

## 1.2 MORPHOLOGICAL STRUCTURE OF WORDS

As we proceed down the rankscale of grammatical units, examining the structure of each unit in terms of the unit below, we expect to analyse the structure of Ewe words in terms of morphemes.

We find some words consisting of only a *nucleus* morpheme which includes virtually all grammatical items plus **ɔ** 'eat', **gã** 'big', and **kábá** 'early'. We find others consisting of *one nucleus repeated* as in (9) and some consisting of two, three, or four *different nucleuses* as in (10).

- |      |                                     |                             |
|------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (9)  | l̄s̄l̄s̄                            | love                        |
|      | pé <p>́</p> pé <p>́</p> pé <p>́</p> | exactly                     |
| (10) | tasivi-nyruivi                      | cousin                      |
|      | wúí-eve                             | twelve                      |
|      | alafá eve-bláet̄s̄-vɔ ene           | two hundred and thirty-four |

Although several of these examples have actual morphemes filling their nucleuses, we can also find rankshifted (downgraded, embedded) words filling nucleuses, instead of morphemes. Indeed, nucleuses can also be filled by rankshifted phrases and clauses.

Instead of one nucleus, however, we can also find the structure of a word consisting of *prenucleus and nucleus* as in (11). In the examples the nucleus is italicized. Notice that the prenucleus can readily be filled by rankshifted phrases and clauses.

- |      |          |             |
|------|----------|-------------|
| (11) | a-t í    | tree        |
|      | ade-lá   | hunter      |
|      | ga-t̄    | rich man    |
|      | dɔwɔ f̄é | workplace   |
|      | gbeme-lá | bush animal |
|      | sisí-lá  | fugitive    |

We can also find words consisting of *nucleus plus postnucleus*, again sometimes with rankshifted items as in (12).

- (12) *kpó dǎ* look  
*blá-eve* twenty  
*ame-gǎ* big man

There are also a few words consisting of *prenucleus plus nucleus plus postnucleus* as in (13).

- (13) *afɔ-wu-i* sock  
*fefé-nú-i* plaything

The detailed study of Ewe DERIVATIONAL MORPHOLOGY is quite complex; but an outline framework of the results of such a study is given above. Another study can be made of the DERIVATIONAL PROCESSES involved. For the noun, these are reduplication, permutation, compounding, affixation, tone change, and various combinations of these processes (Ofori 1989).

Our concern in this paper is not with the phonological or morphological structures of Ewe words. We have outlined these structures to demonstrate that these approaches to word structure are different from each other and constitute a valid study. Our main concern is also different: the SEMANTIC STRUCTURE of Ewe words.

### 1.3 ORTHOGRAPHY

Since the layman thinks of words only in terms of the conventional orthography of the language, we ought to make clear that orthographic words and grammatical words (as defined within the grammatical description of a language) may or may not coincide in any particular case.

Many verbs, nouns, adjectives, and adverbs are written as one orthographic word, at least when they are used in isolation as in *ɔ* 'eat', *atí* 'tree', *gǎ* 'big', and *kábá* 'quick'.

The same is true of prepositions, some pronouns, some quantifiers, intensifiers, and most locatives as shown in (14), and NP particles, most conjunctions, and addressives as in (15).

- (14) *le* at  
*nye* I  
*gbǎto* first  
*ɔ́tɔ́* self  
*dzí* on

- (15) *fě* -s  
*kplé* and  
*eye* and  
*né* if  
*ló* I say

But most verbal auxiliaries, many pronouns, the pluralizer, one focus marker, the mood markers, and the question sentence-particle, are always orthographically attached to some other grammatical word.

In the conventional Ewe orthography, we often find that one orthographic word may include *more than one grammatical word*, or even more than one grammatical phrase as in (16).

- |                    |                  |                   |                   |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| (16) <i>ameawó</i> | <i>viwòwo</i>    | <i>míegblɔna</i>  | <i>yeagahee</i>   |
| 'the persons'      | 'your children'  | 'we say (HAB)'    | 'he'll repair it' |
| N d pl             | N[P]pl           | P /V x            | P /f r V /P       |
| = 3 gram. words    | = 3 gram. words  | = 3 gram. words   | = 5 gram. words   |
| = NP               | = NP             | = NP/VP           | = NP/VP/NP        |
| = 1 gram. phrase   | = 1 gram. phrase | = 2 gram. phrases | = 3 gram. phrases |

In these and many other possible examples, we find that the orthographic word contains *more than one grammatical word*, and this is our concern throughout this paper.

In contrast to the above, we also find Ewe orthographic words which are *less than one grammatical word* in length as in (17).

(17)	<b>mé . . . ò</b>	<b>tógbó bé</b>
	not – negative clause particle	although – subordinating conjunction
	1 gram. word	1 gram. word

Similarly, there are several Ewe orthographic words which are *less than one lexical item* in length as in (18).

(18)	Verbs	<b>ɲlɔ be</b>	forget
		<b>dzra ɖo</b>	prepare, improve
	Nouns	<b>evegbe gbɔgbɔ</b>	speaking Ewe
		<b>afɔkpa xoxo dzrala</b>	secondhand shoe seller
		(cf. <b>afɔkpadzrala</b>	shoe seller)
		<b>zɔzɔ kple amegãwo</b>	keeping company with big men
		<b>dukɔme ɲkuɖodzi ɲkekenyui</b>	national commemoration day
	Verb + Noun		
		<b>fo nu</b>	speak
		<b>ɖe gbe</b>	order
		<b>sɔ gbɔ</b>	be plenty
		<b>sẽ ɲu</b>	be strong

There are also essentially idiomatic collocations of different word classes such as **de afɔ atukpa me** 'die (put foot bottle in)'.  
 There are also essentially idiomatic collocations of different word classes such as

## 2. THE REALIZATION OF MEANINGS BY GRAMMATICAL ITEMS

Since our concern is with the expression of meaning in Ewe using items from the word classes listed in §1, we now go on to elaborate the details of the semantic layer of language and its sublayers (Fawcett 1980) (left column) combined with the Ewe expression of individual meanings (right column), at least in terms of word classes of grammatical items (Duthie 1980). (Lexical items will be treated in detail in the subsequent sections of the paper.)

(19)	The IMPERSONAL sublayer of meaning	
	Category	<i>Ewe realization</i>
	DESCRIPTIVE:	(see Lyons 1981, Beekman et al. 1981, Chafe 1970, Longacre 1976)
	States, Processes, Actions:	adjectives, verbs
	Things:	nouns, (pronouns)
	Quantification:	quantifier, pluralizer
	Participant roles:	(word order), prepositions, locatives, linker <b>-fě</b> 's'
	Aspects:	auxiliaries, (adverbs)
	Manner, Degree:	adverbs, preposition <b>kplé</b> 'with', auxiliary <b>ka-</b> 'slightly'
	NEGATIVE:	clause particle <b>mé . . . o</b> , prefix <b>ma-</b>
	INTERUNIT:	(see Longacre 1976, Grimes 1975)
	Parallel: between things	linker <b>kplé</b> , <b>alo</b> 'and, or', verb <b>nyé</b> 'be'
	between propositions:	conjunctions <b>éye</b> , <b>gaké</b> , <b>alo</b> , <b>abé . . . ené</b> 'and, but, or, as'
	Sequential:	conjunctions <b>ési</b> , <b>né</b> , <b>élabéna</b> ; <b>éyata</b> , <b>hafí</b> , <b>bé</b> , <b>né</b> 'when, if, because; therefore, before, so that, in order to'
	Embedded: as content:	preposition <b>héna</b> 'for', locative <b>ta</b> 'because'
	as qualifying:	conjunction <b>bé</b> 'that', relative <b>si</b> , (adjectives)

- (20) The TEXTUAL sublayer of meaning (see Halliday 1970, 1978)
- MODAL: auxiliaries **té ɲu, nyá** 'can, certainly'  
clause particle **ná-** (subjunctive), (adverbs)
- TOPICAL: particle **-lá** (terminal), intensifier **-ya** 'as for'  
auxiliary **nyá-** (passive)
- INFORMATIONAL:
- Focus (new): particle **-yé, ɖe-**, demonstrative **-aɖe** 'a', quantifiers  
**ɖesiade** 'every', intensifiers
- Phoric (given):
- Cataphoric: pronoun **é-** 'it'
- Logophoric: pronoun **ye-**
- Anaphoric: pronoun **é-, wó-** **-to** 's/he/it, they', (possessed)  
demonstrative **-lá, si** 'the, who/which'
- Deictic: quantifier **búbu** 'other', auxiliary **ga-** 'again'  
intensifier **hã, tɔgbe, neném, boɲú** 'also, such, such, rather'
- Homophoric: pronoun **me, mí, nè/wò, mi** 'I, we, you, you'  
demonstrative **sia, má** 'this, that', auxiliary **le/nɔ** 'is/was'  
demonstrative **lá** 'the', pronoun **wó** 'they'
- (21) The PERSONAL sublayer of meaning
- EXPRESSIVE: adverbs, adjectives, interjections, auxiliary **katse, va,**  
**kpatu** 'dare, eventually, hurriedly'
- INTERACTIONAL:
- Illocutionary function: sentence particle **- `**, **-à, mähã** (question), clause particle  
**né-, ná-** (imperative, subjunctive)  
demonstrative **-ka** 'wh-', quantifier **nénie** 'how much?'
- Politeness, formality: sentence particles **ló, ló `**, **là, sea, tɔɔ** (addressive)

### 3. ADJECTIVES

Having shown in general terms (§2) how the various components of meaning may be expressed by Ewe grammatical items, we are now in a position to turn our attention to the expression of meaning by one word class of lexical items.

ADJECTIVES in Ewe may be grammatically defined as occupying the place in nominal-phrase structure immediately after the nucleus and just before the quantifier.

Some adjectives are always and only adjectives, while some may be derived from verbs (usually by reduplication plus suffixation) and others may be derived from brief clauses (with hardly any alteration). Several adjectives can be found, often with slight alteration, functioning as adverbs in adjunct phrase structure (see §6).

Semantically speaking, an adjective realizes the central state or process of a proposition which qualifies a semantic thing participating in some role in another proposition. In other words, virtually all adjectives can be re-expressed as relative clauses.

Usually the only participant involved is expressed by the noun to which the adjective is attached. (For participants, see Chafe 1970 and Longacre 1976.) Its role is often that of *patient* as shown in (22) and sometimes that of *experiencer* or *agent* as in (23).

- (22) **yibɔɔ** black      **tsrale** lanky      **gbaa** flat  
**gã** big      **lolo** large      **didi** long  
**kókó** tall      **kúkú** dead      **xóxó** old  
**yéye** new      **tótóe** grown, bushy
- (23) **léɖɔ** ill      **gbadu** destructive

A second participant may also be implied in the case-frame, viz. *patient plus experiencer* as in (24), *experiencer plus goal* as in (25), or *goal plus agent* as in (26).

- (24) **nyúi** good (for someone)  
**bəbəe** soft  
**véví** important  
**dzetugbe** beautiful (in the eyes of someone)
- (25) **dəmenyótó** kind (towards someone)
- (26) **kpakpe** (figure) carved (by someone)

Rarely is any participant made explicit in the adjective itself; it could be *patient*, or *content*, or *goal*, given respectively in (27).

- (27) **nyónu abə didi aɖe** a long-armed woman (**abə** 'arm' made explicit)  
**nyánú** wise (know thing)  
**lɔame** loving (love person)

An explicit negative may be involved as in **mavə** 'eternal (not finish)' and **malɔame** 'unloving'.

Occasionally, an adjective may realize the circumstantial roles of *manner* or *degree* in certain cases where abstract nouns are involved as shown in (28).

- (28) **dəwəwə sesiē** hard work  
**də gā** great famine  
**takpókpe nyúi** good solution

#### 4. VERBS

While adjectives in Ewe are relatively few in number and infrequent in texts, VERBS are relatively many and occur one or more times in every clause. While an adjective is always in a subordinate, qualifying position, both semantically and grammatically, the verb fills the nucleus of the verbal phrase, which itself fills the nucleus of the clause, thereby being very important at two grammatical ranks, with corresponding semantic importance.

4.1 Semantically speaking, there is some overlap between verbs and adjectives in the expression of states and processes. Several adjectives are actually derived from verbs of the same meaning, usually by reduplication and suffixation.

Another semantic similarity is that neither the verb nor the adjective overtly contains their participating things within their own structure. Rather, the participants themselves appear overtly in neighboring words (functioning as subjects, objects, etc.). While adjectives may have only one or two accompanying participants (see §3), verbs may have one, two, three, four, or even more participants (especially in the case of verbs expressing action-processes), not all of which need appear overtly.

- (29) Verbs requiring only one accompanying participant, a one-place case-frame, or predicate
- |                      |                              |
|----------------------|------------------------------|
| STATES AND PROCESSES | ACTIONS AND ACTION-PROCESSES |
|----------------------|------------------------------|

*with Patient*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>bə</b> 'be plenty', <b>lolo</b> 'be big', <b>dzo</b> 'be straight'<br><b>susə</b> 'remain', <b>le, li</b> 'exist', <b>bú</b> 'be lost'<br><b>vú</b> 'be torn', <b>gé</b> 'fall', <b>tró</b> 'turn', <b>klé</b> 'shine'<br><b>fli</b> 'break', <b>və</b> 'be finished', <b>vā</b> 'ferment'<br><b>tsí</b> 'grow' | <i>with Agent</i><br><b>tó</b> 'stop', <b>xatsa</b> 'coil'<br><b>gbə</b> 'breathe', <b>fé</b> 'play'<br><b>bu</b> 'turn over' |
|--|---|

*with Experiencer*

- kú** 'die', **tsrə** 'perish', **fɔ** 'wake'

- (30) Verbs requiring two accompanying participants, a two-place case-frame, or predicate

*with Patient and Experiencer*

(the latter often covert)

nyó 'be good', fá 'be cool'

sésě 'be hard', vé 'be bitter'

*with Patient and Range/Source/Goal*

le, nɔ 'is/was-at', te d̥é 'be near'

mlɔ́ 'lie', tsó 'be from', dzɔ́ 'drop'

*with Experiencer and Patient/Content/Goal*

nyá 'know', kpó 'see', hiā 'need'

se kpɔ́ (hear see) 'smell', lɔ́ 'love'

ŋlɔ́ bé 'forget', dí 'seek', vɔ́ 'fear'

*with Agent and another —**and Patient* tsó 'take', xlě 'count, read'

zā 'use', te kpó 'test', vú 'tear'

dzra d̥ó 'prepare', d̥u 'eat'

*and Source:* tsó, dzó 'leave'*and Goal:* vā 'come', yi 'go'

ge d̥é 'enter', srɔ́ 'imitate', wɔ́ 'make'

yó 'fill', káfu 'praise'

*and Range:* zɔ́ 'walk', dzo 'fly'

be 'hide', tsa 'wander', tó 'pass'

*and Instrument:* ku 'scoop, drive'

do (gbe) 'utter (voice)'

*and Experiencer:* nyɔ́ 'waken'

súbó 'serve'

- (31) Verbs requiring three accompanying participants, a three-place case-frame, or predicate

*with Agent and Experiencer and Content/Patient*

gblɔ́, bé say biá se ask d̥ó utter d̥e fiá reveal

ná give xɔ́ receive dzɔ́ contribute

*with Agent and Patient and Source/Goal/Range*

fi steal d̥e remove nya drive out de, da put

d̥i bury si smear gblě abandon d̥o send

yó fill' hé mend gba roof

*with Agent and Instrument and Goal*

fo beat ŋlɔ́ write

- (32) Verbs requiring four accompanying participants, a four-place case-frame, or predicate

*with Agent and Experiencer and Patient and Degree (=price)*

dzra sell fle buy

4.2 The previous section has listed a number of verbs which, taken on their own, seem to require certain accompanying participants. But we also find several collocations of verb plus noun, or of noun plus verb in that sequence, which express the same kind of semantic content as the single verbs mentioned above. These are shown in (33).

- (33) STATES AND PROCESSES

*with Patient* sɔ́ agbɔ́ 'be plenty'

wɔ́ togbe 'be hilly (make hill)'

*with Experiencer:* sē ŋu 'be strong'

d̥i d̥e eme 'relax (sink into it)'

d̥i fo 'be satisfied (fill belly)'

kpó dzidzɔ́ 'be happy (see joy)'

dɔ́ alɔ́ 'sleep', ku dr̥ɛ 'dream'

nɔ́ ŋudzɔ́ 'be awake'

dɔ́ wu (ame) 'be hungry (belly kill person)'

- ACTIONS AND PROCESSES

*with Agent* le dɔ́ dzi 'be at work'

dze agagba 'try', wɔ́ dɔ́ 'do work'

wɔ́ dzaa 'do carefully', d̥e abla 'hurry'

d̥u azā 'celebrate (eat festival)'

*with Agent and Range* fo fu 'assemble'*with Agent and Experiencer*

kɔ́ dzi 'open heart (to)', da gbe 'heal'

kpe d̥e ŋuti 'help', zi dzi 'force (press top)'



<p><i>with Patient and Range</i> fo xlā ‘surround (beat circle)’</p> <p><i>with Patient and Experiencer</i> le . . . así ‘belong to (be in hand)’</p> <p><i>with Experiencer and Content</i> ɔo ŋkú édzí ‘remember (cast eye its top)’ tsóe bé ‘suppose (take it that)’ bu tame ‘consider (think in head)’ kpó mó ‘hope (see way)’</p>	<p>ɔu dzi (eat top) ‘defeat’ ɔe srɔ́ ‘marry (take wife)’</p> <p><i>with Agent and Source</i> do gó ‘go out’</p> <p><i>with two Agents</i> dó go ‘meet’, kpé ‘meet’</p> <p><i>with Agent and Instrument</i> le tsi (be in water) ‘bathe’</p> <p><i>with Agent and Content</i> wɔ susú ‘decide (make thought)’ <i>with A, E, C</i> fo nu ‘speak (beat mouth)’ ɔo ŋu ‘answer’, biá ta se ‘interrogate (ask head hear)’ ɔe éme ‘explain (remove its inside)’ <i>with A, P, E</i> fo agba ná ‘play record for’ sa vɔ́ ‘sacrifice’ <i>with A, I, C/G</i> ɔe gbe ‘order (utter voice)’ fo tú ‘shoot (beat gun)’ <i>with A, P, G</i> ve ‘bring’</p>
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4.3 As we have just seen, most verbs (and some verb-noun collocations) represent semantic states, processes, or actions with varying numbers of accompanying participant things.

But there are also some verbs and verb-noun collocations which express other meanings of various kinds.

Those verbs which are changing into prepositions (‘verbids’, Ansre 1963) tend to indicate *participant roles* as in (34).

(34)	Experiencer	ná	give, for
	Goal	ɔ́e, ɔ́o	reach, to
	Source	tsó	(be-)from
	Range	tó	pass, through
		le	(be-)at

Several verb-noun collocations and some verbs express various *aspects* as in (35).

(35)	inceptive	de así . . . me	(put hand in)
		dze . . . gɔme	begin (land on)
		va . . . me	come about (come in)
	durative	le . . . dzí	continue (be . . . on)
	frequentative	ake	again
	perfective	dzudzɔ	stop
		wu . . . nu	complete

*Time* itself may be expressed by noun-verb collocations as in (36).

(36)	ɔu ke	day-break
	zã dó	night-fall
	ga asiéke fo	nine o’clock (bell nine strike)

Some verbs, especially nyé ‘be’, as well as zu ‘become’ and so ‘be equal’, are normally used to express the *parallel interunit relation* of APPPOSITION between semantic things and of EQUIVALENCE between semantic propositions, the latter expressed by nominalizations as in (37).

- |      |                         |                  |                          |                         |
|------|-------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| (37) | <b>núnána, atíke</b>    | gift, medicine   | <b>wó, amekúkúwó</b>     | they, corpses           |
|      | <b>wò, dada</b>         | you, pride       | <b>wò, tonye</b>         | you, mine               |
|      | <b>aḡatsi, tṣísí</b>    | tears, flood     | <b>Eyadema, dukplólá</b> | Eyadema, president      |
|      | <b>asrafo, dukṣmevi</b> | soldier, citizen | <b>ésia, vodada</b>      | this (situation), fault |
|      | <b>núwṓna, kpódéjú</b>  | action, example  |                          |                         |

In each case, the relationship between the nouns is the same, whether the verb is overt in an example or not.

A sequential interunit relation between propositions may be expressed by the verbs **tsó** 'take' for *means* and **ná (héná)** 'for' for *purpose* as in (38).

- |      |                                 |  |
|------|---------------------------------|--|
| (38) | <b>tsó asrafonyényé do vṓvṓ</b> | use status-as-a-soldier to-instil fear |
|      | <b>dzimetṓtrṓ héná núvṓkeke</b> | repentance for forgiveness             |
|      | <b>ná bé</b>                    | bring it about that                    |

The original verb-noun collocation **té ḡú** 'be able' has virtually become a verbal auxiliary, expressing *weak modality*.

*Topicalization* can be marked with the verbs **nyé** 'be' and **li** 'be at' as in (39).

- |      |                                   |                                       |
|------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| (39) | <b>ményé dṓwṓfṓ ko o</b>          | <i>it-is-not</i> (in) workplace only  |
|      | <b>nya ḡeká li medí bé magblṓ</b> | <i>there's one word I-want to-say</i> |

Deictic reference to *time* can also be expressed using verbs as in (40).

- |      |                          |   |
|------|--------------------------|---|
| (40) | <b>ḡletí eve nyé ési</b> | two months ago (month two <i>is</i> this) |
|      | <b>etsṓ si va yi</b>     | yesterday (which came went)               |
|      | <b>etsṓ si gbṓna</b>     | tomorrow (which is-coming)                |

The interactional meaning of a strong *proposal* is expressed with the verb **le, dze** (plus impersonal pronoun subject and conjunction) as in (41).

- |      |                        |                               |
|------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| (41) | <b>éle bé, édze bé</b> | <i>it-is</i> (necessary) that |
|------|------------------------|-------------------------------|

In all these examples, only a very few verbs are used to express these special meanings.

## 5. NOUNS

(Some nouns have already been included in the section on verbs, because several verb-noun collocations are semantically inseparable, representing single states/processes/actions.)

In traditional grammar, the part of speech known as the NOUN has been defined, not in grammatical (syntactic) terms, but rather in semantic terms, as the name of a person, a place, or a thing, that is, as the name of a semantic thing. While it is true that semantic things are not represented by any other word class in Ewe apart from nouns (and pronouns), at the same time, not all Ewe nouns represent semantic things. Some nouns represent things plus qualifying propositions, some represent semantic states, processes, or actions, and some represent semantic times. In other words, the grammatically defined noun in Ewe can represent diverse semantic categories and with varying degrees of complexity.

5.1 Even among Ewe nouns that represent semantic *times*, there are degrees of semantic complexity.

Some represent only periods or moments of time as in (42), some represent times combined with deictic reference as in (43), some represent one time equated with another as in (44), and some represent a time qualified by some further proposition, or at least the central state/process/action of that proposition as in (45). The qualified time can possibly be combined with a negative as in **dṓmawṓgbe** 'non-working-day' and sometimes with a participant thing in the qualifying proposition made explicit as in (46).

- |      |                  |         |                 |       |              |       |
|------|------------------|---------|-----------------|-------|--------------|-------|
| (42) | <b>ḡdí</b>       | morning | <b>zā</b>       | night | <b>ḡkeke</b> | day   |
|      | <b>aḡabafṓfo</b> | moment  | <b>ga[fṓfo]</b> | hour  | <b>ḡletí</b> | month |

	<b>fē</b>	year	<b>yeyiyi</b>	period	<b>zi</b>	time
	<b>fiḍa</b>	Friday				
(43)	present/immediate/1st person		non-present/remote/2nd person			
	<b>égbē</b>	today	<b>etsɔ</b>	yesterday/tomorrow		
	<b>fifi</b>	now	<b>tsā</b>	far past/future		
(44)	<b>fiḍagbe</b>	Friday (day)				
(45)	<b>avuvɔpli, dzomepli</b>	cold/hot <i>season</i>	<b>ηkekenyui</b>	holiday		
	<b>kúgbē</b>	day of death	<b>hīagbe</b>	day of need		
	<b>dzidzɔyi</b>	<i>time</i> of joy	<b>azāgbe</b>	festival <i>day</i>		
	<b>konyifayi</b>	<i>time</i> of mourning	<b>dzigbe</b>	birthday		
	<b>dzodzóyi</b>	departure <i>time</i>	<b>dɔwɔyi</b>	worktime		
	<b>fɔfɔme</b>	dawn				
(46)	<b>núḍuyi</b>	eating <i>time</i>	<b>atitsogbe</b>	tree-cutting <i>day</i>		
	<b>núfāyi</b>	(thing) planting <i>time</i>	<b>agbledeyi</b>	farming <i>time</i>		
	<b>tsidzagbe</b>	<i>day</i> of rain				

Sometimes a participant in the qualifying proposition may be explicit as we've just seen, but its action/process/state is left implicit as in (47).

(47)	<b>asigbe</b>	market <i>day</i>	<b>vidzime</b>	babyhood
	<b>ḍekakpuime</b>	youth	<b>kluviyeyiyi</b>	<i>time</i> of slavery

More complex, and so longer, examples are conventionally written as several orthographic words, even though they function as single nouns as shown in (48).

(48)	<b>dukɔme ηkuḍodzi ηkekenyui</b>	national commemoration <i>day</i> (nation remembrance day-good)
------	----------------------------------	--

5.2 Among nouns representing semantic *things*, not only is there greater semantic complexity than among times, but also the things themselves require to be grouped into four semantic subclasses, according to their potential for filling different sets of participant roles in propositions. The subclasses are things which may fill:

- the agent and experiencer roles, i.e., animate and mainly human, the traditional 'persons'
- the source, range, and goal roles, i.e., locative, the traditional 'places'
- only the patient and instrument roles, the everyday and traditional 'things'
- only the content role, i.e., 'words, matters' in the widest sense.

(49) Nouns which represent semantic things only

AGENT		SOURCE, RANGE		PATIENT		CONTENT	
EXPERIENCER		GOAL		INSTRUMENT			
<b>ame</b>	person	<b>du</b>	town	<b>tú</b>	gun	<b>nya</b>	word
<b>hɔ</b>	eagle	<b>afe</b>	house	<b>gbe</b>	language	<b>ηkɔ</b>	name
<b>fia</b>	king	<b>gbe</b>	bush	<b>aha</b>	drink	<b>drɔe</b>	dream
<b>srɔ</b>	spouse	<b>xɔ</b>	house	<b>ga</b>	metal	<b>alobálo</b>	story
<b>yevú</b>	whiteman	<b>asi</b>	market	<b>te</b>	yam	<b>kɔnu</b>	custom
<b>da</b>	snake	<b>mó</b>	way	<b>dzo</b>	juju	<b>ami</b>	oil
		<b>afi</b>	place	<b>así</b>	hand	<b>ηutinya</b>	story

(50) Persons and places (proper names) combined with homophoric reference

<b>Eve, Kofi</b>	<b>Ho, Lome</b>
<b>Yiyi (spider)</b>	<b>Kpando</b>

- (51) Nouns including a qualifying proposition of state (=quality) as the final element in the noun's structure

<i>ameyibɔ</i> 'blackperson'	<i>avedodo</i> 'thick <i>forest</i>	<i>amidzē</i> 'red oil'	<i>nunya</i> 'knowledge ( <i>thing-know</i> )'
<i>vijutsu</i> 'son ( <i>child-male</i> )'		<i>dɔvɔ</i> 'smallpox ( <i>disease-evil</i> )'	
<i>nyɔnuvi</i> 'girl ( <i>female-small</i> )'		<i>nuvɔ̄e</i> 'whitlow ( <i>thing-evil-DIM</i> )'	

(DIM = diminutive; POSS = possessive; RED = reduplicating segment)

- (52) An initial or final qualifying proposition of action/state

<i>amedzro</i> 'stranger'		<i>nuɖuɖu</i> 'food ( <i>thing-REdeat</i> )'	<i>nyagblɔɖi</i> 'prophecy'
		<i>gbegbɔgbɔ</i> 'language (lang.- REDspeak)'	
		<i>ɔsisi</i> 'river ( <i>lake-REDrun</i> )'	
		<i>tsifodji</i> 'libation ( <i>water-pour-down</i> )'	
<i>bubume</i> 'respected person'	<i>kɔkɔɛɔ</i> 'holiest'	<i>loloa</i> 'big one ( <i>big-the</i> )'	<i>nufo</i> 'speech ( <i>mouth-beat</i> )'
<i>dzila</i> 'parent ( <i>begetter</i> )'	<i>dzɛfe</i> 'red part' <i>titrɛfe</i> 'thick part'	<i>yeyea</i> 'new one' <i>fefenui</i> 'plaything' ( <i>REDplay-thing-DIM</i> )'	<i>ɲukpenya</i> 'shame(ful) word'
<i>sisila</i> 'fugitive'	<i>nyɛfe</i> 'abode ( <i>be-at-place</i> )'	<i>tɔtɔdzesi</i> 'fullstop ( <i>REDstop-mark</i> )'	
<i>dɔmenyɔɔ</i> 'kind person ( <i>belly-good-owner</i> )'	<i>dɔwɔfe</i> 'work- place ( <i>work-do-place</i> )'		
<i>kukuz</i> 'dead one'	<i>lefe</i> 'handle ( <i>catch-place</i> )'		
<i>fiafitɔ</i> 'thief'	<i>tsatɔfe</i> 'channel ( <i>wander-pass-place</i> )'		
	<i>dzɔtsofe</i> 'origin ( <i>arise-from-place</i> )'		

- (53) An explicit participant in a qualifying proposition but without the central state/process/action being explicit at all!

AGENT	SOURCE, RANGE	PATIENT,
EXPERIENCER	GOAL	INSTRUMENT
<i>konɔ</i> 'barren one'	<i>togbe</i> 'hill land'	<i>toga</i> 'ear ring'
<i>futɔ</i> 'enemy'	<i>avekɔe</i> 'forest area'	<i>abati</i> 'bedstead'
<i>ameha</i> 'crowd (person-group)'	<i>fiɛfe</i> 'palace (chief-house)'	<i>ɲeme</i> 'glue(covered)figure'
<i>avafia</i> 'general (war-chief)'	<i>afɔmɔ</i> 'footpath'	<i>amasi</i> 'medicine (herb-water)'
<i>adela</i> 'hunter'	<i>kokogble</i> 'cocoa farm'	<i>ɲutigbalɛ</i> 'body skin'
<i>asia</i> 'marketer'	<i>yɔdoe</i> 'grave'	<i>agbeka</i> 'life thread'
<i>srɔɔ</i> 'married (spouse-owner)'		<i>gagba</i> 'metal plate'
<i>gbemelā</i> 'bush-animal'		<i>yamevu</i> 'aeroplane'
<i>afenɔ</i> 'mistress (house-owner)'		<i>agblɔvu</i> 'hookdrum'
<i>fiavi</i> 'prince (chief-child)'		<i>Evegbe</i> 'Ewe language'

**taw** 'leader (head-owner)  
**kponw** 'hunchback'  
**abolow** 'breadseller'  
**xamedā** 'intimate'

**sukuxw** 'school room'  
**koklozi** 'hen egg'  
**azidetsi** 'groundnutsoup'  
**sikatoga** 'gold earring'

In other cases, the derivation is more transparent in the sense that both the central state/process/action and at least one participant in the qualifying proposition are overt in the resulting noun as in (54).

(54) AGENT EXPERIENCER	SOURCE, RANGE GOAL	PATIENT INSTRUMENT
<b>tokuw</b> 'deaf person (ear-die-owner)'	<b>yedzefe</b> 'east (sun-rise-place)'	<b>dzikedzo</b> 'lightning (top-release-fire)'
<b>ɲkugbatw</b> 'blind person'	<b>amedzrodzefe</b> 'inn (stranger-lodge-place)'	<b>dzidɛgbe</b> 'thunder (top-utter-voice)'
<b>kpɔleafea</b> 'virgin (see-in-house-the)'	<b>tomanyafe</b> 'place unknown to father'	<b>nuɲloti</b> (thing-write-stick) 'pencil'
<b>dzɔleafea</b> 'native (arise-in-house-the)'	<b>amedjibw</b> 'cemetery (person-bury-garden)'	<b>ahanotre</b> 'drink calabash'
<b>zimenɔla</b> 'chairperson'	<b>nuɲufe</b> 'eatingplace'	<b>dzosinu</b> 'material for fire'
<b>nyasela</b> 'listener (word-hear-er)'	<b>amesitsofe</b> (person-run-from-place) 'refuge'	<b>afeyifw</b> 'homeboundfoot'
<b>tɔgāyɔvi</b> 'cousin (father-big-call-child)'	<b>tsilefe</b> 'bathroom (water-be-in-place)'	<b>agbledewui</b> 'farm-going-clothes'
<b>gadzikipɔla</b> 'treasurer (money-top-see-er)'		<b>detsifozi</b> 'soup-making-pot'
<b>agbledela</b> 'farm(go)er'		
<b>toɔoamela</b> 'obedient one (ear-give-person-er)'		
<b>akpemadala</b> 'ungrateful (thanks-not-give-er)'		

Occasionally, we may find that the thing participating in the qualifying proposition may itself have a state-qualifying proposition attached to it as in (55).

(55) <b>fodogāw</b>	potbellied person (belly-big-owner)
<b>lāfɔne</b>	quadruped (animal-foot-four)
<b>tefekɔkɔnɔla</b>	high-office holder (place-high-occupi-er)
<b>nugbegblēwɔla</b>	evil-doer (thing-rotten-do-er)
<b>dɔmeveveɔ</b>	one suffering from stomach pain (stomach-bitter-owner)
<b>amekukuɖaka</b>	coffin (person-dead-box)

In rare cases, we find that what would seem to be the nucleus of the semantic thing is itself implicit (covert), presumably as a sort of avoidance strategy; it would be semantically the agent (or instrument) as shown in (56)

(56) <b>siame</b>	injurer (injure-person)
<b>dzeaha</b>	drink-buyer
<b>tuasiame</b>	one who pushes down (push-hand-person)
<b>noahanoaha</b>	ant (drink-wine x 2)
<b>ɖunuɖunu</b>	glutton (eat-thing x 2)
<b>ɖuatiɖuati</b>	woodbeetle (eat-wood x 2)
<b>lɔtilɔti</b>	woodpecker (pick-wood x 2)
<b>klēdzoklēdzɔ</b>	glowworm (glow-fire x 2)
<b>fāɖufāɖu</b>	toothpolish (polish-tooth x 2)

Some nouns seem to semantically involve either more than one semantic thing or more than one semantic proposition; in almost all cases, the nucleus of the semantic thing, whether patient or agent, is implicit, surprising though that may seem. Some examples are shown in (57).

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| (57) <b>dedzi</b> 'addition (put-top)'                                | <b>dɛdzi</b> 'reduction (remove-top)'                              |
| <b>kpɔdɛdzi</b> 'profit (see-on-top)'                                 | <b>dʒɛfle</b> 'cooked food for sale (cook-buy)'                    |
| <b>dʒatre</b> 'yam cooked with skin (cook-peel)'                      | <b>trɔgbɔɛ</b> 'leftover food (turn-come)'                         |
| <b>xɔdʒu</b> 'food gift (receive-eat)'                                | <b>tsodʒɔɛ</b> 'unexpected meal (meet-arrive)'                     |
| <b>dʒuamedziɔvlui</b> 'spider<br>(bite-person-sky-thunder-DIM)'       | <b>mevimɛnɔɛ</b> 'stinging ant (sting-child-<br>sting-mother-DIM)' |
| <b>nɔɔfɛdedu</b> 'gossip (stay-home-go-town)'                         | <b>wuamedjame</b> 'gun (kill-person-bury-person)'                  |
| <b>dʒukplegui</b> 'type of crab eaten with<br>shell (eat-with-shell)' | <b>koklokpɔdoafɛ</b> 'centipede (chicken-<br>see-utter-cry-DIM)'   |
| <b>dʒikudziku(i)</b> 'babies who die at birth<br>(bear-die x 2)'      | <b>lɔleafea</b> 'fool (animal-in-house-the)'                       |
| <b>dʒunudʒifo</b> 'glutton (eat-thing-fill-stomach)'                  |  |

5.3 Many Ewe nouns, however, represent neither semantic times nor semantic things (or persons or places), but rather semantic *states*, *processes*, or *actions* directly, just as adjectives and verbs do (see §3 and §4).

Some nouns not derived from verbs nevertheless represent whole semantic propositions, or states, or processes, or actions as in (58).

- |                  |            |             |            |            |       |
|------------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|-------|
| (58) <b>nya</b>  | affair     | <b>ko</b>   | barrenness | <b>alɛ</b> | sleep |
| <b>dɔ</b>        | sickness   | <b>agbe</b> | life       | <b>adã</b> | anger |
| <b>dʒɔgbɛvɔɛ</b> | misfortune | <b>dɔ</b>   | work       |            |       |

But many nouns are *nominalized from verbs*, almost always by means of reduplicating the verb root, though occasionally with a derivational suffix. These derived nouns may represent *states*, *processes*, or *actions* as in (59).

- |                   |                          |                  |                         |                 |                       |
|-------------------|--------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| (59) <b>kú</b>    | death                    | <b>nyonyó</b>    | goodness                | <b>ɲusɛ</b>     | strength              |
| <b>dɛkadzedze</b> | beauty                   | <b>didime</b>    | length                  | <b>nɔnɔme</b>   | character             |
| <b>gãnyényé</b>   | greatness                | <b>adzi</b>      | fertility               | <b>vevé</b>     | smell                 |
| <b>lɔlɔ</b>       | love                     | <b>bubu</b>      | respect                 | <b>xɔse</b>     | belief                |
| <b>xoxó</b>       | old age                  | <b>dɔmevéame</b> | (belly-pain-<br>person) | <b>dʒikú</b>    | anger (heart-<br>die) |
| <b>nuvɔ</b>       | sin (thing-evil)         | <b>dʒigbɔdʒi</b> | patience                | <b>dʒidefo</b>  | courage               |
| <b>dʒidzɔ</b>     | joy (heart-<br>straight) |                  | (heart-sink-down)       |                 | (heart-put-belly)     |
| <b>kakádɛdzi</b>  | confidence               | <b>dɔlélé</b>    | illness                 | <b>azɔli</b>    | walk                  |
| <b>violi</b>      | struggle                 | <b>iyi</b>       | going                   | <b>dodókɔpɔ</b> | examination           |
| <b>tɔtrɔgbɔ</b>   | return                   | <b>biabiá</b>    | question                | <b>nufɔfo</b>   | speech                |
|                   | (turn-come)              | <b>kaléwɔwɔ</b>  | bravery                 |                 | (mouth-beat)          |
| <b>vodada</b>     | mistake                  | <b>nuwɔna</b>    | activity                | <b>dɔwɔwɔ</b>   | work (work-do)        |
| <b>avifafa</b>    | weeping                  |                  |                         |                 |                       |

*One participant* may be made explicit along with the state, the process, or the action as in (60) or a negative can be included as in (61).

- |                    |                          |                    |                                    |
|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| (60) <b>tókúkú</b> | deafness<br>(ear-REDdie) | <b>dokuisinɔnɔ</b> | self-reliance<br>(self-POSS-REDbe) |
| <b>núnyányá</b>    | (thing)knowing           | <b>yedzedze</b>    | sunrise                            |
| <b>tsidzadza</b>   | rainfall                 | <b>kudʒidʒi</b>    | drought                            |

<b>agbledede</b>	farm(go)ing	<b>ablɔ̀ɖekpɔ̀kpɔ̀</b>	freedom (seeing)
<b>nyaxɔ̀se</b>	believing (word-receive-hear)	<b>nyagɔ̀mekuku</b>	investigation (word-under-REDScoop)
<b>vegbegbɔ̀gbɔ̀</b>	speaking-Ewe-language	<b>azãɖuɖu</b>	celebrating-festival
<b>agbalẽxexlẽ</b>	book-reading	<b>srɔ̀ɖeɖe</b>	marriage (spouse-REDtake)
<b>kpekpeɖeɖu, xɔ̀name</b>	help	<b>evedzidzi</b>	bearing-twins
<b>akpedada</b>	thanksgiving	<b>fetutu</b>	paying-reward
<b>detsidɔ̀ɖɔ̀kpɔ̀</b>	souptasting	<b>nyaɖeɖefia</b>	revelation (word- REDremove-show)
<b>sedziwɔ̀wɔ̀</b>	discipline (law-top-REDdo)	<b>amenukpɔ̀kpɔ̀</b>	dependence
<b>nutefekpɔ̀kpɔ̀</b>	experience		
<b>kpɔ̀ɖeɖu</b>	example		
<b>zɔ̀zɔ̀ kple amegãwo</b>	keeping-company with important-people		

- (61) **dzimaxuse**                      unbelief  
**akpemadamada**                   ungratefulness  
**mavamava**                        non-arrival

*More than one participant* can occasionally be made explicit in nouns as in (62).

- (62) **taɖuame**                        headache (head-eat-person)  
**nuxɔ̀xlɔ̀ame**                        advice (thing-REDadvise-person)  
**dɔ̀wuame**                            famine (belly-kill-person)  
**tudadaxevi**                        shooting birds (gun-REDshoot-bird)  
**mawutsidedetanaame**            baptism (God-water-REDput-head-for-person)  
**tsotsokaba le-afeme ɖe-gamedzi le vuvɔ̀ɲoli**   leaving home early in winter

The noun **nyatefẽ** 'truth' is sometimes used to express AGREEMENT with a statement (personal expressive meaning).

A few nouns represent not just one semantic proposition, but more than one. *Two propositions* may be explicitly represented as in (63).

- (63) **tsotsódzɔ̀**                        getting up and going  
**biabiãsekpɔ̀**                        interrogation (ask-hear-see)  
**dɔ̀wɔ̀ɖu, dɔ̀mawɔ̀ɖu**                work to earn/not to earn a living (work-do-eat)  
**agbedɔ̀**                                life(saving) work

An *implied prior proposition* may, however, not be overt; or it may be only partly overt as in (64).

- (64) **dzimetɔ̀trɔ̀**                        repentance (heart-in-REDturn)  
**tsɔ̀tsɔ̀ke**                            forgiveness (REDtake-open?)  
**nuvɔ̀keke**                            forgiveness of sins (thing-evil-REDopen?)  
**xɔ̀xɔ̀**                                    redemption (REDreceive)

Throughout the examples of §5.3, we have found that, just as in English and no doubt other languages, what must be the most semantically-essential participant thing (i.e., filling the agent or experiencer role) is very often left implicit.

## 6. ADVERBS

In the previous two sections, we dealt with verbs and nouns, the two lexical word classes whose members are very frequent in texts, in contrast with adjectives which are relatively infrequent.

Now we come to the ADVERB word class, whose members are also infrequent in texts. The adverb is grammatically defined as functioning in the nucleus of the simple adjunct phrase in clause structure. There is, however, some overlap of membership with

the adjective word class (see §3) and with the intensifier word class (which functions in the final place in the structure of the nominal phrase). Moreover, adverbs can be formed directly from nouns and from transformed clauses. Many adverbs are ideophones.

Because the adjunct phrase occurs only either at the beginning or at the end of the clause (which are respectively the unmarked topic and the unmarked focus positions), inevitably all adverbs fulfil one or other of these textual semantic roles. In the initial topic position, we may find adverbs of time, while in the final focus position, we may find adverbs of manner, degree, etc. In general, adverbs fill secondary circumstantial roles in the semantic proposition, or may even express further supporting propositions.

A few adverbs, derived from adjectives, express *states* (=qualities) such as *éle bɔbɔe* 'it is soft' and *éle dzīe* 'it is red'.

Some adverbs express *aspects* of various kinds, whether momentary, perfective, durative, or repetitive as in (65).

(65)	<b>énumake</b>	suddenly
	<b>xóxó</b>	already
	<b>haǰé</b>	yet
	<b>tegbetegbe</b>	forever
	<b>énuénu, édziédzi</b>	often (may rather be generic when combined with the auxiliary -na)

Some adverbs express *time*, possibly combined with a negative, often with deictic reference as in (66).

(66)	<b>ázǔ</b>	now
	<b>fífiá</b>	now
	<b>égbe</b>	today
	<b>nyitsɔ</b>	day before yesterday/after tomorrow
	<b>tsā</b>	in remote past/future

Some adverbs may become *conjunctions* introducing another clause: **háfi** 'before'.

Many of those adverbs just mentioned above would occur in the *initial* position expressing a time or aspect topic, while most of the adverbs in (67) would occur in the *clause-final* position, reinforcing the verb with a focus on *degree or manner*.

(67)	<b>ɲútó</b>	very	<b>kéɲ</b>	altogether
	<b>kloe</b>	at all	<b>ko</b>	only
	<b>fūū</b>	plenty	<b>eveeve</b>	in twos
	<b>nyúie</b>	well	<b>bɔbɔe</b>	easily
	<b>sésiē</b>	hard	<b>dedie</b>	safely
	<b>vévié</b>	importantly	<b>fā</b>	aloud
	<b>fāā</b>	freely	<b>kábá</b>	quick
	<b>blewu</b>	slow	<b>dzáa</b>	quietly
	<b>kpoo</b>	quiet	<b>tsayatsaya</b>	smithereens
	<b>góɲgóɲ</b>	(stuck) fast		
	<b>flofloflo, kplukplukplu</b>	(stabbing)		
	<b>tsinitsini</b>	(smooth)		
	<b>kpotokpoto</b>	(drumbeat)		

It is not uncommon for adverbs derived from clauses to express a further proposition ancillary to the main clause. Since this adverb comes at the end of the main clause, this ancillary proposition is actually in focus. The ancillary proposition may have a PARALLEL relation to the main one, whether comparative or overlapping in time as in (68) or it may have a SEQUENTIAL relation to the main proposition, expressing a preceding proposition in the negative as in (69).



- (68) **fiatɔɛ = abé fia ené** like a chief  
 (chief-ly)(as chief as)  
**dzidzɔtɔɛ** joyfully  
**akpédátɔɛ** gratefully  
**núblánúitɔɛ** sorrowfully
- (69) **númaqui** without having eaten (thing-not-eat-DIM)  
**tsimalemalee** without having taken a bath  
**dɔmawɔtɔɛ** without doing the work  
**numakemakee** without opening their mouths

A few adverbs express various degree of *modality* as in (70). A few also seem to have *anaphoric reference* to preceding propositions in the text as in (71).

- (70) **ɖewóhĩ** perhaps  
**nyatefɛ, vavá** truly, indeed
- (71) **nenémá** like that  
**álé** so  
**boǰ** rather  
**gawu, há** also  
**mlɛba** lastly

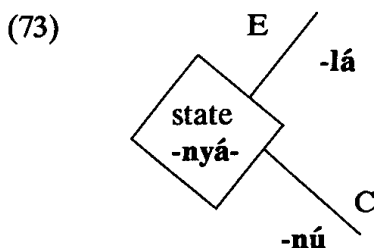
As far as personal expressive meaning is concerned, a few adverbs express the *sender's attitude* as in (72).

- (72) **dzɔgbenyuitɔɛ, dzɔgbevɔtɔɛ** fortunately, unfortunately  
**nukutɔɛ** surprisingly

All cases of lengthening or repetition of ideophonic adverbs also express some degree of expressive *intensity*.

## 7. CONCLUSION

7.1 We may find the same impersonal descriptive semantic structure in several different words of different word classes. In (73), we see a square diagram representing the state **nyá** 'know' in the center, combined with an explicit/implicit experiencer **-lá** 'one who, -er', and an explicit content **nú-** 'thing'.

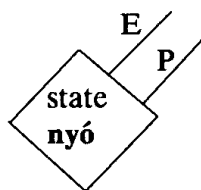


This semantic structure underlies various Ewe clauses, as well as the Ewe words in (74).

- (74) **nyá** know (verb)  
**núnyányá** knowing something (noun)  
**núnyá** knowledge (noun)  
**nyánú** knowledgeable, wise (adjective)  
**núnyálá** wise person (noun)  
**númanyámanyɛ** ignorantly (adverb)  
**númanyámanyátɔɛ** ignorantly (adverb)

The square in (75) represents the state, **nyó** 'be good', combined with an implicit experiencer (basically **amɛ** 'person') and an implicit patient (or possibly content).

(75)



This basic structure underlies various Ewe clauses, as well as the Ewe words in (76).

(76)	<b>nyó</b>	be-good (verb) <sup>2</sup>
	<b>nyonyó</b>	goodness (noun)
	<b>nyúi</b>	good (adjective)
	<b>manyómanyó</b>	badness (noun)
	<b>nyúíé</b>	well (adverb)

Except for **nyúíé**, which expresses the circumstantial role of manner, all the other words actually express the same semantic state (or quality) 'be good', the participants often remaining implicit.

7.2 Because the orthography of any language is secondary to the spoken form which is primary for everyone (and so the orthography is somewhat artificial), we did not make use of the orthographically-defined word as a basis for this study, although in many cases we found these words happened to coincide with our grammatical (syntactic) words. It was then shown that words, so defined, could be studied as to their phonological and their morphological structures, even though our concern in this paper was with their semantic structure.

The outline semantic framework was first applied in general terms to purely grammatical items, and then to the four lexical word classes in turn. ADJECTIVES express semantic states/processes qualifying semantic things; VERBS also express states/processes as well as actions, with varying numbers of participants in their case-frames, as well as other miscellaneous meanings; ADVERBS express various meanings, but especially circumstances of manner and degree, as well as supporting propositions; NOUNS may also express states/processes/actions (after nominalization), as well as semantic things and semantic times, often with one or more qualifying propositions attached.

In order to carry out the above study, it was important to have a clear framework of semantic structure, distinct from those for grammatical or for phonological structures. The same semantic framework can also be applied to discourse analysis and to translation (Duthie 1984).

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<sup>2</sup>Patient as subject, experiencer in adverb phrase: **ényó nám** 'it is good for me'