

BODY-PART TERMS IN LIKPAKPALN

Abraham Kwesi Bisilki

Department of Applied Linguistics, University of Education, Winneba, Ghana

Department of Linguistics, The University of Hong Kong

bisilki@yahoo.com

Abstract

In this paper, I provide a preliminary discussion of body-part terms in a scarcely researched Mabia (or Gur) language known as Likpakpaln (Konkomba). Likpakpaln is often traditionally associated with the Northern Region of Ghana, although it significantly spreads beyond that region. The analysis is from a descriptive point of view and dwells on a multi-source corpus through a triangulation of oral texts, observation, the semi-structured interview and direct elicitation. Where necessary, I also employ cognitive linguistic notions to explicate phenomena. The study covers the Bikpakpaam (native speakers of Likpakpaln) concept of the human being and the morphological characterisation of body-part terms as a basic category. Structurally, the lexicalisation of body-part terms into other derived expressions is also considered. The semantics and pragmatics of the lexicalised target domains are equally discussed. Analysis of data reveals embedded cultural models in the Bikpakpaam concept of the human being. The morphological patterns of body-part words are also observed to be congruent with those of prototypical nouns in the language. These body-part nouns are not inherently inalienable, since they have to be deliberately marked for possession. Furthermore, the data shows that body-part terms constitute a productive lexical domain. The operationalisation of body-part nouns in the grammatical system of Likpakpaln follows a lexicalisation process that mainly results in relatively more complex expressions that denote concepts as emotions, predispositions, affective states of being, character traits and other abstract concepts such as hope, distress and haughtiness among others. The semantic shift from the original concrete meaning of the body-part noun to a more abstract concept in the output expression is a trace of desemanticisation. Finally, I argue that an appropriate understanding and interpretation of a body-part derived expression is heavily reliant on the pragmatic context and knowledge of the cultural models of the Likpakpaln native speakers.

Key words: Body-part, derived expression, Bikpakpaam, Likpakpaln

1. Introduction

The semantic domain of body-part terms (BPTs), also known variously as body-part nouns, body-part words or body-part names, has proved to be a rich source of input in the linguistic structure and usage of human languages across the world. No wonder, an ever-increasing number of studies continue to be dedicated to the phenomenon of BPTs in the grammars of natural languages across the globe. Such works find exemplars in Aberra (2016) on Amharic, Agyekum (2004, 2013, 2015, 2018) on Akan, Aikhenvald (2015) on Manambu, Ameka (1995) on Ewe, Amiridze (1998) on Georgian, Dzokoto and Okazaki (2006) on West African languages, Hollenbach (1995) on Mixtecan and Neumann (1995) on German. Agyekum's and Ameka's works are based on Ghanaian languages and, thus, have a kind of broad contextual relationship with the present study, which is pitched on Likpakpaln, a Mabia language spoken in Ghana. Similarly, Dzokoto and Okazaki also represent some data on Ghanaian languages. The term Mabia is supposedly a more indigenous label for the Gur language cluster. I adopt it in this study with reference to Bodomo and Abubakari (2017: 161) and Bodomo (2017).

In the view of Lehmann (2017: 2), the linguistic aspects of body parts have constituted a subject of extensive studies in both descriptive and comparative linguistics domains. Lehmann further makes the point that because human body parts provide a major means by which human beings execute physical actions and experience physical impressions, these body parts naturally assume an indispensable role in human actions and experiences and, ultimately, in linguistic expressions representing such human actions and experiences. A similar justification explaining the prevalent use of BPTs in the grammars of natural languages is the hypothesis that linguistic

conceptualisation is anthropocentric by being human centred (see Aberra, 2016; Amiridze & Leuschner, 2002). The foregoing claims clearly suggest that exploring how body part nouns dabble in the grammatical system of a language has a great potency of revealing much about the purely linguistic structure of such a language and the associated cognitive and socio-cultural models of its speakers.

In spite of the somewhat universally centre stage assumed by BPTs in language structure, there appears to be no research record(s) on the subject in relation to Likpakpaln, a generally little researched Mabia language spoken in (northern) Ghana. As a result, the present study seeks to fulfill two prime objectives: contribute to filling the research gap on Likpakpaln and to further shed understanding on the linguistics of BPTs. It is particularly anticipated that since BPTs are often operationalised to function in the mainstream grammars of languages, the present study will make a contribution to the grammatical description of Likpakpaln. On an ancillary note, this paper additionally promises to address a bias in the foci of early and recent studies on BPTs. While early studies on BPTs were mainly lexicological in orientation, recent ones tend to concentrate on the grammatical aspects of BPTs (Lehmann, 2017: 2). The present analysis responds to the gap by incorporating both a grammatical and a semasiological analysis of BPTs. The data is from a natural corpus as detailed in section 4.0.

The following key questions guide the scope of this paper:

- i. What is the morphological structure of Likpakpaln body-part words in their basic form?
- ii. What are the linguistic strategies employed in the lexicalisation of BPTs into other target domains?
- iii. What are the structural-semantic patterns of lexicalised BPTs?

I will show that BPTs in their basic forms, in Likpakpaln, consist of a stem and, at least, an affix. The affixes mark class and also encode a number semantic in a noun (see section 7). Unlike in some other languages, body-part nouns in Likpakpaln are not inherently inalienable. That is, a body-part noun is rendered like a sortal noun. When as a possessum, a body-part noun must receive an appropriate morphological marker that puts it in a part-whole relationship with a possessor entity. This is instantiated in (22-23). The possessor entity must be recoverable from the discourse context. The afore indicated characteristics of body-part nouns in Likpakpaln are closely aligned with the patterns observed in other prototypical nominals in the language.

Compounding is a major means of lexicalising body-part terms in Likpakpaln (see section 8.0). This is similar to the phenomenon with Akan body-part expressions (Agyekum, 2015, 2018). A lexicalised body-part compound consists of a body-part noun as head and an adjectival complement in a post-posed position. In very few cases, the derivation involving a body-part term may not lend itself to compounding. In such cases, the derived expression remains a clausal structure in which the predicate element takes the form of a verb of state as in (22) and (25) in section 8.0. No observations are made to confirm any structural-semantic correlates in the lexicalised output body-part expression. However, data (as revealed in section 9.0) speak to the occurrences of marked semantic shifts and extensions in the lexicalised forms. This is to the extent that (almost) every body part derived expression will be semantically anomalous if taken in the expression meaning. For instance, while the body part nouns denote corporeal entities, their lexicalised meanings are invariably abstract concepts. This type of meaning relationship warrants what Agyekum (2018) and Yu (2008) describe as ABSTRACT CONCEPT IS A PHYSICAL CONCEPT metaphor. This nature of mapping relationship also reflects the view of conceptual theory. Conceptual theory holds that we grasp unfamiliar and abstract concepts in terms of other concrete concepts that we well understand (see Agyekum, 2015: 89; Semino, 2008). Homonymy also plays out in the semantic patterns of body part expressions in Likpakpaln. The same lexicalised form can hold different interpretations. There

are also synonymous body-part derived expressions. Here, similar meanings can be expressed using different body-parts as loci.

As I will show in section 9.0, the interpretation and understanding of body-part expressions in Likpakpaln is context modulated. In the case of Likpakpaln, the meanings of body-part derived expressions are culturally programmed (conventionalised). Thus, to decipher the appropriate meaning of a body-part expression requires an overall knowledge of the language, culture, society and specific context of utterance. A backdrop for the pragmatic nature of lexicalised body-part expressions in Likpakpaln can be found in the cognitive theory of embodiment. At one end of this theory is the view that the human body plays a universal role in the expression of meaning (see Kövecses, 2008). At the other end of same theory is the culture as a filter paradigm (Agyekum, 2015: 91; Ogarkova & Soriano, 2014: 147). The culture as a filter hypothesis holds that there are cross-lingual variations in body part related constructions due to different cognitive and cultural experiences of various ethnolinguistic groups. The variation in language specific conceptualisation of body part expressions is rooted in embedded cultural models (Afreh: 2015: 38). The remaining sections of the paper expound on the foregoing highlighted features of body- part expressions in Likpakpaln.

It is, however, important to indicate that the present study was not conceived to be a compendium of body-part related expressions in Likpakpaln. As such, the discussions herein concentrate on only three of the body-parts (**liyil** ‘head’, **kinyɔk** ‘mouth’ and **linimbil** ‘eye’). These three body-parts attract attention since they more saliently featured in the corpora gathered for this analysis.

2 The state of research on body part expressions in Mabia

Intricate relations between culture, body and language have continued to trigger interest in body-part linguistics. Some language groups of Ghana, especially those of the Kwa family have received considerable attention in this regard. Mention can be made of Afreh (2015), Agyekum (2015; 2016a, 2016b, 2018), Ameka (2002) and Ansah (2014) which are body-part related studies on one Kwa language or the other. Akan benefits from the highest number of works on body-parts. A look at the bibliographic reference section of Agyekum (2018) reveals that he alone has a long list of eight publications on body parts in Akan.

The Mabia languages (numbering about 100 [Bodomo, 2017]) are spoken in six West African countries, including Ghana, Togo, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Mali and Benin (see Mous, 2003: 166; Cahill, 2007: 5). However, a recent conference call *Workshop on Mabia Languages and Literatures: 31st West African Languages Congress (WALC)* made by Hasiyatu Abubakari (under the auspices of Adams Bodomo) indicate that this language family is also found in Northwest Nigeria.

Generally, research has shown that the Mabia language family is one of the least researched African language phyla (Abubakari, 2018:1; Cahill, 2007: 5; Sands, 2009: 568). This state of under-documentation applies to the Mabia languages of Ghana. As a member of the Mabia cluster of Ghana, Likpakpaln has, notably, been fixating on the status of an under-studied language. Linguistic documentation of Likpakpaln is generally very much in dearth. A trace of this scientific reality is seen in Schwarz’s (2009: 182/3) comment that the need for basic grammatical descriptions of the language is still very high. Although Schwarz’s observation is now a decade old, it is still valid as the research situation on Likpakpaln has since only seen a little improvement.

From my observation, body-part linguistics is an area where studies and literature on Mabia languages is still quite a rarity. My search has been fruitless in discovering any work mainly focused on body-parts in a Mabia language. What exists for literature on body-parts in Mabia is rather quite scanty. In the context of such literature, body-part terms in one Mabia language or the other is usually mentioned in passing and more in relation to their function in spatial constructions or as postpositions. Such brief remarks on body-part terms in Mabia can be

found on Kusaal in Abubakari (2018: 99-100), Gureɛ in Atintono (2013: 146) and Kusaal, Dagaare, Buli and Gureɛ in Bodomo and Abubakari (2017: 172-3).

The existing knowledge gap on body-part expressions in Mabia does not seem to be receiving the needed attention. A close look at the presentation list of a BPTs workshop/conference recently held (8-9 December, 2017) at the University of Warsaw portray a discussion of the subject from a broad swath of languages across the world. Regrettably, no Mabia language was represented at this workshop. Given the situation, the present study is a potential seminal effort that predominantly discusses the linguistics of body-parts in Likpakpaln, a Mabia language. It adds a new impetus to the scholarly discourse on the subject of body-parts linguistics.

3. The theoretical framework

This study is situated in the framework of ethnolinguistics as discussed in Bonvillain (2000) and Aikhenvald (2015). From an ethnolinguistic point of view, the practice of encoding values, ideas, perceptions and emotions in language is universal (Bonvillain, 2000: 49). This is to also say that the structure and usage of language as by any group of people is bound to express and reflect their attitudes, beliefs and perceptions about the world from their own cultural perspective. This view is further crystalised in Agyekum (2013: 1) when he convincingly argues that a strong interface obtains between a people's conceptual, environmental and cultural experiences and their linguistic systems. It is the attested close connection between language and culture that warrants the claim that the vocabulary of a language, for instance, has a quintessential role as a window into the universe of knowledge of its speakers and their view of the world around them (see Holmes, 2001; Mphande, 2006: 105; Wardhaugh, 2006). Indeed, Sapir (1949) underscored the point that human experiences are nothing, but a construct of language and culture. That is, to Sapir, all human experiences are, to a certain degree, mediated by culture and language.

The words employed in communication are multi-layered in terms of meaning, including concrete reference to objects as well as events and metaphoric or symbolic significance (Bonvillain, 2000: 49). While the foregoing assertion is true, it stands to reason that the meanings of the set of linguistic expressions used by an ethnolinguistic group can only be properly deciphered when one is well versed in the cultural models and knowledge of the context of the speakers. Culture varies from place to place and this variation has a significant role in accounting for linguistic differences. Again, due to these cultural variations, how entities are conceptualised and represented in language structure and usage go with characterisation that responds to the unique cultural context of the linguistic group concerned.

The use in language of body-parts as visible components of a human being and their grammatical properties thereof may correlate with the ways in which they are perceived. This leads us into the domain of culture, beliefs, traditions and other aspects of world view as reflect in language (Aikhenvald, 2015: 86). Aikhenvald further opines that many, if not all of the human body-parts may acquire dimensions of meaning with ethnographic importance. This suggests that the grammatical features as well as the semantico-pragmatics of human body-parts have the tendency to differ cross-linguistically. The foregoing theoretical notions constitute the tenets for the present analysis, which looks at BPTs from the linguistic context of Likpakpaln speakers in Ghana.

4 Methodology

This paper largely explores the linguistics of body-part names in the grammatical system of Likpakpaln. As a native speaker linguist (NSL), I offer the analysis from both emic and etic perspectives for a balanced positionality (see Levon, 2013: 196). The corpora were recorded from native speakers in the Nkwanta North District in the newly created Oti Region, Ghana. The data recordings were in digital and in hand-written modes. The Nkwanta North District is, notably, one of the geographic locations in Ghana where Likpakpaln is indigenously spoken (

Bisilki, 2017: 35; Ghana Statistical Service [GSS], 2014: 4). A triangulation of data methods and sources was used in order to enhance validity of findings. The sources included oral texts (including folktale narratives and spontaneous everyday conversations), observations, the semi-structured interview and elicitation stimuli. In the stimuli administration, six participants were shown pictures of the body-parts concerned. In turns, each participant was asked to form as many sentences as s/he could with each of the body-parts seen.

Additionally, I used the semi-structured interview for data from two purposively selected native-speaking consultants. The interview data was principally augmentative and served as a means for cross-checking the data gleaned from the other sources.

5. A brief background on Likpakpaln language

In this section, I consider some fundamental characteristics of Likpakpaln. These aspects, especially the noun structure and possessive expressions are key to understanding the expression properties of body-part terms in their basic and lexicalised structure.

Likpakpaln is a Mabia, Niger-Congo (see Naden, 1988). In Simons and Fennig's (2017) *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*, Likpakpaln speaker population in Ghana is placed at 831000. The same source and others (Naden, 1988; Hasselbring, 2006) report of other speakers in northern Togo. Likpakpaln comprises numerous clan dialects, although the exact number is not established yet (Hasselbring, 2006: 107; Schwarz, 2009: 182). The dialects, nevertheless, have been observed to share a considerable degree of mutual intelligibility (see, for example, Bisilki & Akpanglo-Nartey, 2017).

Likpakpaln is synthetic with respect to noun structure. It has an (embryonic) noun class system founded mainly on class prefixes and suffixes (see Bisilki & Akpanglo-Nartey, 2017; Winkelmann, 2012). The majority of prototypical Likpakpaln nouns cannot stand as words without an affix (i.e., they cannot be cited in root form only). This is a widely distributed feature of the Mabia languages (Dakubu, 2005: 42; Musah, 2018: 81/2; Nsoh, 2002: 2; Olawsky, 1999: 71). A class prefix may have a corresponding class suffix that it obligatorily co-occurs with in the structure of a noun. Apart from marking noun class membership, the class affixes are also a major means for coding singular-plural [sg-pl] dichotomy in nouns. But in a mass noun, an affix carries only a class marker function. There are also a handful of the Likpakpaln nouns which take only suffixing formatives, which form the basis for the class assignment of such nouns. The examples in (1) serve to illustrate that prototypical Likpakpaln nouns cannot occur in root form only:

- (1) a. **u-loo**
CL;SG-aligator
'aligator type'
- b. ***Ø-loo**
Ø-aligator
('aligator type')
- c. **li-nuu-l**
CL;SG-yam-CL;SG
'yam'
- d. ***Ø-nuu-l**
Ø-yam-CL;SG
('yam')

The incorrectness of the forms in (1b) and (1d) is due to the absence of an appropriate prefixal element. The forms in (1a) and (1c) can also be rendered as **i-loo** and **n-nuu** respectively in the plural version.

Likpakpaln has postpositions as relates, for example, to prepositional phrase structure. Similarly, an adjective complement is postposed to the nominal head in phrase structure. However, postpositions in Likpakpln are not body-parts as occurs in some Mabia languages (see Bodomo & Abubakari 2017). The italicised prepositional phrase and the noun phrase in (2) and (3) respectively show this linguistic feature of Likpakpaln:

- (2) **U-nangbasi** **bi** *li-buu-l* **ni**
 CL;SG-bee is CL;SG-pot-CL in
 ‘A bee is in the pot’
- (3) *U-sapuan-sakpiin* **ya** **doon**
 CL;SG-lady-big DEF come.IPFV
 ‘The big (young) lady is coming.’

Nonetheless, in the case of a nominal modifier, the order that is observed in (3) is reversed, such that the modifier is preposed to the head noun as in (4) and (5):

- (4) *Ti-naa-bin* **kaa-nuu.**
 CL-cow-faeces NEG-smell
 ‘Cow dung does not smell.’
- (5) **Konja ban** *li-kaln-tuln* **le**
 Konja want.IPFV CL-whiteman-work FOC
 ‘Konja wants a white-collar job.’

As can be seen in the italicised noun phrases (NPs) in (4) and (5), the nominal modifier, **u-naa** ‘cow’ is preposed to the noun head, **ti-bin** ‘faeces’ and same happens between **li-kaln** (something of Western or European culture) and its head noun, **li-tuln** ‘work’. It is worthwhile to remark that the placement of an adjective modifier relative to the head noun in the Likpakpaln phrase structure is compliant of the noun-adjective adjacency principle (Rijkoff, 2004). In an NP structure involving a nominal modifier, the class prefix of the modifying nominal is invariably dropped and its slot taken by the class prefix of the head noun. Hence, the nominal modifiers, **u-naa** ‘cow’ and **li-tuln** ‘work’ as occur in (4) and (5) respectively are without their class prefixes, **u-** and **li-**.

Attributive or adnominal possession in Likpakpaln follows possessor-possessee order. This form of a possessive construction requires prefixing/cliticising the possessee noun with a possessive morpheme. This can be seen with the italicised parts in (6) and (7):

- (6) **Sandee**¹ *aa-na* **kpii.**
 Sandee POSS-mother be.dead
 ‘Sandee’s mother is dead.’

¹ Sandee, literally meaning rabbit, is the trickster character in Bikpakpaam folklore.

- (7) **Nachiin aa-puu ŋman u-chal aa-bin.**
 Hyena POSS-wife eat.PFV her/his-husband POSS-faeces
 ‘Hyena’s wife ate her husband’s faeces.’

An attributive possessive construction can also consist of only the possessum, prefixed with an appropriate possessive morpheme. Nonetheless, to express possession in such a manner strictly requires that the identity of the possessor entity (antecedent of the possessive morpheme) is a shared knowledge of the speaker and the addressee in the context. Examples (8) and (9) instantiate this:

- (8) **Baa-saa-k ŋaa li-nuu-l li-beln le paam**
 POSS-farm-CL make.PRF CL-yam-CL CL;SG-year DEM INTENS
 ‘Their farm has yielded so much yam this year.’

- (9) **Waa-ŋuu-l pua**
 POSS-anger-CL be.hard
 ‘His/her anger is uncontrollable.’

The contextual background to (8) is that a son broke to his father the news of two brothers in their neighbourhood renovating their house to such a befitting status. The father’s response was as expressed in (8). The father’s point was that the two brothers had money to renovate their house because their yam farm yielded so much that year. That is, the two brothers made good money out of the sale of their yam proceed. In this case, there was no information gap between the interactants (father and son) as to the possessor as this was provided in the son’s utterance preceding the father’s in (8). A similar discourse-contextual condition makes it possible for the possessive construction used in (9). In Likpakpaln possessive expressions, the possessive morpheme in the possessum has reference and concordial agreement with the endocentric or the exocentric possessor.

Possessive phrases involving whole-part relations (holonym/meronym) such as the corporeal parts of the human being can follow either of the foregoing patterns discussed, depending on the discourse felicity conditions. As such, the forms in (10) and (11) are acceptable:

- (10) **Namuk aa-yi-l ŋaan**
 Namuk POSS-head-CL be.good
 ‘Namuk is fortunate.’

- (11) **Aa-yi-l ŋaan.**
 POSS-head-CL be.good
 ‘You are fortunate.’

Likpakpaln is basically an SVO word order language. The SVO pattern is a common place syntactic property of the Mabia family (see Abubakari, 2017: 44; Bodomo, 1997: 45; Nsoh & Ababila, 2009: 193). Nonetheless, under certain focus conditions, an object element can be fronted as illustrated in (14).

- (12) **U-kpan ku u-mə-naa** [canonical sentence]
 CL-hunter kill.PFV CL-bush-cow
 ‘The hunter killed a wild cow.’

- (13) **U-mo-naa nka u-kpan ko** [non-canonical sentence]
 CL-bush-cow FOC CL;SG-hunter kill.PFV
 ‘The hunter killed A WILD COW.’

Thus, the foregoing are some of the fundamental characteristics of Likpakpaln. These features are commonly seen in body-part words and how they are lexicalised into other source domains as will be observed in subsequent sections of this article.

6 Cultural models in the Bikpakpaam conception of the human being

In Likpakpaln, the terms **u-ni-bɔn**, **u-nii** and **u-nul** are conceptually synonymous in their reference to the human being or person. The subtlety is, nonetheless, that whereas **unibɔn** is dialectally neutral, the **unii/unul** variants have dialectal implications. For instance, in Linajuul, Likutul, Lisanguul, etc. clan dialects, **unul** is the preferred option whilst **unii** is the version used in Lichabɔl, Linankpɛl, Lisaanmaan, etc. dialects. Again, **unibɔn** is more defining. It consists of **unii** ‘person/human being’ and **-bɔn** ‘black’ and so literally means *black person*. While it is certain that there is some sense or awareness of body, soul and spirit as componential units of the human being in the Bikpakpaam milieu, what is not immediately clear is whether all these aspects are perceived to exist concurrently. This is on the basis that the Bikpakpaam mainly talk of a person in terms of **ti-wun** ‘body’ and **n-wiin** ‘soul’ while the person is still alive. This linguistic reality blurs the issue and, in particular, complicates any attempt at drawing boundaries between the soul and the spirit elements of the human being. The quandary surrounding soul-spirit dichotomy will be revisited shortly (later) in this section.

From the Bikpakpaam perspective, the tangible frame of a person that operates in the physical or earthly world, **ki-tiŋ-bɔ/u** is the **tiwun** ‘body’. The other aspect of **nwiin** ‘soul’ is a perceivable that lie beyond the physical world. By the scheme of things in the Bikpakpaam sociocultural dispensation, the non-corporeal part(s) of the human being, whether soul or spirit or both are held as sacred element(s). This is revealed in the fact that one can offer sacrifices to one’s **nwiin** ‘soul’ either to strengthen or cleans it or even on propitiatory grounds. In the Bikpakpaam belief system, the **nwiin** ‘soul’ is regarded as the source of life. No wonder, one’s life cannot stumble to the harm of witchcraft until one’s soul has been tempered with or arrested by an evil hound. It remains an explicit view of the Bikpakpaam that for a person to lose his or her life to witchcraft manipulation means that the person’s soul was first killed and feasted on by a witch or wizard in the esoteric realm of witchcraft. It is from this perception that in Likpakpaln it is put as **Bi ŋman u** ‘They have chewed him/her’ when conveying the sense of the death of one who is believed to have been a victim of witchcraft. This ties up with the theory of the connection between language and experience/perception. **Ki-naŋ** is another label for soul in Likpakpaln, but this option is found to be more frequently used in Christian discourse domains of the Bikpakpaam community.

Although there seems to be a sense of the spirit element of the human being among the Bikpakpaam, at the same time, one is unable to be forthright on the issue. As earlier indicated, it is the aspects of **tiwun** ‘body’ and **nwiin** ‘soul’ that come to the fore, per clues from speech input in the community. The spiritual dimension of the human being only seems inferable when one takes a critical dive into the Bikpakpaam cultural view of life after death. In the Bikpakpaam belief, every deceased individual only transitions into another world where s/he continues to exist in the non-carnal sense. This means that even one who dies out of bewitchment passes out of the earth to continue one’s existence in this other world. The question that arises at this point is that if the **nwiin** ‘soul’ of a person who dies out of bewitchment were supposedly devoured, then what form of the person recedes into the non-carnal realm? A person’s existence in that

stage could be thought to be in a form other than body or soul, most likely the aspect of spirit. Much as this extrapolation may sound logical, its prospects are dimmed by a lack of a linguistic label that clearly delineates the concept of spirit as a division of the human being in Likpakpaln. As such, upholding the claim that the human being has a spirit component can be culpable of the theoretical stance that the set of vocabulary of a language is a bastion of the universe of knowledge of its speakers and their view of the world around them (Holmes, 2001).

Indeed, some Bikpakpaam speak of spirit generally as **ki-fur**, also literally meaning *breath*. Out of **kifur** are derived the forms **n-furta-nyaan**, signifying ‘Holy Spirit’ and **ti-furtan-jɔn** ‘vile/evil spirit’. In this sense, the word, **kifur** occasions homonymy in Likpakpaln. A diachronic view of the use of **kifur** suggests that there has only been an extension in the semantic range of the word by adding spirit to its original meaning of *breath*. Language and cultural contact possibly underpinned this linguistic evolution as **kifur** as spirit can be associated more with religious discourse, with the advent of churches where Likpakpaln equivalents must be found for the concepts of the Akan *Honhonkrokron*, which is the Holy Spirit’ in English. This observation has credence in the hypothesis that a people’s language is inextricably interwoven with their culture, environment and various sectors of society. Therefore, a change in any of these variables naturally has a direct bearing on the nature and structure of the language and can bring about corresponding diachronic changes in the linguistic system (Agyekum, 2013: 2).

Given the accounts so far, this study proposes to settle that in the Bikpakpaam metaphysical world, the human being consists essentially of **tiwun** ‘body’ and **nwiin** ‘soul’. Again, as already hinted (in section 1), this paper focuses on the **tiwun** ‘body’ aspect of the human being and the linguistic characterisation of terms denoting its various parts. The study also seeks to explicate how these BPTs are lexicalised into other relatively more complex expressions in Likpakpaln and how the connected processes underlyingly reflect the sociocultural models of the native speaker. The parts: **li-yil** ‘head’, **ki-nyɔ-k** ‘mouth’ and **li-nimbi-l** ‘eye’ are the primary focus in this study.

7. The morphological structure of body-part nouns as a basic category

The term, **ti-wun** ‘body’ itself is bimorphemic. It is analysable into **ti-**, a class prefix and **-wun** as the stem. The stem, **-wun** is semantically opaque as it lacks any obvious inherent semantic transparency. Unlike their hypernym, **tiwun**, the Likpakpaln body-part nouns are generally tri-morphemic. Each body-part name consists of a stem, a class prefix and its corresponding suffix. The class prefixes and their corresponding suffixes must co-occur in the structure of a body-part noun. See the examples in (14) and (15):

- (14) a **li-yi-l**
 CL;SG-head-CL;SG
 ‘head’
- b **ki-nyɔ-k**
 CL;SG-mouth-CL;SG
 ‘mouth’
- c **li-nimbi-l**
 CL;SG-eye-CL;SG
 ‘eye’
- d ***li-yi-Ø**
 CL;SG-head
 (‘head’)

- e *Ø-nyɔ-k
mouth-CL;SG
(‘mouth’)

- f. **linimbi- Ø**
CL-eye
(‘eye’)

A body-part noun can be pluralised essentially through affixation as in the forms in (15).

- (15)
- a **n-yi-l**
CL;PL-head-CL;PL
(‘heads’)

 - b **n-nyɔ-m**
CL;PL-mouth-CL;PL
(‘mouths’)

 - c **n-tafa-l**
CL;PL-ear-CL;PL
(‘ears’)

 - d **n-nimbi-l**
CL;PL-eye-CL;PL
(‘eyes’)

N-tafa-l ‘ears’ is alternatively pluralised as **ti-tafa-r**. An interesting observation about the basic structure of Likpakpaln body-part nouns (as given in [15]) is that whereas prefixal segments always change in coding plurality, the corresponding suffixes may be altered or remain unchanged (compare examples in (15) with 14a, b and c). The unamenable nature of some of these suffixes render them sort of syncretic elements (see Katamba & Stonham, 2006: 37 for syncretism).

Although the set of nouns denoting body-parts undergo paradigm changes for number marking, they remain neutral gender wise. The membership of body-part nouns remains closed as no new terms are derived and added to their lexicon. Likpakpaln body-part nouns can be expressed alienably as though they were sortal nouns and each could exist in isolation or independently of the human body. This feature of Likpakpaln body-parts is akin to those of Manambu and Ewe (Aikhenvald, 2015: 88; Ameka, 1996: 783). A body-part is expressed as a possessum if only it is attributed to a particular person or persons, depicting a whole-part relationship. In the latter context, the body-part noun is cliticised with an appropriate possessive marker that has agreement and reference with the possessor antecedent. Illustrations of this are found in section 7.0. It needs emphasising that whole-part constructions involving BPTs in Likpakpaln grammar literally do not position the **tiwun** ‘body’ as the holonym to which a part belongs. Instead, a part (in this case a body-part) is a piece or a possessum of a person/human being. This linguistic variable is possibly rooted in the Bikpakpaam cognitive organisation where the **tiwun** ‘body’ is not the entirety of a person, but also only a facet of an individual. The Bikpakpaam speak of **unul aa-wun** ‘a person’s body’ in the sense of the **tiwun** ‘body’ being a part of a person. This is made clearer when one considers an utterance such as **Jagri aawun wɔɔ**,

which literally translates, ‘Jagri’s body is in pain’ and idiomatically as ‘Jagri is sick’. In the idiomatic usage, we can also say that **tiwun** ‘body’ is used metonymically to represent the person, Jagri.

8. The structure of body-part derived expressions.

The lexicalisation of body-parts into relatively complex expressions in Likpakpaln follows a concatenative process. The output terms of the lexicalisation process are predominantly compound nouns, with only a few exceptions. This makes the body-part derived nouns in Likpakpaln akin to the Akan body-part expressions (see Agyekum, 2013: 5). In Likpakpaln, a body-part derived expression basically comprises a noun (BPT), plus an adjective complement. This structure can be schematised as:

N (body-part noun/BPT) + adjective → body-part derived expression (\pm compound noun). This can be seen in (16):

- (16) a **li-yi-muan**
 CL;SG-head-sweet
 ‘fortune/good luck’
- b **Li-yi-kpel**
 CL;SG-head-dead
 ‘misfortune/bad luck’

In (16a), we find the body-part derived compound noun consisting of the body-part noun, **liyil** ‘head’ and the adjective complement, **-muan** ‘sweet’. Similarly, in (16b), the structure comprises the body-part noun, **liyil** ‘head’ and the adjective complement, **-kpel** ‘dead/bad’. As can also be noted from the examples in (16), the structure of body-part derived compounds falls in line with the noun-adjective adjacency principle that is found to be operational in Likpakpaln (earlier mentioned in 4.0). Furthermore, as a nominal, a body-part derived compound noun retains a class prefix in the original basic body-part. Tables 1, 2 and 3 provide a list of body-part derived expressions in Likpakpaln. The expressions are based on **liyil** ‘head’, **kinyɔk** ‘mouth’ and **linimbil** ‘eye’.

Table 1: Liyil ‘head’ based body part derived expressions

No	Body part expression in Likpakpaln	Literal translation	English gloss/idiomatic meaning
1	liyimuan/liyinyaan [+]	sweet head/good head	fortune/good luck
2	liyikpel [-]	bad/dead head	misfortune/bad luck
3	n-yigbein [-]	big head	arrogance/daring
4	n-yipuan [\pm]	hard/strong head	wickedness/headstrong/difficult to subdue/uncontrollable
5	liyibiil [-]	spoiled head	waywardness/misfit
6	liyi-yar [+]	lifted head	honorable/face saving
7	n-yiduun [-]	swollen headed	disgrace/shame

Table 2: Kinyɔk ‘mouth’² based body part expressions

No	Body part expression in Likpakpaln	Literal translation	English gloss/idiomatic meaning
1	kinyɔmuan [±]	sweet mouth	persuasion/flattery
2	kinyɔdiin [±]	soft mouth	soft spoken/undefensive
3	nnyɔpuan [-]	hard/strong mouth	loudness
4	linyɔkpel [-]	bad mouth	abusive language/insulting mouth
5	kinyɔkuun [-]	empty mouth	vain talk/bluster/empty boast
6	kinyɔbaan [+]	single/one mouth	Unity
7	kinyɔk waa [-]	wide/open mouth	indiscreet/extravagant
8	kinyɔk wɔɔ [-]	painful mouth	insulting mouth
9	kinyɔk ni mɔɔ (kinyɔk mɔɔ) [-]	mouth inside sweet (sweet mouth)	having a sweet tooth
10	nnyɔtun [-]	bitter mouth	sadness/sorrow/regret

Table 3: Linimbil ‘eye’ based body part expressions

No	Body part expression in Likpakpaln	Literal translation	English gloss/idiomatic meaning
1	nnimbidiin [±]	soft eye	understanding/obedient/easily controlled
2	nnimbipuan [-]	Strong or hard eye	untamable/unyielding/stubborn
3	inimbiwun	eye open	enlightenment/civilization
4	linimbipaln	eye put on	hope/expectation
5	ininkuun [-]	dry eye	merciless/unsympathetic/shameless/wicked
6	nnimbifɔk [-]	long eye	greed/insatiable
7	kinimbibɔn [-]	eye dizziness	confusion
8	linimbimaln [-]	red eye	Distress

² [+] after an expression means the expression generally has a positive connotation whilst [-] after an expression suggests a negative connotation. On the other hand, [±] after an expression means it can have a positive or negative connotation, depending on context. The interpretation of these notations is the same for all the tables.

Although a majority of body-part derived expressions are nominal compounds, a handful of this class of expressions remain clausal structures and are usually rendered so, even in isolation. They have the structure:

N (body-part noun/BPT) + (postposition.) + V → body-part derived expression.

Examples 7, 8 and 9 in table 2 are instances of clausal body-part derived expressions. These examples are provided in (17), (18) and (19) as follows:

- (17) **Ki-nyo-k** **waa** (indiscreet/extravagant)
 CL;SG-mouth-CL;SG be.open
 ‘Mouth is open.’
- (18) **Ki-nyo-k** **woo** (insulting mouth)
 CL;SG-mouth-CL;SG be.painful
 ‘Mouth is painful.’
- (19) **Ki-nyo-k** **ni** **moo** (having a sweet tooth)
 CL;SG-mouth-CL;SG inside be.sweet
 ‘Sweet inside the mouth.’

So far, an observation that can also be made is that while the body-part nouns as source domains remain simple structures, the derived expressions as the resulting target domains assume relatively complex forms. This phenomenon reflects the view that, in language, the complex expressions are derived from the basic categories, which include BPTs (Sweetser, 1990: 1). In a sentence structure, a body-part derived expression can be used either inalienably or alienably. In the former case, it is a possessum and must have attribution to a person or a possessor entity. In the latter situation, a body-part derived compound noun is rendered in the fashion of a sortal noun as it is morphologically not marked as a possessum or related to any possessor.

- (20) **U-nasuu** **kpa** **n-yi-gbein**
 CL;SG-thief has CL-head-big
 ‘A thief can be daring.’
- (21) **I-nin-kuun** **bii** **li-mantol**
 CL-eye-dry spoil.IPFV CL;SG-family
 ‘Wickedness mars family relations.’

As can be noted in (20), the nominal compound, **n-yigbein** ‘daring’ is a possessee of **unasuu**, ‘thief’ while in (21) **ininkuun**, ‘wickedness’ is used in the sense of a non-relational term.

Possessive expressions involving body-part derived nominals in Likpakpaln can be achieved through adnominal possession (prenominal possessive) or predicative possessive constructions (see Barker, 2008: 1; Stassen, 2009: 26-8 for typology of possessives). Examples (22) and (23) instantiate these possessive construction types:

- (22) **Nakool** **aa-nimbil** **pua**
 Nakool POSS-eye be.hard
 ‘Nakool is untamable.’

- (23) **Nakool** **kpa** *n-nimbi-puan*
 Nakool has CL-eye-hard
 ‘Nakool is untamable.’

In (22), possession with the body-part expression is by the use of a prenominal possessive construction and by a predicative possessive construction in (23). In the case of a predicative possessive construction option, a body-part derived expression may not be retained in a compound form as the otherwise adjective complement is decategorialised into a verb of state which assumes a predicate role in the sentence. (22) and (25) are examples of this:

- (24) **Sandee** **kpa** *n-nimbi-fɔk*
 Sandee has CL-eye-long
 ‘Sandee is greedy.’
- (25) **Sandee** *aa-nimbi* **fɔk**
 Sandee POSS-eye be.long
 ‘Sandee is greedy.’

9. The semantico-pragmatics of body-part derived expressions

Although body-parts are a set of universal extensions, the expressions derived from them, in the Likpakpaln case, will often be semantically anomalous, if taken in their denotative or general meanings. A body-part derived expression usually attains a meaning that is a markedly semantic shift from the denotation of the source body-part term. The derived expression, thus, attains a new meaning from the original body part. In the derived expression, the body-part may be gravely divested of a critical defining feature by giving it a contradictory feature as in (26) and (27) below:

- (26) **Namuk** *aa-nimbi* **pua**
 Namuk POSS-eye be.hard
 ‘Namuk is unyielding.’
- (27) **Saaja** *aa-nyɔk* **pua**
 Saaja POSS-mouth be.hard
 ‘Saaja is loud.’

In (26), the eye is divested of its softness and fragility features and portrayed as a strong/hard object. Similarly, in (27), the mouth is contradictorily portrayed as hard/strong, instead of a fleshy, supple part of the human body.

The new meanings attained by body-part derived expressions are generally abstract, in contrast to the reference of the physical/concrete body-parts from which they are derived. The abstract denotation of a derived expression may be a personality attribute or any other concept such as hope, enlightenment, etc. The abstract nature of meanings in body-part derived expressions in Likpakpaln resonates with the views of Dirven et al. (2007) and Semino (2008). According to Dirven et. al., bodily experience is a fertile ground for the conceptualisation of emotions and abstract thought. On the part of Semino, target domains are comparatively more abstract and complex than their corresponding source domains. Also, the assumption of abstract meanings by these derived forms can be said to be a trace of desemanticisation that can potentially evolve further, with time (see Shustova et al. (2017: 35)). The desemanticisation is

seen in the bleaching of concrete/physical concepts into abstract ones in the denotations of the lexicalised expressions.

The semantic pattern of synonymy is also found in body part expressions in Likpakpaln. For instance, **n-yipuan** ‘hard head’ and **ininkuun** ‘dry eye’ can both interpret as wickedness, depending on the communicative context. A form of homonymy also obtains in the body part derived expressions of Likpakpaln. For example, the expression, **kinyɔk waa** ‘mouth open’ has two different interpretations: indiscreet and extravagant. Same goes for **ininkuun** ‘shamelessness’ and **ininkuun** ‘wickedness’.

While some of the body-part derived expressions are totally detached from their source body-part words in meaning, others maintain a meaning relationship with their source body-parts. In cases such as **kinyɔk ni mɔ** ‘having a sweet tooth’ and **linyɔkpel** ‘abusive language’, we find some correlations/associations between the literal functions of mouth and the meanings of these expressions. Such body-part derived expressions also pass for the description as metaphoric derivations or extensions of the original body part terms.

Likpakpaln body-part derived expressions are constative utterances. The meanings of these utterances are more associative than denotative. Deciphering the meaning of a body-part derived expression is with much recourse to the particular communicative context and the cultural knowledge of the native speaker milieu. Apart from the fact that connotations vary from context to context (Thakur, 2009: 14-15), body-part derived expressions in Likpakpaln are found to be culturally mediated. The fact that body part expressions are culturally filtered is well grounded in the literature (Agyekum, 2019; Ogarkova & Soriano, 2014; Yu, 2008). In Likpakpaln, this is to the extent that the repertoire of body-part derived expressions is fairly fixed and their meanings are fossilised and rooted in how the Birkpakpaam conceptualise life. For instance, among the Birkpakpaam the prototypical sense of extravagance is normally applicable to a situation where a person spends lavishly on sumptuous meals or edible items. That is, to the Birkpakpaam, any level of spending on durable or things that are more material may still remain a positive act. This cultural perception underpins the logical connection between **kinyɔk waa** ‘open/wide mouth’ and the meaning, extravagance. Here, the Birkpakpaam concept of extravagance is associated with the mouth as the human organ that performs the act of eating.

10. Conclusions

In this paper, I have discussed body-part terms in Likpakpaln and how they are lexicalised. This has been done mostly from a descriptive point of view. Cognitive linguistics notions have also been minimally drawn on in the paper where applicable. The analysis reveals that body parts serve as a productive lexical domain in Likpakpaln. They are a major means of lexical derivation for many abstract concepts (most especially those related to human attributes, predispositions and intellect among others) for which there are no equivalent terms. The abstract denotations of the target domains of BPTs is in tandem with the observations of Lakoff and Johnson (1980), Lakoff (1993), Yu (2008: 249-250) and Agyekum (2019: 124). As noted by the afore-mentioned researchers, in language, there is the tendency to borrow concepts and vocabulary from the relatively more accessible physical and social worlds to account for the less accessible worlds of abstraction (emotion, reasoning and intellect, just to name a few). The linguistic structure of basic body-part terms and their lexicalised forms have been examined. As a basic category, body part terms have a structural pattern closely aligned with those of prototypical nouns in the Likpakpaln language. That is, the core forms contain class affixes and stems. The lexicalised output expressions, on their part, are mostly nominal compounds. The constituents of the lexicalised body part compound are a head noun and an adjectival complement. There are, however, a few cases where the lexicalised body-part expression assumes a clausal structure. I have also argued that semantically, body part derived expressions in Likpakpaln are constative. The expressions exhibit meaning relations of synonymy and homonymy. There are also uneven patterns of semantic shifts and metaphorical associations between the source domains and their target domains. Finally, it is recommended that a future

analysis of Likpakpaln body-part expressions in the cognitive linguistic theories of conceptual metaphor and embodiment be considered. Such an approach will offer a more focused theoretical contribution on the subject, since the present study already addresses the core/basic linguistics aspects.

Abbreviations

BPT	Body part term	NP	Noun phrase
CL	(Noun) class	PFV	Perfective
DEF	Definite marker	PRF	Perfect
DEM	Demonstrative	PL	Plural
FOC	Focus marker	POSS	Possessive
INTENS	Intensifier	POSTPOS	Postposition
IPFV	Imperfective	SG	Singular
NEG	Negative marker	V	verb
N	Noun		

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