A sociolinguistic study of an Ewe-based youth language of Aflao, Ghana

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CHAPTER THREE

A STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF AN ADZAGBE CONVERSATION

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a structural analysis of one of the audio-visual recordings of an Adzagbe conversation as the first part of the answer to the first research question, which seeks to unearth what goes into the creation of Adzagbe among the youth of Aflao, Ghana. In this analysis, attention is given to the manipulations involved in the creation of Adzagbe vocabulary. Discussions concern creativity as regards the employment of foreign materials, word-formation processes, social meanings Adzagbe speakers attach to their code, and the performance of Adzagbe.

However, before specific parts of the conversation in question are isolated and discussed, the entire conversation is presented, glossed, and translated below. This conversation comprises four participants, all males, comprising three Adzagbe speakers and a non-Adzagbe speaker. Let us call the non-Adzagbe speaker Amenyo and the three Adzagbe speakers Denyo, Dodzi and Gameli. Denyo wanted to help Amenyo, an Ewe speaker from a nearby town of Agbozume, to cross the border into Togo. The Ghana-Togo border has been closed as part of the covid19 measures taken by the two countries. Denyo takes Amenyo to Dodzi and Gameli for help. Their conversations cover topics such as crossing the border illegally, politics, sex, and survival tactics during the covid19 pandemic.

This conversation is a recording of a re-enactment of the experience narrated above. The re-enactment comprises the same three Adzagbe speakers, namely, Denyo Dodzi and Gameli and a substitute for Amenyo, the non-Adzagbe speaker, by one of the researcher's assistants. The recording was done by the researcher. The experience could not be recorded for ethical reasons because Amenyo gave no prior consent to being

recorded. Besides, the site of the live conversation is a crowded place and recording a scene could be taken as invading people's privacy. The idea of the re-enactment was brought up by Denyo, one of the Adzagbe speakers in the live experience. Part of the conversation takes place in the presence of Amenyo as he is the one to be helped to cross the border into Togo. As the conversation grows, Amenyo leaves the scene and the three Adzagbe speakers continue their discussions on how to take advantage of Amenyo and make money. The following is the conversation, followed by its structural analysis. The bold parts of the conversation are the Adzagbe terms from the base Ewe and foreign materials.

3.2 An Adzagbe Conversation

3.2.1 Dodzi: Ne è-**tse** **paɖi** yia, è-ya **fũ**
        COND. 2SG-see man PROX 2SG-AUX know

        be   me-tso   du-a   me   o.
        COMP   NEG-come   town-DEF   POST NEG
        'If you see this man, you can tell he is not from town.'

3.2.2 Gameli: Me-**fũ**
          1SG-know
          'I know.'

3.2.3 Denyo: Adza-wo   leke-o?   Leke-e   nye du-a   me?
          rogue-PL   how-PRT   how-FOC   COP town-DEF POST
          'Rogues, how? How is town?'

 3.2.4   Mía-wo   ɖeko mí-le   gbɔ   tso   **dziame** yia.
         1PL-PL   just 2PL-VLOC return   PREP abroad   PROX
         'We are just coming from abroad.'

 3.2.5   Nye me brɔda-e   yia.
         1SG POSS brother-FOC PROX.

3.2.5.1 Ɖeko wò-gbɔ   tso   **dzia**-e   yia.
         just 3sg-return   prep abroad-foc   prox
         'This is my brother; he has just returned from abroad.'

3.2.6 Dodzi: **Sevo** ke li?
           brain what exist

3.2.6.1 Ame-nye   **alayi** ɖe wɔ-m-ee?   È-be   leke?
    person-1SG:POSS, lie   INDEF do-PROG-FOC. 2SG-say what
      'What idea is there? Friend, you are saying something. What are you saying?'

3.2.7 Denyo: Me-bena ta mi-a-**wɔ-avu**   na   mɩ́ ne
          1sg-say   DEM 2PL-SUBJV-do-struggle DAT   1PL CONJ

 3.2.8 mɩ́-a-cross, mi-a-**wɔ**   **bagu**
      1PL-FUT-cross 2PL-SUBJV-do fake

      ne mɩ-́a-tso   de-a.
      PREP 1PL-SUBJV-cross border-DEF
      'I'm saying that you help us cross the border illegally.'

 3.2.9 Fifi-laa   ko mɩ́-gbɔ   tso **dzi-a**.
      now-INT   just 1PL-return PREP above-DEF.
      'We just returned from abroad.'

 3.2.10 Gameli: Mi-be   mi-a-cross   a-yi   du-a   me-a?
             2PL-say 2PL-SUBJV-cross SUBJV-go   town-DEF POST-Q
             'You want to cross into town?'

 3.2.11 Denyo: Mɩ́-le   yi   ɖe   du-a   me vɔa blewu blewu.
           1PL-VLOC go   PREP   town-DEF POST CONJ slowly slowly
           'We want to cross into town but let's take it easily.'

3.2.12 Gameli: Ame   yia   me **pɔme le   shoo**.
           person PROX POSS pocket VLOC IDEO.
           'This guy's pocket is full of money.' (Referring to Amenyo)

3.2.13 Dodzi: Ame-nye,   fifi-laa-fia   *one two three four five*,
          person-1SG:POSS now-INT-now

3.2.14 è-le   do   mɩ́a me   gbe
      2SG-VLOC speak 1PL POSS language

ta   me-**fũ**   be   **adza** ne-nye.
CONJ 1SG-know COMP   rogue 2SG-COP
'Friend, right now, I can tell you are a rogue because you speak our language.'

3.2.15 Denyo: Ame-nye,   **adza** me-nye,   ny-a   edu-a
person-1SG   rogue 1SG-COP   1SG-TOP town-DEF

me   wo-dzi   ny-a   ny-a   ɖo.
POST 3PL-birth 1SG-TOP 1SG-TOP   POST.

3.2.16 Ny-a   edu-a   me wo-**fã**   ny-a   ny-a   ɖo.
1SG-TOP town-DEF POST 3PL-birth   1SG-TOP 1SG-TOP   POST.
'Friend, I am a rogue and I was born in this town. I was born in this town.'

3.2.17 Nye me **aloba**-e   yia,   ya   du-a
1SG POSS man-FOC   PROX 3SG   town-DEF

me   me-kplɔ-e   tso   va.
POST 1SG-bring-3SG PREP come.

3.2.18 Me-ya-**kɔ**   **alɔ**   ɖeka eve nɛ.
1SG-AUX-raise   arm one two DAT:3SG
'This is my friend. I have brought him from town and I want to teach him some tricks.'

3.2.19 Ta   mí-a-**kɔ**   **alɔ**   ɖeka eve nɛ.
CONJ 1PL-SUBJV-raise arm   one two DAT:3SG.

3.2.20 Ta   ny-a   nye me brɔda   ye,
CONJ 1SG-TOP   1SG POSS brother FOC

ta   **alayi** me-li   o.
CONJ lie   NEG-exist   NEG
'So we can teach him a few things. He is my brother, so no lies.'

3.2.21 Ny-a   nye ŋutɔ-a   **adza**   me-nye,
1SG-TOP   1SG very-TOP   rogue   1SG-COP,

du-a   me   wo-dzi-m   ɖo.
town-DEF   POST   3SG-birth-1SG POST.

3.2.22 Nye me **mma** le de-a dzi.
1SG POSS mother VLOC border-DEF POST
'I for one I am a rogue born in this town. My mother is at the border side.'

3.2.23 Wò   ŋutɔ è-**fũ**,   me-yi   du-a   me fia   dzidzi.
2SG   very   2SG-know,   1SG-go   town-DEF   POST now   long.
 'As you yourself know, it has been long since I had been to town.'

3.2.24 Gameli: Fifia è-dza   se gɔme   be   hafi
            now 2SG-AUX hear under   COMP   before

mí-a-**tse**   **koti**-wo   le
1PL-SUBJV-see   police-PL   VLOC

 fima, wo-le   **wɔ wad** ŋutɔ…
 there 3PL-VLOC   do wild   very
'Now you have to understand that before we see the police over there…they are   very
wild.'

3.2.25 Dodzi: Ne   mí-be   mí-a-to
           COND 1PL-say 1PL-SUBJV-pass

       bɔda   alo beat nine fifi-laa-fia,
       border PRT   now-INT-now

     corona me nu   yia   ta   ye-wo-a
           POSS thing PROX CONJ LOG-PL-SUBJV

      quarantine mí for *some time*. È-se   gɔme-a?
             1PL   2SG-hear under-Q
'If we want to cross through the main border or beat nine, because of covid19
they may quarantine us. Do you understand?'

3.2.26 Denyo: Ee
          Yes

3.2.27 Gameli: Vɔ-a   mí́a mí́-**fũ**
        CONJ-TOP 1PL   1PL-know

   ne   du-a-me,   **eguadzi** mí́a-wo   mí́-le.
   DAT   town-DEF-POST   street   1PL-PL   1PL-VLOC
   'But we, we know town and we are on the streets.'

3.2.28 Ne   wo-**tse**   mí́a-wo   ye   mí́-**le**
      COND   3PL-see 1PL-PL   CONJ 1PL-VLOC

   baya   me   ko-a
   behind   POST just-TOP

   mí́-ya   **gu**   wo-a   ko-a   mí́-a-to   le   me.
   1PL-AUX trick 3PL-TOP just-TOP   1PL-SUBJV-leave   PREP POST
    'If they focus their attention on us, we can sneak behind them and cross over on
    their blind side.'

3.2.29 Denyo: (to Amenyo) *They will help us cross the border.*

3.2.30 Amenyo: Ok

3.2.31 Denyo: **Granfre**, mi-ya   **wɔ-avu**   ne   mí́.
           friend   2PL-AUX do-struggle   DAT   1PL.

3.2.31.1 Me-nye   **tasoso** me   ŋɖeke   o.
            NEG-COP   fraud   POSS nothing   NEG
            'Friend, you will help us but do not defraud us.'

3.2.32 Leke-o   **esa**   ya   mí́-wɔ-a,   e-le   gbedzi-a?
      how-PRT   dress PROX 1PL-do-TOP   3SG-VLOC right-Q
      'How? The dress that we are wearing, is it alright?'

3.2.33 Gameli: Ee
           Yes

3.2.34 Gameli: Mi-ya   ɖe   dze   va   mí-a-kɔ   *settle*   **koti**-wo.
           2PL-AUX   remove   money come 1PL-SUBJV-take   police-PL
           'You will give us some money to settle the police officers.'

3.2.35 Denyo: **Edze**-a   li   vɔ.
            money-DEF exist   finish

3.2.35.1 Mi-a   mi-**wɔ-avu**   ne mí gbɔ.
        2PL-TOP 2PL-do-struggle   DAT 1PL moment
        'The money is right here. You just help us first.'

3.2.36 Dodzi: **Granfre**, **ku kuu**, **ku kuu**.
            friend   cool cool cool cool

3.2.36.1 E-le   blewu, e-le   blewu, **wɔ**-**alayi**, **wɔ**-**alayi**.
        3SG-VLOC slowly 3SG-VLOC slowly, do-lie   do-lie
        'Friend, take it easy, take it easy. It is alright, you speak, you speak.'

3.2.37 **Papãpii**   me-le   me   o, **ku kuu**.
      too.much.talk   NEG-VLOC POST NEG cool cool.

   3.2.37.1 Me-ga-nɔ   ƒo ŋƒo   sugbɔ o.
           NEG-REP-stay   beat speech lot   NEG
           'No need for too much talking. Take it easy. Don't talk too much.'

3.2.38 Ne èƒo   ŋƒo   sugbɔ-a, **akayi**-wo   li   wo-dza-va
       COND 2SG-beat speech lot-TOP   lie-PL   exist   3PL-AUX-come

    rob elabe   wo-nya   be   me-nye du-a   me mi-tso   o.
        because 3PL-know COMP   NEG-COP town-TOP   POST 2PL-come NEG
        'If you talk too much, tricksters will come and rob us because they can tell you
        are not from this town.'

3.2.39 Denyo: Me-**fũ**,   yeta me-**tse** mi abe **granfre-wo**   ene,
            1SG-know   CONJ 1SG-see 2PL as   friend-PL   as

    ye me-zɔ   ɖe mia dzi be   mi-a-**wɔ-alayi** ne mí.
    CONJ 1SG-walk POST 2PL POST COMP   2PL-FUT-do-lie DAT 1PL.
    'I know, that is why I see you as friends and I approach you to help us.'

3.2.40 Dodzi: È-nya ŋke-e dzɔ-a?   Énya ŋke-e dzɔ-a?
     2SG-know what-FOC happen-Q 2SG-know what-FOC happen-Q

3.2.40.1 Emɔ-a ame eve-e   li.
   way-TOP person two-FOC exist
   'Do you know what happened? Do you know what happened? There are two ways.'

 3.2.40.2 **Aƒlame** li   hafi gɔ-a-me   li.
    seaside exist before under-DEF-POST exist
    'There is the seashore or the under way.'

 3.2.41 Denyo: Ke fika mi-kpɔ be mɪ́-a-**wɔ-avu**   to?
      CONJ where 2PL-see COMP 1PL-FUT-do-struggle pass
      'So where do you think we can pass?'

3.2.42 Gameli: È -nya ŋke-e dzɔ-a?
      2SG-know what-FOC happen-Q
      'Do you know what happened?'

3.2.43 Denyo: Ao.
     No

3.2.44 Gameli: Ye mɪ-́va **tra** me egb'a
      COND 1PL-come work POST today-TOP

    mɪ́a me **aloba** ɖeka le du-a-me   le **ƒlame**
    1PL POSS friend one VLOC town-DEF-POST VLOC seashore

    ta mɪ́-dza *carry* mi to **ƒladzi.**
    CONJ 1PL-AUX   2PL POST seashore
    'When we came to work today, one of our friends is at the seashore so we will take you through the seashore.'

    Mi-ya ɖiɖi   to   gɔme-a.
    2PL-AUX descend through under-DEF
    'You will descend through the underside.'

3.2.45 Denyo: **Adz**a-wo, vɔ-a   mí-le   se **alayi** ɖe   be   Jay Jay ku la!
              rogue-PL CONJ-TOP 1PL-VLOC hear lie   some COMP   J.   J. die PRT
              'Rogues, we have heard some news that Jay Jay is dead!'

3.2.46 Dodzi: Mí-le   du-a   me mí-le   se **alayi-a**.
              1PL-VLOC town-TOP POST 1PL-VLOC   hear lie-DEF
              'We are in town and we are hearing the news.'

3.2.47 Gameli: O   **mɔfɔ**   ma,   **paɗi**   ma   me   ku-a,
              INTERJ fool   DEM man   DEM POSS   death-DEF

          Jay me **alayi** ma me-nye   nu   vi-e   le   yi dzi o   ɖe.
          Jay POSS lie   DEM NEG-COP thing small-FOC VLOC go POST NEG PRT
          'O that fool, that man's death; the news about Jay's death is not a small thing that is going on.'

3.2.48 Denyo: (to Amenyo) We are talking about our ex-president's death.

3.2.49 Denyo: Wo-be **alayi-a**   ny-a   nye ŋutɔ
              3PL-say lie-DEF   1SG-TOP 1SG very

        me-**fũ**   Nana Akuffo Addo-e   **hayi aloba.**
        1SG-know Nana…   Addo-FOC   kill   man
        'They say the news, I myself I very well know that it is Nana Akuffo Addo who had killed him.'

3.2.50 É-se   gɔme-a?   **Efũ**   be
       2SG-hear under-Q   3SG-know   COMP

       aloba-e le   me hafi   wo-**hayi mpa**,
       man-FOC VLOC POST before   3PL-kill father

       mpa ma yi ke ɖu   president-a.
       father DIST REL INT become president-DEF
       'Do you understand? He knows that the man was with the people who killed his father, his father that was the president.'

       Adza me-nye   la!   Me-le   **wɔ-alayi**   na   mi
       rogue 1SG-COP PRT   1SG-VLOC do-lie   DAT 2PL

be   mɪ́a-wo mɪ́-le   du-a-me   xoxoxo.
COMP   1PL-PL 1PL-VLOC   town-DEF-POST   long.ago
'I am a rogue! I am telling you that we have been in this town long ago.'

3.2.51 Edu-a   me   ny-a   me-xɔ   *level*   ɖekpekpe le.
        town-DEF POST 1SG-TOP   1SG-receive   all   PREP

3.2.51.1 Mia   ŋutɔ mi-**fũ**.
          2SPL very 2PL-know
          'I have learned all my tricks in this town. You yourselves you know.'

3.2.52 Mɪ́-dza   va   **wɔ-muvmã**   *one two three four five.*
        1PL-AUX   come   do-movement
        'We will come to do something one two three four five.'

3.2.53 Nye kple   nye me   brɔda   ma-**kɔ**   alɔ   ɖeka eve nɛ.
        1SG CONJ 1SG POSS brother 1SG-take   arm   one two DAT:3SG
        'My brother and I, I want to teach him some tricks'

3.2.54 Dodzi: Fifi-laa-fia,   mɪ́-ya-kɔ   mi to **aflame**. È-se   gɔme-a?
              now-INT-now   1PL-AUX-take   2PL pass seashore. 2SG-hear under-Q
              'Right now, we will take you through the seashore. You understand?'

3.2.55 Gameli: **Aƒuame**   le   mia ŋtsi   alo **duame**-e?
               foreign.currency VLOC 2PL enter.surface PRT local.currency-FOC
               'Do you have foreign currency or local currency?'

3.2.56 Denyo: **Aƒuame**   li,   Ghana cedi li,   mía me CFA li.
              foreign.currency exist   G.   cedi exist,   1PL POSS CFA exist
              'We have foreign currency, Ghana cedi and CFA on us.'

3.2.57 Ŋɖekpekpe le   mɪ́a ŋu   ta   mi-ga   *worry*   o.
        everything VLOC 1PL body CONJ   2PL-REP   NEG
        'Everything is set on us, so don't worry.'

3.2.58 Gameli: Vɔ-a   nya   ŋka ye-a?
               CONJ-TOP   know what FOC-Q
               'But do you know what's more?'

3.2.59 Denyo: Ao
              No.

3.2.60 Gameli: Hafi   mí-a-**tse**   Togo.tɔ-wo   ŋtsi
              before   1PL-SUBJV-see Togolese-PL   enter.surface

        è-ya   xe **bela**. È-**fũ**   ne   **bela**?
        2SG-AUX pay bela. 2SG-know   DAT   bela
        'Before we pass by the Togolese soldiers, you will pay bela. Do you know bela?'

3.2.61 Denyo: **Bela** me dix mill-e   ma?
              bela NEG ten thousand-FOC DIST
              'Bela, isn's that ten thousand?'

3.2.62 Gameli: **Bela-**e   ma.
              bela-FOC DIST
              'That's bela.'

3.2.62 Ne   mí-ga   ɖo   Ghana me **drã-wo**   gbɔ-a,
        COND 1PL-REP   reach Ghana POSS soldier-PL near-TOP

        wo-xɔ-na   **koko koko** wo ame   ene.
        3PL-take-HAB cocoa cocoa 3PL person   four
        'When we reach the Ghanaian soldiers, they take forty Ghana cedis.'

3.2.63 Denyo: **Edze**-a   le   fi   yia.
              money-DEF VLOC place PROX
              'The money is here.'

      3.2.64 Ke leke-o,   mí-a-te   kpɔ gagbala   ɖe
             CONJ how-PRT   1PL-FUT-can see money.exchanger   some

        wò-a-gbã   dze-a   na mí *one two three four five*-a?
        3SG-FUT-exchange money-DEF   DAT 1PL one   five-Q
        'So how? Can we get any money exchanger to change the money for us one two three four five?'

3.2.64 Gameli: Wò-a   kɔ   **dze**-a   na   **granfre** ko-a…
              2SG-TOP take   money-DEF   DAT friend   just-TOP…
              'You just give the money to my friend.'

3.2.65 Denyo: Problem ɖeka le   mí-a-gbɔ   fia ye nye
              problem one VLOC 1PL-near   now FOC COP

      wo-be du-a   me   akɔdada ƒe *level* ɖe-wo.
      3PL-say town-DEF POST   election POSS   some-PL.
      'One problem with us now is we heard about the election problems in the
      country.'

3.2.66 Wo-be ame   yia   me-ɖu   dzi o.
       3PL-say person PROX NEG-win   top NEG

3.2.67 Nyitsɔ   wo-ga-le-gblɔ   be   *court*
       two.days.ago 3PL-REP-VLOC-say COMP

       ƒe ŋɖe-wo,   *politics* ƒe nya ɖe-wo.
       POSS something-PL   POSS word some-PL
       'They said this one has not won the elections; two days ago, I heard about some
       court cases regarding the elections.'

3.2.68 Ŋke-e   le   yi dzi le   du-a   me? Mí-le *worry* kua.
       that-FOC VLOC go top PREP town-DEF POST 1PL-VLOC   ADV

3.2.69 Mí-le   kpɔ be   du-a   me me-le   gbedzi   kua.
       1PL-VLOC see COMP town-DEF POST NEG-VLOC   right   ADV
       'What's going on in town? We're just worried that things are not alright in town.'

3.2.70 Dodzi: Du-a   me le   gbedzi ne   wò ŋutɔ
              town-DEF POST VLOC right   COND 2SG very

       è-le   gbedzi ko-a   du-a   me le   gbedzi.
       2SG-VLOC right   just-TOP town-DEF POST VLOC right
       'Everything is alright in town if you are alright yourself.'

3.2.71 Ta *politics* me nya ma   katã **alayi**-e.
       CONJ   POSS word DIST all   lie-FOC
       'So all those political talks are lies.'

3.2.72 *Politics*-a   *TV* dzi   me **fɔdzi**-e.
       politics-DEF TV POST POSS fackery-FOC
       'All political matters are television fakeries.'

3.2.73 Ɖeko wo-le-**glã-**dumevi-wo   kɔ   le-**wɔ-bagu**   a-kɔ   wu *time*.
       just   3PL-VLOC-deceive-citizen-PL take   VLOC-do-fake   SUBJV-take kill
       'Those are just pretences to deceive citizens and to kill time.'

3.2.74 Gameli: Ta   mía ŋutɔ mí-le   du-a   me mí-me-le   **budze** o.
             CONJ 1PL   very   1PL-VLOC   town-DEF POST 1PL-NEG-VLOC   worry NEG
             'So we ourselves in town are not worried at all'

3.2.75 Amega-wo le   dzi-a   le-wu
       leader-PL VLOC TOP-DEF   VLOC-kill

       dumevi-wo, wo-le-**so**   **ta**   na   mí꞊ ye.
       citizen-PL,   3PL-VLOC-cut head   DAT   1PL TOP
       'The big men at the top are only killing the citizens, they are deceiving us.'

 3.2.76 Mí꞊awo-e   le   **guadzi**. È-se-gɔme-a?
        1PL-FOC   VLOC   street.   2SG-understand-Q
         'We are the ones on the street. You understand?'

3.2.77 Denyo: Mi-nya   ŋke-e   dzɔ-a?
            2PL-know what-FOC happen-Q

       Ame-nye-a,   e-be   ye-a-**da**   **neku**.
       person-1SG:POSS-TOP 3SG-say   LOG-SUBJV-throw   testicle
       'You know what happened? My friend wants to have sex.'

3.2.78 E-be   ye-a-**wɔ**   **brɔshin**. **Evɛ̃ shɔshɔ-**wo le du-a   me-a?
       3SG-say LOG-SUBJV-do brushing. girl beautiful-PL   VLOC town-DEF POST-Q
       'He says he wants to have sex. Are there beautiful girls in town?'

3.2.79 Dodzi: È-le   gbedzi. E-be   ye-a-**wɔ-brɔshin**?
          2SG-VLOC right.   3SG-say LOG-SUBJV-do-brushing

3.2.80 Ne   e-ge   ɖe   **geti-a**   me   fiya   ko e-ya-**tse**   wo.
       COND 3SG-enter PREP house-DEF   POST   here   just 3SG-AUX-see   3PL
        'You're right. He wants to have sex? If he enters the ghetto, he'll see them.'

3.2.81 Mi-ya-to   **ƒlame** a-va   yi gɔme-a
       2PL-AUX-pass   seashore SUBJV-come   go under-DEF

ko vɔ-a,   ko mi-a- **da-neku**   ɖeka *sure*.
just PERF-TOP, just 2PL-SUBJV-throw-testicles one
'You'll just pass the seashore under the sea bed and you can surely have sex.'

3.2.82 Denyo: Ke ne mí-to   **ƒlame**   ko e-vɔ-a?
          CONJ COND 1PL-pass seashore just 3SG-finish-Q
          'So once we pass the seashore, that's it?'

3.2.83 Dodzi: Mi-me-ɖo   *problem* o la!   **Alayi** me-li kura o.
          2PL-NEG-have   NEG PRT, lie NEG-exist NEG NEG
          'You have no problem at all! No lying at all.'

3.2.84 Ne   è-le   ƒo   ŋƒo   sugbɔ-a, è-le-**wɔ-pã̃pã̃pã̃**.
      COND 2SG-VLOC beat speech   lot-TOP 2SG-VLOC-do-plenty.talk

3.2.84.1 È-se-gɔme-a?
      2SG-undestand-Q
      'If you talk too much, seems you like to talk too much. You understand?'

3.2.85 Denyo: Eee la! È-nya   ŋke-e   dzɔ-a?
          yes PRT, 2SG-know   what-FOC happen-Q
          'Yes! Do you know what happened?'

3.2.86 *Last* me-dzi be   m-a-**wɔ-bagu**   m-a-tso   de-a,
      1SG-want COMP 1SG-SUBJV-do-trick 1SG-SUBJV-cross border-TOP

      peti ɖewo-e   ko-e   le-de   asi kotoku-me   ne-m,
      small some-FOC just-FOC   VLOC-put hand pocket-POST   DAT-1SG

      le-**wɔ-alɔvi**   me nu-wo   gake wo-me-nya   be
      VLOC-do-small.arm   POSS thing-PL CONJ 3PL-NEG-know COMP

      me-**fũ**   ne   du-a   me xoxoxo   o la!
      1SG-know DAT   town-DEF POST long.ago   NEG PRT
      'Last time when I wanted to cross the border, some boys were putting their hands
      in my pocket. They never knew I know town long ago!'

3.2.87 Gameli: **Esa**   mi-ɖo   be   mi-va   **tse** mi.
          fortune 2PL-have COMP 2PL-come see us
          'You're very fortunate to have met us.'

3.2.88 Ne mi-me-va   **tse** mi ɔ-a,   aleke mi-wɔ   da ɖi   *sure*
       COND 2PL-NEG-come   see 1PL NEG-TOP, how   2PL-do   put down

       ye   mía ame eve-a   katã mi-le   ɖi   le
       CONJ 2PL person two-DEF all   2PL-VLOC   alight   PREP

        ʋu-a   me-a   mı́-le   **tse**   mi zi   ɖeka.
        car-DEF POST-TOP   1PL-VLOC see   2PL time one
        'If you had not seen us, the way you're looking, the moment you two were
        coming down from the vehicle, we recognised at once that you're new in town.'

3.2.89 Mı́-**fũ**   ne   mi zi   ɖeka. Mi-**fũ**   ne   mi zi   ɖeka.
       1PL-know DAT 2PL time one.   1PL-know   DAT 2PL time one.
       'We knew at once that you're new in town. We knew at once.'

3.2.90 Denyo: Ta **peti**   ɖeke   me-ya   be   ye-a-**wɔ**   **alɔ-vi**
           CONJ small   some   NEG-AUX   COMP LOG-SUBJV-do hand-small

           alo   a-**wɔ**   **bagu**   kple mi o   ɖe?
           PRT   SUBJV-do   trick   CONJ 1PL NEG PRT
           'So no one will want to steal from us or trick us into anything?'

3.2.91 Gameli: Ao. Mi-ka   ɖe   mı́a dzi.
            no   2PL-brag   PREP   1PL POST.

          Mi-ya-to   ʄlame   fifidzeŋ,   è-le   gbedzi-a?
          2PL-AUX-pass   seashore right.now.   1SG-VLOC   right-Q
          'No, trust us. We'll pass the seashore right now. Are you alright?'

3.2.92 Denyo: Me-le   gbedzi. Ke   leke-o?   **Muvmã**   alo?
           1SG-VLOC right.   CONJ how-PRT movement PRT
           'I'm alright. Now what? Can we go now?'

(All three Adzagbe speakers asked Amenyo, the non-Adzagbe speaker, to excuse them as they deliberate on helping him cross the border.)

3.2.93 Denyo: **Adza**-wo, leke-o? Fifia mi-me-ga   *mind* o.
        rogue-PL   how-PRT   now 2PL-NEG-REP   NEG
        'Rogues, what's up? Now you guys don't worry.'

3.2.94 Gameli: Wo me **aloba** e-**fũ**   ne du-a   me-a?
         2SG POSS man   3SG-know   DAT town-DEF   POST-Q
         'Does your friend know this town?'

3.2.95 Denyo: Ao me-**fũ**   o. Me-le   **wɔ bagu** kple susu   be
         no NEG-know NEG.1SG-VLOC do trick CONJ   mind   COMP

        wò ŋutɔ è-**fũ**   ne **edze**   ƒe **alayi**.
        2SG very 2SG-know DAT money   POSS lie
        'No, he doesn't. As you can tell I'm trying to trick and take money from him.'

 3.2.96 Ne   mí-dza-**wɔ**-**muvmã**,   mi-a-**si**-i.
        COND 1PL-AUX-do-movement   1PL-SUBJV-cut-3SG
        'If we want to do something, we'll trick him.'

3.2.97 Ne   nye dix mille-a   mí-a-be vingt mille
        COND COP ten thousand-TOP 1PL-say twenty thousand

        kple susu   be   wò   ŋutɔ   è-**fũ**,   nye-a   me-ya-ɖu   nu.
        CONJ mind   COMP 2SG   very   2sg-know   1SG-TOP 1SG-AUX-eat thing
         'If they say ten thousand CFA, we'll tell him twenty thousand, you know, I have
        to eat.'

3.2.98 Dodzi: Yeta me-nye   **guadzi** vi   wò-nye-a?
         CONJ NEG-COP   street   child 3SG-COP-TOP-Q
         'You mean he's not from the street?'

3.2.99 Denyo: Ao, Agbozume vi-wo,   Ho vi   ma-wo,
         no, A.   child-PL   H. child DIST-PL

        wò ŋutɔ è-nya   be   Agbozume kple Ho vi   ma-wo
        2SG very 2SG-know COMP A.   CONJ H. child   DIST-PL

        ne   mi-ɖo   **alayi** zi ɖeka wo-me-**fũ**-na
        COND 1PL-reach lie   time one 3PL-NEG-know-HAB

na   ŋɖekpekpe o   ɖe.
DAT   everything NEG PRT
'No, you know that when we set traps for those guys from Agbozume and Ho, they do not understand anything.'

3.2.100 Gameli to Dodzi: Me-le-**wɔ-alayi**   ne   wò be   **paɖi**   yia
                         1SG-VLOC-do-lie   DAT   2SG COMP guy   PROX

leke wò-le-**pã**   **pii-a**   è-ya-nya   be   **paɖi-a**   **fũ**.
how 3SG-AUX-speak lot-TOP   2SG-AUX-know COMP   guy-DEF   know
'I'm telling you that the way this guy is talking you can tell he knows Adzagbe.'

3.2.101 Denyo (About Amenyo): **Paɖi** yia   **mɔfɔ-e**,   m-e-**fũ**   o.
                              guy PROX fool-FOC,   NEG-3SG-know NEG.

3.2.101.1 Me-do.go-e   le   mɔ-a   me.
          1SG-meet-3SG PREP way-DEF   POST
          'The guy is a fool, he doesn't speak Adzagbe, I met him on the way.'

3.2.102 E-be   m-a-**wɔ-avu**   ne ye ye-a-cross   ede-a.
        3SG-say   1SG-FUT-do-struggle   DAT LOG LOG-SUBJV-cross border-DEF.

3.2.103 Ta   me-dzi   be   mí-a-wu-i,   mí-a-**so-ta**   nɛ.
        CONJ 1SG-want COMP   1PL-SUBJV-kill-3SG,   1PL-SUBJV-cut-head   DAT:3SG
        'He asked me to help him cross the border, I want us trick him and take his money.'

3.2.104 Dodzi: È-le   gbedzi.
               2SG-VLOC   right
               'You're right.'

3.2.105 Denyo: Ta   ne   **dze**-a   nye dix mille-a
               CONJ COND money-DEF COP ten thousand-TOP

mí-a-be   vingt mille.
1PL-SUBJV-say   twenty thousand.
'So if the money is ten thousand, we'll say twenty thousand.'

3.2.106 Gameli: Ao, mi-ya-yɔ **dze**-a be **bela** ame eve.
no 1PL-AUX-call money-DEF COMP bela person two.
'No, in his presence we'll refer to the amount as two bela.'

3.2.107 Denyo: Me-**fũ** ta **alayi** me-li o. Amenye-e, me-**fũ** o.
1SG-know CONJ lie NEG-exist NEG. friend-FOC NEG-know NEG
'I know, so no lies. He is my friend. He doesn't speak Adzagbe.'

3.2.108 Wò ŋutɔ è-nya be **mɔfɔ** ma-wo le
2SG very 2SG-know COMP fool DIST-PL VLOC

ŋgadzi wo-nɔ vuvu-m kple tɔwo.
outside 3PL-stay expand-PROG CONJ others
'You yourself you know those fools from outside who have been bragging and doing other   things.'

3.2.109 Ta me-do.go-e le mɔ-a-me, ye ɖeka le-**wɔ-alayi**,
CONJ 1SG-meet-3SG PREP way-def-POST LOG one VLOC-do-lie

ta me-**fũ** be **asa** yia **mɔfɔ-e**, **eyi-tsitsi** **gbla**!
CONJ 1SG-know COMP guy PROX fool-FOC cutlass-blunt IDEO
'I met him on the way looking all new in town, so I could tell this is a fool from outside town, a complete stranger!'

3.2.110 Dodzi: **Neku** ma wò-be ye-a-**da** ŋutɔ hã…
testicles DIST 3SG-say LOG-SUBJV-throw very also
'Even that sex he wants to have…'

3.2.111 Denyo: Me **plasee** ev̰ɛ̃-a vɔ, ev̰ɛ̃-a
1SG arrange girl-DEF PERF, girl-DEF

dza-wu-i le **kã** me.
AUX-kill-3SG PREP house POST
'I've already arranged the girl for him, the girl will kill him in the ghetto.'

3.2.112 **Edzedada** kple **muvmã** kple detsotso
payment CONJ movement CONJ border.crossing

kple ŋɖekpekpe le gbɔ wò.
CONJ everything VLOC place 2SG
'You'll take care of payment, crossing the border and everything.'

3.2.113 **Edze**-a   le   gome ne-m.
        money-DEF VLOC pocket DAT-1SG
        'The money is in my pocket.'

3.2.114 Me-ga-**fũ**   be   me-le-wu   ye o
        NEG-REP-know COMP   1SG-VLOC-kill   LOG NEG

        wònye be   mía ŋutɔ **adza**-wo ɖeɖe mí-nye.
        3SG-COP COMP   1PL   very rogue-PL alone 1PL-COP
        'Don't think that I'll swindle you because we're all rogues.'

3.2.115 Dodzi: Mi-le   *point* dzi.
                1PL-VLOC   POST.
                'I agree with you.'

3.2.116 Denyo: Wò ŋutɔ è-**fũ**   ne   **sa**-e?
                2SG real 1SG-know   DAT clothes-TOP.

3.2.117 **Esa**   wu **muvmã**   le   du-a   me.
        clothes kill movement PREP   town-DEF POST
        'You yourself you know my clothes? They have conquered the town.'

3.2.118 Dodzi: È-le   gbedzi.
                2SG-VLOC   right
                'You're right.'

3.2.119 Denyo: È-nya   ŋke-e   dzɔ-a?
                2SG-know   what-FOC happen-Q
                'You know what happened?'

3.2.120 Fifi-laa   ŋutɔ   hã, ne e-be   ye-a-do.go
        now-INT   very   also COND 3SG-say LOG-SUBJV-meet

        viɖe mí-a-ga-trɔ   kɔ-e   a-ga-do.go   tso gɔme,
        small 1PL-SUBJV-REP-turn take-3SG SUBJV-REP-meet   PREP under

a-zi   *one two three*   nɛ   gbagba,
SUBJV-hit   DAT:3SG   IDEO

wò-a-**fũ**   be   nya   gblɔ-m   mí-le-a
3SG-FUT-know COMP   word   say-PROG 1PL-VLOC-TOP

me-nye   joke me   nya   ye   o.
NEG-COP …. POSS word   FOC   NEG
'Now we have to turn him upside down and inside out and confuse him so he can believe us, and that we're not joking here.'

3.2.121 Mi-a-si   nɛ   zi   ɖeka.
        1PL-SUBJV-cut   DAT:3SG   time one.
        'We'll trick him at once'

3.2.122 Ke   fika   me-ya   va   **tse** mi le?
        CONJ where person-AUX   come see 2PL PREP
        'So where will I see you?'

3.2.123 Me-dzi   be   ma-**bɔ-za**.
        1SG-want   COMP   1SG-bend-food
        'I want to eat.'

3.2.124 Gameli: Mí-ya-nɔ   **geti-**a   me.
         1PL-AUX-stay ghetto-DEF POST
        'We'll be in the ghetto.'

3.2.125 Denyo: Mi-ya-nɔ   **geti-**a   me-a?
              2PL-AUX-stay   ghetto-DEF POST-Q
              'You'll be in the ghetto?'

3.2.126 Gameli: Eee
                Yes

3.2.127 Denyo: Tso!   Me-be   **adza**   me-nye la!
              INTERJ 1SG-say   rogue 1SG-COP PRT.

3.2.128 **Aftown**   me-nye la!   **Aftown** boy**s** mí-nye la!
        Aflao   1SG-COP PRT. Aflao   1PL-COP PRT
        'Hey! I say I'm a rogue! I am Aflao boy! We're Aflao boys!'

3.2.129 Dodzi: È-le   gbedzi!
            2SG-VLOC   right
            'You're right!'

3.3 Discussion

Adzagbe conversations such as the foregoing deviate from the base Aflao Ewe by their heavy reliance on manipulated lexical items and idiomatic expressions from Ewe and foreign sources. Adzagbe vocabulary, therefore, comprises content lexical items, namely, nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs and idiomatic expressions distinct from Ewe.

Examples of Adzagbe nouns in the conversation above are *sevo* 'knowledge', *eguadzi* 'street', and *granfre* 'friend' from the French words *cerveau* 'brain', *goudron* 'tar', and *grand frère* 'older brother' respectively. The Aflaogbe equivalents of the Adzagbe terms *sevo*, *eguadzi* and *granfre* are *nunya* 'knowledge', *mɔ* 'street' and *velia* 'friend' respectively. From the conversation also are the Adzagbe nouns *paɖi* 'friend', *alayi* 'lie', *pɔme* 'pocket' and *mɔfɔ* 'fool' from Pidgin English *padi* 'friend', English words *lie, pocket* and *more foolish* respectively. Aflaogbe equivalents for Adzagbe's *paɖi*, *alayi*, *pɔme* and *mɔfɔ* are *velia* 'friend', *alakpa* 'lie', *kotoku* 'pocket' and *movitɔ* 'fool' respectively. The Adzagbe word *pɔme* 'pocket' is an interesting creation because it is a fusion of the initial syllable of the English word *pocket* and the Ewe word *me* 'inside', making *pɔme* 'lit. pocket inside'.

Some Adzagbe verbs from the conversation are **fũ** 'know', **fã** 'give birth' from the French words *founir* 'to furnish/supply' and *enfant* 'child' respectively while *hayi* 'kill' and *tse* 'see' are creations and change of meaning of the English words *high* and *check* respectively. Aflaogbe equivalents of **fũ**, **fã**, *hayi* and *tse* are *nya* 'know', *dzi vi* 'give birth', *wu* 'kill' and *kpɔ* 'see' respectively. As stated at the outset, just as it is in the base Ewe, the Adzagbe Lexicon contains very few adjectives and adverbs. It is no wonder that

the entire conversation under discussion has no Adzagbe adjective but just one adverb *ku kuu* 'calm down' whose origin is the English adjective *cool*; *ku kuu*'s Ewe equivalent is *blewu*.

In the conversation are also Adzagbe idiomatic expressions such as *wɔ pãpãpã*, 'talk too much', which combines words from Ewe and French origins, *wɔ alayi* 'do something/tell a lie' from Ewe and English origins, and *da neku* 'have sex' from Ewe origin. *Da neku* 'have sex' is created from the Ewe verb *da* 'throw' and *neku* 'testicles'. Though Adzagbe speakers claim that the expression *wɔ pãpãpã* 'talk too much' is created from the Ewe verb *wɔ* 'do' and the triplication of the Adzagbe word *pã* 'talk' whose origin is the French word *parler* 'speak', the expression could also be traced to *wɔ pãã* 'to brag', a common Ewe expression used in the wider community. Of course, Adzagbe's *wɔ pãpãpã* 'talk too much' relates to the common Ewe expression *wɔ pãã* 'to brag' in that talking too much is one way to brag about oneself and bragging is a form of talking too much. The Aflao Ewe equivalents for *wɔ pãpãpã*, *wɔ alayi*, and *da neku* are *ƒo nu* taŋtaŋtaŋ 'talk too much', *da alakpa* 'tell a lie' and *da alime* 'lit. shake waist inside' respectively; the lattermost *da alime* 'lit. shake waist inside' on which *da neku* 'lit. throw testicles' is based is used in the wider Ewe community widely and metaphorically to mean *have sex*. Some of these Adzagbe vocabulary have undergone manipulations compared with their origins. Suffice it to say now that a key identifying feature of Adzagbe is its vocabulary such as captured in the conversation above. Another is the unique way Adzagbe is performed, which is discussed at Section 3.7 of this chapter.

3.4 Adzagbe Manipulations

The purpose of this section is to describe the speech labelled Adzagbe with regard to its word-formation processes. As an Ewe-based youth language, Adzagbe's word-formation processes are largely adopted from Aflaogbe (Aflao Ewe). That notwithstanding, there are some variations or deviations in Adzagbe word-formation processes from regular Aflaogbe. Whether or not a word-formation process in Adzagbe is adopted from Ewe is

discussed in each process. The Adzagbe Lexicon reveals morphological and phonological manipulations; the former comprising affixation, reduplication, coinages, old words with new meanings, and new creations by fusion while the later consists of metathesis of word syllables and clipping. Adzagbe also shows semantic manipulations by giving Ewe or foreign words new meanings. With examples from the Adzagbe Lexicon, this section discusses each of these word-formation processes.

3.4.1 Morphological manipulations

Morphological manipulations of foreign and local materials abound in Adzagbe as it is for youth languages in general. Kiessling and Mous (2004) discuss some of the numerous morphological manipulations of Camfranglais. They argue that "in the youth languages of the francophone areas of Africa, it is common to find French derivational suffixes attached to lexemes from various non-French sources…" (Kiessling and Mous, 2004:319). Kiessling and Mous (2004) provide an example of morphological manipulation as *manesse* 'girl' from Ouagadougou's French-based youth language. *Manesse* comprises the English word *man* followed by a French suffix *-esse*. The root *man* is English while the suffix is French, a clear confirmation that youth languages rely heavily on foreign material. Let us discuss some of these morphological manipulations in Adzagbe, starting with affixation.

3.4.2 Affixation in Adzagbe

This process of morphological manipulation is a general phenomenon with all youth languages. The Adzagbe Lexicon comprises prefixes and suffixes. All the lexical items to which prefixation and suffixation is applied in Adzagbe are nouns.

3.4.2.1 Prothesis in Some Adzagbe Words

Adzagbe speakers employ prefixation as one of their word-formation processes. This is done by adding the sound è-, pronounced like the schwa [ə], at the beginning of already

created monosyllabic or disyllabic Adzagbe vocabulary that start with a consonant. Non-prothesised lexical items and prothesised ones are used interchangeably and synonymously by Adzagbe speakers. **Table 3.1** presents some Adzagbe prothesised vocabulary.

Table 3. 1: Some prothesis in Adzagbe

Word	Source	Form in source languages	Adzagbe meaning
1. vɛ̃ / evɛ̃	English	vagina	girl
2. bo/ebo	Ewe	bo	girlfriend
3. guadzi/eguadzi	French + Ewe	goudron+a-dzi tar+DEF+POST	on the streets
4. sa/esa	French	*saper* 'dress up'	clothes
5. dã/edã	Ewe	dã	fool
6. mɔ/emɔ	Ewe	*mɔ* 'machine'	fool
7. pɔme/epɔme	English +Ewe	pocket+me +inside	pocket
8. tra/etra	English	trade	work
9. bli/ebli	French	blè	money

I must say that the prothetic è- is commonly used in Aflaogbe and Lomégbe. It is not unusual to hear Ewe speakers of Aflao refer to these monosyllabic nouns: *ha* 'pig', *gbɔ̃*

'goat', *nyi* 'cow', and *sɔ* 'horse' as *eha, egbɔ̃, enyi* and *esɔ* respectively. Ewe nouns have the structure comprising a prefix and a stem. The prefixes are è- and à-, referred to by Kpoglu (2019:21) as "residue noun prefixes" because they are not prototypical morphological prefixes but function as such. All nominal roots, to which è- or à- is prefixed begin with a consonant. The prefix è- tends to be elided when it comes after other vowels. On the contrary, other vowels are elided in the presence of the prefix -à. Employing this feature of the base Ewe, Adzagbe speakers have created vocabulary and their synonyms. While the meanings of Adzagbe prothesised words do not change from their non-prothesised ones, their use follows the phonotactic constraints of the base Ewe as discussed above. Let us look at some of these Adzagbe sentences to illustrate these phonotactic constraints:

9b. **Epɔme** le   shoo ne   paɖi ma.
    pocket VLOC IDEO DAT guy   DIST
    'The pocket is full of money for that guy.'

9c. Paɖi ma **me   pɔme** le   shoo.
    guy   DEM POSS pocket VLOC   IDEO
    'That guy's pocket is full of money.'

9d. **Evɛ̃-a**   me   baya   to   ŋutɔ.
    girl DEF POSS   buttocks thick very
    'That girls' buttocks are very big.'

9e. Ne è-tse   baya   ne **vɛ̃-a**   è-ya   da   tomba
    COND 2SG-see buttocks DAT girl-DEF 2SG-AUX throw tumble
    'If you see the buttocks of that girl, you'll summersault.'

In example 9b, *epɔme* 'pocket' maintains it prothetic è- as it does not come after a vowel; it, however, loses the prothetic è- as it comes in contact with a vowel in example 9c. Examples 9d and 9e show similar variations for evɛ̃ and vɛ̃ 'vagina' respectively. These examples demonstrate how Adzagbe speakers use prothesised nouns and their non-prothesised counterparts.

3.4.2.2 Suffixation in Adzagbe

Adzagbe also employs suffixation adopted from Ewe as a nominalisation word-formation process. Like the prothesis word-formation process in Adzagbe, all the items to which suffixation is applied are nouns and the resulting words are also nouns. **Table 3.2** presents some of these lexical items.

Table 3. 2: The Ewe suffix *-nɔ* in Adzagbe

Base	Suffix	New words
10. *adzui* 'brain'	-nɔ	*adzuinɔ* 'clever person'
11. *zo* 'fire'	-nɔ	*zonɔ* 'smoker'
12. *fɔdzi* 'fakery'	-nɔ	*fɔdzinɔ* 'faker'
13. *ebli* 'money'	-nɔ	*eblinɔ* 'rich person'
14. *satsi* 'juju'[1]	-nɔ	*satsinɔ* 'juju person'
15. *gaba* 'muscle, courage'	-nɔ	*gabanɔ* 'muscular, courageous person'
16. *so* 'soɗabi; local gin'	-nɔ	*sonɔ* 'drunkard'
17. *kpe* 'money'	-nɔ	*kpenɔ* 'rich person'
18. *dzibla* 'penis'	-nɔ	*dziblanɔ* 'one with a big penis'

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[1] An object that is infused with magical powers or the magical powers itself. Juju is common in West African countries such as Nigeria, Benin, Togo and Ghana.

From **Table 3.2**'s Examples 10 to 18, all the base items are nouns; the resulting new words are also all nouns. Adzagbe speakers employ the Ewe suffix *-nɔ* to mark ownership. Example 10's *adzui* 'brain' becomes *adzuinɔ* 'clever person'. The same principle applies to *zo-zonɔ* 'smoker', *fɔdzi-fɔdzinɔ* 'faker'*, ebli-eblinɔ* 'rich person'*, satsi-satsinɔ* 'juju person'*, gaba-gabanɔ* 'muscular/courageous person'*, so-sonɔ* 'drunkard' and *kpe-kpenɔ* 'rich person' and *dzibla-dziblanɔ* 'one with a big person'. Adzagbe utilises the Ewe suffix *-nɔ* to indicate ownership in Adzagbe and as it is in Ewe, it derives nouns from nouns.

However, the suffix -nɔ in Ewe has distinct qualities. Ameka (1991:190) points out that the suffixes "-tɔ and to a limited extent -nɔ are used to mark ownership". The suffix -nɔ is, therefore, restricted to certain words. Claudi and Heine (1986:314) have shown that the use of the possessor suffix -nɔ to express attributes usually goes with words expressing adverse states such as disease, infirmity and suffering. Ameka (1991:196) provides some examples of such words as *dɔ* 'sickness', *tsuku* 'madness' and *kle* 'cowardice' to which -nɔ is affixed to derive *dɔnɔ* 'sick person', *tsukunɔ* 'mad person' and *klenɔ* 'coward'. It is obvious that Adzagbe speakers have not employed the regular suffix -tɔ at all to mark ownership. They prefer the restricted -nɔ. It seems also that from examples 10 to 18, only the words *fɔdzi* 'fakery' and *so* 'local gin' to which -nɔ is affixed have negative connotation; the rest do not.

This deviation from the regular use of the suffix -nɔ in Ewe is a mark of identity in that while Adzagbe speakers create their own vocabulary, they do not necessarily follow the dictates of the base Ewe by employing the suffix *-nɔ* the very way it is used in Ewe. Scholars such as Hollington and Nassenstein (2017), Nassenstein and Hollington (2015), Kerswill (2010), and Kiessling and Mous (2004) argue that one feature of youth languages is identity manifested not only in their culture but also in the way they create language to suit their own preferences. Adzagbe speakers' employment of the restricted *-nɔ* to mark ownership where the majority of the words to which -nɔ is affixed do not have negative

connotations as it is with Ewe, Adzagbe's base language, is one demonstration of the creativity and anti-language identity (Halliday, 1976) of Adzagbe speakers as they use features at their disposal from the base language to create vocabulary their own way. *Anti-language* is a term coined by Halliday (1976) to refer to a special way of language use by a minority within a wider speech community. According to Halliday (1976), anti-languages use the same grammar as the main speech community but use their own created vocabulary so that they can only be understood by insiders. According to Halliday (1976:571), an anti-language, like Adzagbe, "is language relexicalized". Adzagbe can, therefore, be said to be Ewe relexicalized as Adzagbe has its own vocabulary and does not rigidly follow the dictates of Ewe grammar.

Let us discuss another type of suffixation employed by Adzagbe speakers as presented on **Table 3.3.**

Table 3. 3: The Ewe suffix -vi in Adzagbe

Base	Suffix	New word	Meaning
19. *dzɔŋki* 'rogue'	-vi	dzɔŋkivi	rogue
20. *gank*i 'rogue'	-vi	gankivi	rogue
21. *tipe* 'small'	-vi	tipevi	small
22. *sipe* 'small'	-vi	sipevi	small

The Ewe diminutive morpheme *-ví* 'little, small' is one of the suffixes employed in Adzagbe. In Ewe, for example, when we add *-ví* to *kusi* 'basket', we have *kusiví* 'small basket' and when we add *-ví* to *ŋutsu* 'man', we have *ŋutsuví* 'boy'. It is observed that the people of Aflao add this diminutive morpheme to names of people, especially children.

So, for names such as Kɔku, Dodzi, Cosmas, we have Kɔkuví, Dodziví and Cosmasví respectively. Some of these names get stuck even if their bearers have become adults. This phenomenon transcends into Adzagbe as one of their word-formation processes.

In Examples 21 and 22 on **Table 3.3**, the diminutive -*ví* is affixed to the Adzagbe words *tipe* 'small', created from the syllable swapping of the French word *petit* 'small', and *sipe* 'small', derived from the English word *simple*. Interestingly, both words mean *small* in Adzagbe; adding the diminutive -ví to these words only intensifies their smallness, so to speak, making *tipeví* and *sipeví* comparatively smaller than *tipe* and *sipe* respectively. Therefore, a boy or girl that is called *sipeví* or *tipeví* among Adzagbe speakers is likely a very small boy or a very small girl.

In Examples 19 and 20 Adzagbe speakers have employed another function of the suffix -*ví* which means 'member of', 'part of' or 'association with a place' rather than 'small' (Ameka, 1991:190, Claudi and Heine, 1986:316, Heine and Hünnemeyer, 1988). Ameka (1991:200) argues that "-vi relates to how a child or children belong to a family". On that conceptual metaphor, adding -ví to Aflao and Ghana derives Aflaoví 'one from or belonging to Aflao' and Ghanaví 'Ghanaian or belonging to Ghana'. The suffix -ví in *dzɔŋki* 'rogue' and *ganki* 'rogue' used this way, therefore, means one belonging to the Adzagbe community of rogues or hooligans.

On the surface, this conclusion can be contested given that *dzɔŋki* 'rogue' and *ganki* 'rogue' are not place names like Aflao or Lomé. However, a popular Ewe artist called Edem who uses Adzagbe in his lyrics has formed a social media nation called Gbevu Nation close to a decade ago. This 'nation' is very popular among Adzagbe speakers and many claim its membership. Edem has composed a so-called anthem for the nation titled *Gbevu* 'rogue' in which he claims to be the nation's president and one Giovanni his deputy. He claims that citizens of this Gbevu Nation are *gbevuwo* 'rogues'. Part of Edem's Gbevu Nation's anthem goes thus:

Me-se   be   è bena   ganki ye-nye
1SG-hear   COMP   2SG-say rogue LOG-COP

Giovanni nye vice   Edem   ye nye presido
G.   COP vice   E.   FOC COP president

'I have heard that you said you are a rogue
 Giovanni is the vice and Edem is the president'

Edem has used the Adzagbe word *ganki* 'rogue' in his song *Gbevu* 'rogue'. Both the Adzagbe words *ganki* and *dzɔŋki*, and the Ewe word *gbevu* translate as 'rogue' or 'hooligan'. Edem's Gbevu Nation literally means 'rogue nation', making ganki**ví** and dzɔŋki**ví** members of this 'nation' of rogues. So while *ganki* and *dzɔnki* basically mean rogue, *gankiví* and *dzɔnkiví* means rogues belonging to the *Gbevu Nation* 'rogue nation'. In effect, Adzagbe speakers have used the suffix -vi the very way it is used in the base Ewe to create their own vocabulary.

3.4.3 Reduplication in Adzagbe

Adzagbe speakers also employ reduplication as a word-formation process. This is not surprising because reduplication as well as triplication is one of the word-formation processes in the base Ewe. Adzagbe speakers are only exploiting this feature their own way by applying it to foreign words that have undergone some manipulations, while observing underlying rules that govern the process of reduplication in Ewe. According to Ameka (1999:79), "verbs can be reduplicated to from an adjective or a verbal noun". The Adzagbe Lexicon contains verbal nouns that are as a result of reduplication of Adzagbe verbs. Ameka (1999:79) gives some underlying rules of the reduplication process: "if the original begins with a consonant cluster, the cluster is simplified and the first consonant is retained"; if the stem is nasalised, it is replaced by its oral counterpart in the reduplicative"; "if a noun is formed, then a high tone in the original is changed to a low tone in the reduplicative form". Adzagbe speakers have observed these underlying rules

in their word-formation process of reduplication. Let us discuss some examples of Adzagbe reduplication as presented on **Table 3.4**.

Table 3. 4: Reduplication in Adzagbe

Adzagbe verb	Resulting noun from reduplication
23. *pã* 'speak'	*papã* 'speech'
24. **fũ** 'know'	**fufũ** 'knowledge'
25. **fã** 'give birth'	**fafã** 'birth'
26. *gɔ̃* 'impregnate'	*gɔgɔ̃* 'pregnancy'
27. *tra* 'v. work'	*tatra* 'n. work'
28. *gbo* 'die'	*gbogbo* 'death'
29. *kere* 'be careless'	*kerekere* 'carelessness'
30. *tsɛle* 'v. play'	*tsɛletsɛle* 'n. play'

Examples 23 to 26 are Adzagbe monosyllabic verbs with nasalised vowels. The nasalised vowels in these verbs have all been replaced by their oral counterparts in the first syllable of the reduplicated resulting nouns. Thus, **pã** becomes **papã**, **fũ** becomes **fufũ, gɔ̃ - gɔgɔ̃** and **fã – fafã**. Accordingly, the first syllables in the reduplicated form have lost their high tones and become low tones. In Example 27, following the rule that original consonant clusters are simplified in reduplicative form, *tra* 'v. work' becomes *tatra* 'n. work' in its noun reduplicative form. The consonant cluster tr- in *tra* is, therefore, simplified to ta- in *tatra*. Example 28 *gbo* 'die' is simply reduplicated into *gbògbó* 'death' and the first syllable losing its high tone and acquiring a low tone in the resulting *gbògbó*. The

consonant cluster in *gbɔ̀gbó* has not changed because the consonant cluster gb- in *gbɔ̀gbó* is a double articulated sound and is not as complex as the tr- in *tra*. In Examples 29 and 30, the disyllabic verbs *kéré* 'be careless' and *tsélé* 'v. play' are reduplicated into nouns *kèrèkéré* 'carelessness' and *tsèlètsélé* 'n. play', with the original stems losing their high tones and assuming low tones in the reduplicative forms, the very way it is the case in Adzagbe's base language – Ewe.

3.4.4 Coinages by sound symbolism

Another way Adzagbe speakers create vocabulary is by coinages, identified by Mugaddam (2009:90) as a major source of vocabulary in youth languages. While coinages are not a prominent word-formation process in Ewe, they are prominent in youth languages and Adzagbe relies heavily on coinages as a word-formation process. Coinages are completely new words, created without using any word-formation process and often from seemingly nothing. Mugaddam (2009:91) gave some examples of completely new words in Khartoum youth language, none of which is either Arabic or English. Examples are *kaddala* 'thief', *shirteet* 'money' and *latta* 'drunk'. By these coinages, outsiders are completely lost as to what is meant by these words. It follows that while other word-formation processes are effective in youth languages as regards secrecy, coinages may be the most reliable for the youth. And of all the processes, coinages are the most difficult to decode. Adzagbe possesses coinages, some of which are presented on **Table 3.5.**

Table 3. 5: Some Adzagbe coinages

Coinage	Ewe equivalent	English Equivalent
31. bɔ	ɖu	eat
32. dzibla	aʋa	penis
33. gbla	ɖe fu na ame	worry

	remove worry DAT person	
34. sabaa	didi vie, mí-a-do.go long small-FOC/ 1PL-SUBJV-meet	a while, later
35. sheŋ	nyo	good
36. shoko	nyo	good
37. gblegɔŋ	drẽdrẽdrẽ	sophisticatedly
38. shoo	taŋtaŋtaŋ	a lot of/plenty

Of all the coinages on **Table 3.5,** two – bɔ 'lit. bend' and *gbla* 'ideophone' – are Ewe. The rest are altogether new creations in Adzagbe. Unlike other manipulations that can be decoded with some reflection, these coinages cannot be decoded except that one is told their meanings by Adzagbe speakers. One Adzagbe speaker says of Adzagbe coinages:

È-ya   te   zro   da   tomba,
2SG-AUX AUX   jump   throw tumble

ya ta   ɖi,   me-ya   fũ   o!
hit head down NEG-AUX   know NEG

'You can jump, summersault, hit your head on the

ground, you will not understand it!' **(A 24-year-old**

male, Adzagbe Notes, March 10, 2020)

The foregoing sums it all up; whether we "jump, summersault and hit our heads on the ground", we cannot decode these coinages, proving the potency of coinages as the lock on secrecy in Adzagbe and other youth languages. From **Table 3.5**, we note that while the coinages are altogether new, they follow Ewe phonological structure. First, *bɔ, dzibla, gbla, sabaa* and *shoko* are all open syllables as it is mostly the case in Ewe (Agbedor, 2001). Second, some are products of sound symbolism, which is a feature of the base Ewe

as an ideophonic language. For example, *gblegɔŋ* and *shoo* are ideophonic. Ideophones form an integral part of Ewe vocabulary, and being an Ewe-based youth language, it is not surprising that Adzagbe has ideophonic words. The conclusion that *gblegɔŋ* and *shoo* are Adzagbe ideophones is reached on the grounds that these words depict vivid experience, the Adzagbe stories behind them and, in some cases, their Ewe equivalents.

Gblegɔŋ and *shoo* have their Ewe ideophonic equivalents as *drẽdrẽdrẽ* and *taŋtaŋtaŋ*, respectively. Ameka (2001:26) argues that some "individual ideophones" in Ewe and other ideophonic languages "turn to collocate with specific words." That is the case illustrated below with examples from Ewe and Adzagbe to demonstrate that *gblegɔŋ* and *shoo* are ideophonic:

39a. Hadzila-wo dzra-ɖo   *drẽdrẽdrẽ*. (EWE)
     singer-PL   dress-OBJ   IDEO
     'The singers have dressed up sophisticatedly.'

39b. Aloba-wo xɔ-sa   gblegɔŋ (ADZAGBE)
     man-PL   dress-OBJ   IDEO
   'The men have dressed sophisticatedly.'

40a. Ga   le   e-si   taŋtaŋtaŋ. (EWE)
     money   VLOC 3SG-hand   IDEO
     'He has a lot of money.'

40b. Pɔme le   shoo n-ɛ. (ADZAGBE)
     pocket VLOC IDEO   DAT-3SG
     'He has a lot of money.'

In Example 39a the Ewe verb phrase *dzra ɖo* 'dress up' takes the adverbial ideophone *drẽdrẽdrẽ*. Among Ewe speakers of Aflao, the ideophone *drẽdrẽdrẽ* is used hand-in-hand with the verb phrase *dzra ɖo* 'dress up' when one's dress is seen as being sophisticated. The same pattern goes for the Adzagbe ideophone *gblegɔŋ* used hand-in-hand with the Adzagbe verb phrase *xɔ sa* 'dress up'. When one *xɔ sa gblegɔŋ*, it means, therefore, that one has dressed sophisticatedly, the same as *dzra ɖo drẽdrẽdrẽ* in Aflao Ewe.

In Example 40a, the Ewe ideophone that collocates with having a lot of money is *taŋtaŋtaŋ* 'a lot of' or *kpaŋkpaŋkpaŋ*. This collocation is mirrored by Adzagbe via the idiomatic expression *pɔme le shoo* 'pocket full of money'. This is the only way the ideophonic *shoo* is used in Adzagbe. According to Adzagbe speakers, when one has a lot of money, it falls *shoo* like rain, an obvious case that *shoo* is an expressive word, an ideophone. Adzagbe coinages are, therefore, largely driven by sound symbolism.

3.4.5 Old words with new meanings

Adzagbe speakers also create new meanings from already-existing words. In the Adzagbe Lexicon, most of these words are from the base language – Ewe. **Table 3.6** presents some of these.

Table 3. 6: Some Adzagbe old words with new meanings

Adzagbe word	Literal meaning in Ewe	Adzagbe meaning
41. aʋafiagã	army general	prostitute/one with a big penis
42. ebo/bo	bed of crops	girl, girlfriend
43. agbo	ram	penis
44. dã	snake	foolish/naïve person
45. agbãvi	plate	gun
46. emɔ	machine	foolish/naïve person
47. ŋe	break	broke (economically)

48. afi	mouse	thief

All examples on **Table 3.6**, from aʋafiagã to **afi**, are taken from the base Ewe and given new meanings. These undergo playfulness, humour or exaggeration. These words have interesting etymologies, some of which are discussed in the next chapter while the rest are presented in the full Adzagbe Lexicon in the appendix. To illustrate, let us discuss three of the examples on **Table 3.6**, namely, *aʋafiagã, dã* and *emɔ*. As a single Ewe word, aʋafiagã means *army general*. Aʋafiagã is a compound in Ewe consisting of *aʋa* which is the Ewe word for *war* or *penis*, **fia** 'chief' and gã 'big/great'. Adzagbe speakers divide the compound aʋafiagã into its three different parts: the Ewe words *aʋa* 'penis', **fia** 'chief' and *gã* 'big/great'. The humour is based on the homonymous nature of the first part of the Ewe compound *aʋa* 'war/penis'. In effect, playfully adding these individual meanings, we have something literally as *big penis king* from which Adzagbe speakers derive the meaning *prostitute*. On the other hand, a prostitute is one who entertains *men with big penises*, the other meaning of aʋafiagã in Adzagbe.

Regarding *emɔ* which means *machine* in Ewe, Adzagbe speakers claim that one who does not think properly is controlled by others like a machine, hence *emɔ* is used to describe a foolish person. *Dã* means *snake* in Ewe. A humorous story behind *dã* to mean *foolish person* in Adzagbe is that Satan was foolish in that instead of turning into a man to have sex with Eve, he turned into a snake. He could have enjoyed the sex better had he turned into a man. This sexual humour is a twisted Bible story and it reveals the extent to which the youth can go with any conjured story to suit their own speaker etymologies.

Ɖe is another play on words. It means *break* in Ewe. Moreover, the English verb *break*'s past tense is *broke*, pronounced and spelt the same as the adjective *broke* 'be without money'. Adzagbe speakers use the Ewe verb *ŋe* 'break' in the same light as the English adjective *broke* 'be without money' since it plays a double role of being the past

tense of *break* and the adjective *broke*. This play on words shows Adzagbe speakers' knowledge of English words, one of the reasons of many materials of English origin in Adzagbe.

3.4.6 New creations by fusion

Adzagbe speakers create vocabulary also by means of fusion – words created from parts of already-existing words. While fusion is not a regular word-formation process in Ewe, it is common with youth languages in general (Kiessling and Mous, 2004). Adzagbe fusions are usually created in tandem with clipping. Some Adzagbe fusions originate from Ewe while others are based on foreign materials. **Table 3.7** presents some of these Adzagbe fusions.

Table 3. 7: Some Adzagbe fusions

Adzagbe fusion	Origin	Meaning in Adzagbe
49. mɔfɔ	more + foolish (English)	foolish person
50. pefũ	person +foolish (English)	foolish person
51. guadzi	goudron+a+dzi (French +Ewe) tar+DEF+POST	on the streets
52. Aftown	Aflao +town	Adzagbe speech community
53. papãpii	parler + pii (French + Twi) speak+lot	too much talking
54. avuadzi	avu+a+dzi (Ewe) struggle+DEF+POST	proposal, relationship

55. mpa	my + papa (English)	father
56. mma	my + mama (English)	mother
57. mbro	my + brother (English)	brother
58. nsa	my + sister (English)	sister

Example 49 of **Table 3.7** shows the fusion *mɔfɔ* created from clipped parts of the English adverbial phrase *more foolish*. The first syllable of each of the words is taken and joined into a new creation *mɔfɔ*. **Pefũ** follows the same pattern of **mɔfɔ** by combining the initial syllables of the English adjective phrase *foolish person* after clipping the second syllables of these words and transposing their positions into **pefũ** with the same meaning as the original phrase. These fusions obviously, though unconsciously done, follow Ewe word order. For example, *foolish person* is *ame* **fuflu** in Ewe, where *ame* means *person* and **fuflu** means foolish; the adjective **fuflu** postmodifies the noun *ame* 'person', after the norm in Ewe unlike in English where *foolish* premodifies *person*.

In Example 51, *guadzi* entails clipping just like the cases of **mɔfɔ** and **pefũ**. *Guadzi* is created from the first syllable of the French noun *goudron* 'tar', the Ewe definite articles -a and the Ewe postposition *dzi* 'on', making *guadzi*, which means 'the street' in Adzagbe. One who is on *the street* in Adzagbe is a rogue and belongs to the Adzagbe community. In the light of that, all Adzagbe speakers are *le guadzi* 'on the street'. Following *guadzi* on **Table 3.7** is a fusion of clipped *Aflao* and *town*, resulting in *Aftown,* used among Adzagbe speakers to refer only to the community of Adzagbe speakers. It follows that one can be a native of Aflao but is not regarded by Adzagbe speakers as coming from Aftown while a non-native of Aflao who speaks Adzagbe is regarded as a citizen of Aftown. The passport to Aftown, metaphorically speaking, is to speak Adzagbe, embrace its culture and be *on the street*. Example 53's *papãpii* combines the Adzagbe

creation of *papã* from the French *parler* 'talk' and the Twi adjective *pii* 'plenty, many', making *papãpii* obviously *too much talking*.

Example 54's *avuadzi* combines an Adzagbe new creation of an Ewe noun *avu* 'dog, struggle', the Ewe definite article -a and the postposition *dzi* 'on', making *avuadzi* which means *proposal* or *relationship* in Adzagbe. Making a *proposal* or being in a *relationship* is compared with a struggle in the resulting meaning of *avuadzi* in Adzagbe, while *guadzi* maintains its literal meaning of *on the street* in Adzagbe.

Examples 55 to 58 are Adzagbe kinship terms. Their formation involves the clipping of the English possessive *my* to the nasal *m-* or *n-*, fused with clipped English kinship terms *papa*, *mama*, *brother* and *sister*. Hence *my papa*, *my mama*, *my brother* and *my sister* become *mpa* 'father', *mma* 'mother', *mbro* 'brother' and *nsa* 'sister' in Adzagbe. Their production follows some phonotactic constraints, given that the Adzagbe term for sister *nsa* 'sister' does not employ the initial nasal *m-* but *n-*. Clipping *my* into the nasal *m-* in these Adzagbe kinship terms create the digraphs *mp-*, *mm-* and *mb-* in *mpa* 'father', *mma* 'mother' and *mbro* 'brother'; but *ns-* in nsa 'sister'. Pronouncing the *mp-*, *mm-* and *mb-* digraphs poses no challenge because the sounds share the same place of articulation; they are all bilabial sounds. On the other hand, the digraph *ms-* could not be used in *nsa* 'sister' to derive **msa,* obviously because the nasal *m-* is a bilabial consonant while *s-* is an alveolar sibilant. The challenge arises from the transition between these two different places of articulation. The shift from a bilabial sound to an alveolar sound in quick succession is naturally more challenging than producing two different sounds from the same place of articulation as it is in *mp-*, *mm-* and *mb*, all being bilabial consonants.

Adzagbe speakers, therefore, reject the digraph *ms-* for *ns-* in *nsa* 'sister' because the *ns-* digraph is easier to pronounce with regard to the effect of coarticulation compared to *ms-* as both *n* and *s* are alveolar sounds. Asked why *sister* in Adzagbe is not **msa* after other kinship terms such as *mbro* 'brother' and *mpa* 'father', one Adzagbe speakers says:

> Ame   aḍeke me-zã-na   msa   o.
> person none   NEG-use-HAB msa   NEG
>
> E-yɔ-na   nu   na   ame.
> 3SG-fill-HAB mouth DAT   person.
>
> Nsa le   kul.   È-kpɔ-e-a
> Nsa VLOV cool   2SG-see-3SG-Q
>
> 'Nobody uses msa. If fills a
> person's mouth. Nsa is cool. Do
> you see it?' (**Adzagbe Notes,
> May 2021**)

By saying that pronouncing *msa *yɔna nu na ame* 'lit. fills a person's mouth', this Adzagbe speaker is referring to the difficulty in pronouncing the digraph *ms-* discussed above, confirming that Adzagbe speakers adopt *ns-* in *nsa* 'sister' to negotiate this challenge. These demonstrations show fusion in tandem with clipping as a word-formation process in Adzagbe.

3.5 Phonological Manipulations

Youth languages also exhibit phonological processes such as blending, clipping and the like. Adzagbe exhibits phonological processes such as clipping and metathesis of word syllables in its lexicon.

3.5.1 Clipping

Adzagbe speakers employ clipping, generally considered a linguistic "phenomenon consisting in cutting up, trimming…a word so as to produce a shorter version of this word by loss of material" (Jamet 2009: 16). Jamet (2009) shows that linguists refer to clipping with other terms like *shortening* or *truncation*. In this work, *clipping* is the only term used and it is used in the same fashion as defined by Jamet (2009). In the Adzagbe Lexicon, this word-formation process involves nouns and verbs, all based on foreign materials.

Resulting clipped words have a shape similar to Ewe roots. It must be noted that clipping is not a regular   word-formation process in Ewe but a popular feature with youth languages. As a regular word-formation process in English and French, it is likely the reason why Adzagbe speakers have adopted clipping for words of English and French origins. The following table presents some clippings in the Adzagbe Lexicon.

Table 3. 8: Some clippings in Adzagbe

Clippings	Source	Meaning in Adzagbe
59. vɛ̃ / evɛ̃	vagina (English)	girl, vagina
60. pã	parler (French)	speak, propose
61. fũ	fournir (French)	know
62. zɔ̃	maison (French)	house
63. drã	drama (English)	evil, soldier
64. asa	assassin (English, French)	rogue
65. fã	enfant (French)	give birth
66. gɔ̃	gonfler (French)	pregnant/impregnate
67. sã	concentrer (French)	pretend/to be angry
68. tra	travail (French), trade (English)	work (v, n)

69. la	laver (French)	bathe/beat

Table 3.8 shows some of the clippings in the Adzagbe Lexicon, all from foreign materials, particularly, English and French. This is of no wonder since English and French are the official languages of Ghana and Togo respectively and are in constant contact in Aflao which is situated right at the border of these two countries. The reason of clipping foreign words is to make them resemble Ewe in length. Two things stand out about the clippings of Adzagbe. Some of the clipped words are reduced to just one syllable and localised by the nasalisation of their vowels; **fũ, drã** and **fã** are examples of this recurrence. Observation shows that all the nasalised clippings in Adzagbe are created from loan words, particularly those from French, whether or not the clippings are as a result of first syllable clipping, or final syllable clipping or both first and final syllable clipping in one word. For example, **fũ, drã, pã** *and* **gɔ̃** from *founir, drama, parler* and *gonfler* are products of final syllable truncation; **fã** from *enfant* results from initial syllable clipping while **sã** from *concentrer* is a product of first and final syllable clipping. The nasalisation of the clipped words is a conscious effort on the part of Adzagbe speakers to make the words sound more French than Ewe. In fact, it turns out that the remaining parts of some of the clipped words from their original French roots have nasalised vowels; **fã** from *enfants*, **zɔ̃** from *maison*, **sã** from *concentrer* and **gɔ̃** from *gonfler* substantiate this point. Moreover, when Adzagbe speakers crack jokes among themselves, they claim that the French speak through their nose, revealing their knowledge of French's possession of nasal vowels. On the other hand, nasalised vowels are not foreign to Ewe as Ewe has seven oral vowels with their seven nasal counterparts (Duthie, 1996). Besides, Ewe speakers of neighbouring towns to Aflao usually say that Ewe speakers of Aflao nasalise all their vowels. These points could be responsible for the nasalisations in question.

The other thing is that some of the clipped words have their meanings, at least, slightly adjusted from their original meanings. For example, *vẽ* whose origin is the English

word *vagina* means *girl*, *girlfriend* and *vagina* in Adzagbe; **gɔ̃** from French *gonfler* 'inflate' means *pregnant* or *impregnate* in Adzagbe; **la** from French *laver* 'bathe' means both *bathe* and *beat* in Adzagbe. The Adzagbe lexical item *la* is not nasalised for an obvious reason that its source *laver* does not have a nasalised vowel. Details regarding change in meaning from Adzagbe words' original attestation to their present attestation are discussed under semantic manipulations and speaker etymologies of Adzagbe vocabulary in the next chapter. Suffice it now to say that clipped words in Adzagbe are usually reduced to just one syllable and their meanings slightly changed.

3.5.2 Metathesis of word syllables

Another type of phonological manipulation in youth languages identified by Kiessling and Mous and found in Mugaddam (2009) is syllable swapping – a linguistic process of transposition of syllables within a word. Kiessling and Mous (2004:324) acknowledge that this process and other language games is very common in African youth languages and are "attractive because they add an element of competition" among speakers as to who does better with the process. An example of syllable swapping for the word *cosmos* is *moscos* where the positions of the syllables are altered – the first pushed to the second position and the original syllable in the second position is brought to initial position. Kiessling and Mous (2004) refer to this process as *metathesis of syllables* because speakers try to do with word syllables what metathesis does with word phonemes – swap their positions. Metathesis of syllables is, therefore, the interpositional change of syllables in a word. As we saw earlier, some of the new creations in youth languages are simply for fun. Swapping of syllables is, therefore, one of these fun games of words in Adzagbe. According to a 25-year-old male Adzagbe speaker,

Mɪ́-dɔli-na   teʃe   alo   a-trɔ
1PL-change-HAB place   PRT   SUBJV-turn

gbo   wo   abe   bɔda dabɔ   ene.
down 3PL   as   border derbor   as

'We change the positions of the
syllables or turn them upside down.
An example is *bɔda* which has
become *dabɔ*.' (**Adzagbe Notes,
May 2020)**

Metathesis of syllables is, therefore, a conscious word-formation process in Adzagbe. Usually, the meanings of the words whose syllables are metathesised remain the same but for a few cases. It must be noted that metathesis of syllables, which Duthie (1996) calls *syllable permutation*, also happens in Adzagbe's base language, Ewe, especially with ideophones. Ameka (2001:31) provides some examples of metathesised words in Ewe with similar meanings such as *tsaklii/klitsaa* 'rough surface', *dzahlii/hlidzaa* 'tough and plumpy', *kɔlii/likɔɔ* 'black and thick smoke' and *nyadrii/drinyaa* 'tough'. Other cases like *lɔbɔɔ* 'long' and *bɔlɔɔ* 'soft' have altogether different meanings (Ameka, 2001:31). It would be very strange for Adzagbe not to employ metathesis of word syllables as a word-formation process for two main reasons; the first of which is that metathesis of syllables is a common feature of youth languages in general and African youth languages in particular. The second reason is that Adzagbe's base also possesses this feature. Adzagbe speakers are only employing this feature of the base language, Ewe, as well as of African youth languages, to create their own words. **Table 3.9** below presents some examples of metathesis of syllables in the Adzagbe Lexicon.

Table 3. 9: Some metathesis of syllables in Adzagbe

Transposed word	Source	Meaning in Adzagbe
70. sawui	Hausa	cheap clothing/robe
71. dabɔ	border	border
72. tuivua	voiture 'vehicle'	expensive car
73. tipe	petit 'little'	child, an ignorant person
74. aloba	Abalo 'a male name'	boy, man, boyfriend
75. voyo	yovo 'white person'	white person
76. tsekuŋ	coucher 'sleep'	wait, observe

Example 70 on the **Table 3.9** is *sawui*, the phonologically adapted *Hausa*. In Adzagbe, *sawui* refers to *cheap clothing* or *a robe*, revealing that some metathesised lexical items change meaning as they are adapted into Adzagbe. Adzagbe speakers claim they created *sawui* 'robe in Adzagbe' from *Hausa* because the Hausa in Aflao are normally Muslims who usually wear robes. This is not surprising because in Aflao, *Hausa* is used almost interchangeably and synonymously with Muslims, and even if an Ewe person or anyone of any other ethnic group converts to Islam, he or she is said to have become a Hausa, a general perception in Ghana. This holdover finds itself in the creation of *sawui*. Example 71 *dabɔ* is the result of the transposition of the syllables of the English word *border*. *Tuivua* is from the French word *voiture*, *tipe* from *petit*, *aloba* from a popular male name *Abalo*; *voyo* from the Ewe noun *yevu* 'white person', more specifically from *yovo*, the Lomé dialect version of the Ewe *yevu,* while *tsekuŋ* is from the French word *coucher*, with

the usual Adzagbe nasalisation of vowels in words from French origins. A recurrence that runs through this word-formation process in Adzagbe is that nearly all transposed words are disyllabic as we can tell from the examples. Stewart (2010:10) argues that dissyllables are by far the most common form of metathesis in Verlan, a popular French-based youth language, and that "the simplest scenario is that of two open syllables in a disyllable, for example [si] and [te] in çité, inverting to create téci." That is exactly the case with Adzagbe. As shown on **Table 3.9**, only *aloba* is a trisyllabic word, the rest are all disyllabic. Besides, all examples, including the trisyllabic word comprise open syllables after the norm in Ewe.

3.6 Adzagbe and Its Social Meanings

Apart from lexical items and idiomatic expressions from the base Ewe or foreign materials, Adzagbe data also reveals the motivation of choices as well as the social meanings Adzagbe speakers attach to their code. The most outstanding social meaning Adzagbe speakers assign to their code is that of identity. This conclusion is reached on deductions drawn from Adzagbe speakers' reference to their code and those who do not speak Adzagbe. For example, from the recorded conversation at the outset of this chapter, Denyo makes this comment about non-Adzagbe speakers from other towns:

Ao, Agbozume vi-wo,   Ho vi   ma-wo, ne
No A.   child-PL Ho child DIST-PL COND

 mí-ɖo   alayi   zi   ɖeka,
1PL-reach lie   time one

wo-me-fũ-na   ne ŋɖekpekpe o ɖe.
3PL-NEG-know-HAB DAT everything NEG PRT

'No, you know that those guys from Agbozume,

Ho and others do not understand anything when

we speak Adzagbe.' (**Adzagbe Video 1, April 10, 2021**)

Agbozume and Ho are other main Ewe towns of the Volta Region of Ghana, the home region of Aflao. Ho is the capital town of the Volta Region. Specific reference to people from these towns compared with Adzagbe speakers and pointing to Adzagbe as a linguistic demarcation between them reveal the unique identity Adzagbe speakers bestow on themselves, which is one of secrecy and distinction, usually perceived negatively by non-Adzagbe speakers. For example, because of Adzagbe speakers, neighbouring towns refer to all youth from Aflao as *fiafiwo* 'thieves', a negative identity at best, whether or not they are Adzagbe speakers. In fact, among Adzagbe speakers, Aflao is known as Aftown or USA, the latter's full name being the United States of Aflao, modelled after the United States of America, as though Aflao were a country on its own.

From the conversation in question, the Adzagbe speakers Dodzi and Gameli could easily recognise that Denyo is one of them the moment he begins to speak. They could also tell that Amenyo is a non-Adzagbe speaker, hence they refer to him as *mɔfɔ* 'fool', a popular term they use to refer to strangers or non-Adzagbe speakers. In a conversation, one male Adzagbe speaker says that:

Mía dzɔŋki-wo me   gbe-e,
1PL   rogue-PL POSS language-FOC

mía hã   mía me patois   ye ma.   È-tse   aleyi
1PL also 1PL POSS patois   FOC DIST. 2SG-see   how

Jamaicatɔ-wo pã-na   yevu-gbe-a?
Jamaican-PL   speak-HAB white.person-language-Q

Nenema   mía hã mí-do-na   Uegbe-a.
like.that   1PL also 1PL-speak-HAB Ewe-DEF

> 'For us rogues, this is our language, our patois. You
> see how Jamaicans speak their English? That's how
> we also speak our Ewe.'
> **(A 26-year-old male, Adzagbe Notes, April 5 2020)**

Equating Adzagbe with the Jamaican creole clearly projects the Adzagbe speaker's view of his language as a unique mark of identity. If the Jamaican creole identifies Jamaicans as a people with a unique culture, so does Adzagbe do its speakers. This identity permeates their performance of Adzagbe and their general culture as we will see in the subsequent chapters. Suffice it now to say that the identity mark of Adzagbe speakers is so strong that even among speakers, reverence is given to those who speak the language well. During data collection, it was common for an Adzagbe speaker to refer to another speaker as a better speaker and that one as the best speaker and this one with the most sophisticated vocabulary, revealing degrees of acceptability of what it takes to have the true Adzagbe identity.

Another reason from the viewpoint of the Adzagbe speaker as regards the motivations for their choices in some situations is to reduce mutual intelligibility. This is done when Adzagbe speakers do not want people they consider as threats and others not to follow or understand their conversations. One example from the conversation at the beginning of this chapter is as follows:

Denyo: Ta ne dze-a nye dix mille-a
    CONJ COND money-DEF COP ten thousand-TOP

  mi-a-be   vingt mille.
  2PL-SUBJV-say twenty thousand.
  'So if the money is ten thousand, we'll say twenty thousand.'

Gameli: Ao, mi-ya-yɔ dze-a   be   bela ame eve.
   no 1PL-AUX-call money-DEF COMP   bela person two.
   'No, we'll call the amount two bela.'

Denyo: Me-fũ   ta   alayi me-li   o.   Amenye-e, me-fũ   o.
      1SG-know   CONJ lie   NEG-exist NEG. friend-FOC NEG-know NEG
      'I know, so no lies. He is my friend, he doesn't understand.'
      (Adzagbe Video 1, April 10, 2021)

To hide the amount of money to be paid from Amenyo and to trick him to pay more, Gameli suggests that they do not use the true amount *dix mille* 'ten thousand CFA', but a term that the stranger Amenyo does not understand. By the way, in Aflao, both Ghana's and Togo's currencies are used, and it is very common to hear people use French terms such as the *dix mille* in question. In all, the foregoing demonstrates the conscious effort by Adzagbe speakers sometimes to hide meaning under Adzagbe vocabulary.

3.7   **Performance of Adzagbe**

It was observed that Adzagbe speakers show some unique features in their performance of Adzagbe. These are loudness, abrupt change of topics, interruptions, overlaps, intentional breaking of the voice and exaggerated gestures. Adzagbe speakers are very loud during their conversations. Florentine (2011:1) admits that "the topic of loudness is no longer something esoteric, discussed only in research laboratories and psychoacoustics lectures. It is mainstream in social conversation, and most people have developed an opinion about some aspect of loudness". Just by mere observation, it is obvious that Adzagbe speakers speak very loudly as compared to non-Adzagbe speakers of the wider Aflao speech community, making loudness part of the performance of Adzagbe.

A second feature of Adzagbe conversations are frequent interruptions and overlaps. Smith-Lovin and Brody (1989:424) acknowledged decades ago that interruptions are common in verbal communications and that "men interrupt men with supportive comments in all-male groups, but these supportive interruptions drop as the number of women in the group increases. Supportive interruptions also succeed in gaining

the floor more often in single-sex groups." This is exactly the case in conversations among Adzagbe speakers which is already stated as a male-dominant language. A speaker starts a sentence only for another in the group to complete it. Because of this trend, topics get changed very frequently insofar as it takes a lot of attention to follow conversations among Adzagbe speakers. A typical Adzagbe conversation is what is presented at the opening part of this chapter. Even though the conversation took just about nine minutes, topics discussed involved politics, sex, survival tactics among the youth, the death of Ghana's former president Jerry Rawlings and so on. An examination of the recorded video shows each participant trying his best to be heard. Interruptions and overlaps are, therefore, typical of Adzagbe conversations.

In addition, Adzagbe speakers employ exaggerated gestures in their performance of Adzagbe. Their conversations involve their whole body. When standing, their body movements involve frequent handshakes, hugs, knocking knuckles and so forth. Their hand movements during conversations resemble how rappers move their hands during performances on stage. Studies such as Dahl and Lugvigsen (2014) and Brookes (2005) have shown the significant roles gestures play in human conversations of any kind. Brookes (2005:2044) argues that "gestures are multifunctional, and fulfil substantive, interactive, and discourse functions simultaneously". It is noted that while gestures play the usual role of enhancing speech among Adzagbe speakers, their exaggerated use of gestures, particularly, the frequent hugs and handshakes of different styles reflect their identity as a people.

As we have already noted above, key features of an Adzagbe performance are loudness, interruptions, overlaps and exaggerated gestures. Discussed below is an excerpt from Adzagbe Video 1 (April 10, 2021), the Adzagbe conversation at the outset of this chapter, to demonstrate these features. This excerpt comprises only the three Adzagbe speakers Denyo, Dodzi and Gameli after they have dismissed Amenyo to discuss issues among themselves. Each response from a speaker is numbered for easy reference. The

Adzagbe words are bold; immediately below them are the Aflao-Ewe equivalence, followed below by their English translations.

77a. Gameli: **Wò me aloba e-fũ   ne   du-a-me-a?**
          2SG POSS man   3SG-know DAT town-DEF-POST-Q

          Wò velia nya   du-a-me-a?
          2SG friend know town-DEF-POST-Q
          'Does your friend know town?'

77b. Dodzi: **Du-a-me   vi   ye-a?**
          town-DEF-POST child   FOC-Q

          Du-a-me   vi   wò-nye-a?
          town-DEF-POST child   3SG-COP-Q
          'Is he from this town?'

78a. Denyo: **Ao me-fũ   o.   Me-le   wɔ bagu kple   susu   be**
          no NEG-know NEG. 1SG-VLOC do   trick CONJ   mind   COMP

          wò ŋutɔ è-fũ   ne   edze   ƒe   alayi.
          2SG very 2SG-know DAT money POSS   lie

          Ao. Me-nya   du-a-me   o.   Me-dzi
          no   NEG-know town-DEF-POST NEG 1SG-want

          be   m-a-bli-i   abe aleyi
          COMP 1SG-SUBJV-deceive-3SG like how

          wò ŋutɔ è-nya   ne   mí-a-ba   ga   le   si.
          2SG very 2SG-know DAT   1SG-SUBJV-cheat money VLOC hand
          'No, he doesn't know town. I'm trying to trick him as you know, so we can
          take   money from   him.'

b. **Ne   mí́-dza-wɔ muvmã,   mi-a-si-i.**
   COND 1PL-AUX-do movement   1PL-SUBJV-cut-3SG

   Mí-a-bli-i   mí-a-fi   ga   le   si.
   1PL-SUBJV-deceive-3SG   1PL-SUBJV-steal money VLOC hand
   'We'll trick him and steal his money.'

c. **Ne   nye dix mille-a   mí'a-be vingt mille**
   COND COP ten thousand-TOP 1PL-say twenty thousand

kple susu be   wò   ŋutɔ   è-fũ,   nye-a   me-ya-ɖu   nu.
CONJ mind say 2SG   very   2sg-know   1SG-TOP 1SG-AUX-eat thing

Ne wo-be   Togo-ga   akpe   wo-a, mí-a-be   akpe   blaeve
COND 3PL-say Togo-money thousand ten-TOP 1PL-SUBJV-say thousand twenty

ne   m-a-kpɔ   nane   a-ɖu.
DAT 1SG-SUBJV-see something   SUBJV-eat
'If they say ten thousand CFA, we'll say twenty thousand, you know, so I could eat.'

79. Dodzi: **Yeta me-nye   guadzi vi   wò-nye-a?**
           CONJ NEG-COP street child 3SG-COP-TOP-Q

    Yeta me-nye   gbevu wò nye o-a?
    CONJ NEG-COP rogue 3SG COP NEG-Q
    'You mean he's not from the streets?'

80. Denyo: **Ao, Agbozume vi-wo,   Ho vi   ma-wo,**
            no A.   child-PL H. child DIST-PL

    wò ŋutɔ è-nya   be   Agbozume kple Ho vi   ma-wo
    2SG very 2SG-know say A.   CONJ H. child DIST-PL

    ne   mi-ɖo alayi zi   ɖeka wo-me-fũ-na
    COND 1PL-reach lie   time one   3PL-NEG-know-HAB

    na   ŋɖekpekpe o   ɖe.
    DAT everything NEG PRT

    Ao, wò ŋutɔ è-nya be   Ho-vi   ma-wo kple Agbozume-vi
    no 2SG very 2SG   COMP   Ho-child DIST-PL CONJ A.-child

    ma-wo kple tɔ-wo wo-me-se   mía me Adzagbe-a gɔme o.
    DIST-PL CONJ other-PL 3PL-NEG-hear 1PL POSS A.-DEF   under NEG
    'No, you know that those guys from Agbozume, Ho and the rest do not understand anything when we speak Adzagbe.'

81a. Gameli to Dodzi: **Me-le-wɔ-alayi   ne   wò be   paɖi   yia**
                          1SG-VLOC-do-lie   DAT 2SG COMP   guy   PROX

leke wò-le-pã   pii-a   è-ya-nya   be   paɖi-a   fũ.
how 3SG-AUX-speak lot-TOP   2SG-AUX-know COMP   guy-DEF   know

    Megblɔ na   wò be   leya ŋutsu-vi   yia
    1SG-say DAT 2SG COMP   how boy-child   PROX

    nu   ƒo-m   taŋtaŋtaŋ è-ya-nya   zi ɖeka be   gbevu-e.
    mouth beat-PROG IDEO   2SG-AUX-know time one COMP   rogue-FOC
    'I told you that the way this guy is talking too much you can tell that he
    is a rogue.'

81b. Denyo: **Adza me-nye   ta…**
    rogue 1SG-COP CONJ

    Gbevu me-nye   ta...
    rogue 1SG-COP CONJ
    'I'm a rogue so…'

82. Denyo: **Paɖi yia   mɔfɔ-e,   me-fũ   o.**
    guy   PROX fool-FOC, NEG-know   NEG.

    Me-do.go-e le   mɔ-a   me.
    SG-meet-3SG PREP   way-DEF   POST

    Ŋutsu-vi yia movi-tɔe, me-se   Adzagbe-a o,
    boy-child prox fool-foc   neg-hear A.-DEF   NEG

    me-do.go-e   le   mɔ-a-dzi.
    NEG 1SG-meet-3SG PREP   way-DEF-POST
    'The guy is a fool, he doesn't know. I met him on the way.'

83. **E-be   m-a-wɔ-avu   ne ye ye-a-cross   ede-a.**
  3SG-say 1SG-SUBJV-do-struggle   DAT LOG LOG-SUBJV-cross border-DEF.

  E-be   m-a-kpe   ɖe ye ŋu ye-a-tso   de-a…
  3SG-say 1SG-SUBJV-help PREP LOG body LOG-SUBJV-cross border-DEF
  'He asked me to help him cross the border...'

84. **Ta   me-dzi   be   mí-a-wu-i,   mí-a-so-ta   nɛ.**
    CONJ 1SG-want COMP   1PL-SUBJV-kill-3SG,   1PL-SUBJV-cut-head   DAT:3SG

    Ta me-dzi   be   mí-a-bli-i   a-xɔ   ga   le   si.
    CONJ 1SG-want COMP   1PL-SUBJV-deceive-3SG SUBJ-receive money   PREP hand
    'I want us trick him and take his money.'

85. Dodzi: **È-le   gbedzi.**
           2SG-VLOC   right

    Ye   ko-e   ma.
    3SG only-FOC   DIST
    'You're right.'

86. Denyo: **Ta   ne   dze-a   nye dix mille-a**
            CONJ COND money-DEF COP ten thousand-TOP

    mí-a-be   vingt mille.
    1PL-SUBJV-say twenty thousand.

    Ta   ne   ga   nye akpe   ewo-a,   mí-a-be   akpe   blaeve.
    CONJ COND money COP thousand ten-TOP   1PL-SUBJV-say thousand twenty
    'So if the money is ten thousand, we'll say twenty thousand.'

87. Gameli: **Ao, mi-ya-yɔ   dze-a   be   bela   ame   eve.**
             no 1PL-AUX-call money-DEF COMP   bela   person two.

    Ao, mí-ya-yɔ   ga   be   bela   ame eve.
    no 1PL-AUX-call   money   COMP   bela   person two.
    'No, we'll call the amount two bela.'

In response **80**, Denyo is loudest of the three speakers in pinpointing *Agbozume viwo kple Ho vi mawo* 'those guys from Agbozume and Ho' as those who do not speak Adzagbe and are *mɔfɔwo* 'fools'. His loudness overshadows his friends who could be seen as trying to say something at the same time. This employment of loudness achieves two goals – that of identity confirmation and power. By loudly emphasising that persons from Agbozume and Ho cannot speak nor understand Adzagbe and are, therefore, *fools* compared with Adzagbe speakers, Denyo is confirming to his colleagues their special identity of

belonging to the Adzagbe speech community, known among Adzagbe speakers as *Aftown*. Second, Denyo's use of loudness to dominate the entire conversation reveals his power over his peers. The source of this power is that Denyo's responses contain more Adzagbe vocabulary than those of Dodzi and Gameli. While the competition to be heard and the use of loudness to achieve this is a common feature of typical Adzagbe conversations, it is a general observation that individuals with higher competencies in Adzagbe employ loudness to dominate conversations such as Denyo is doing in this excerpt.

Interruptions also dominate Adzagbe conversations insofar as the competition to be heard among speakers can be mistaken for a quarrel among them by a non-Adzagbe speaker. There are also cooperative overlaps as a speaker is likely to finish off what another has started. For example, immediately after Amenyo is dismissed, Gameli resumes the conversation with response **77a**, trying to find out from Denyo whether Amenyo is from town and understands Adzagbe. Hardly has he started the question when Dodzi overlaps him with response **77b** as to whether Amenyo is from town only to be also interrupted by Denyo's response in **78a** that Amenyo does not speak Adzagbe. Among the many instances of interruption in the excerpt above is Gameli's response **81a** to Dodzi that Denyo understands Adzagbe and is a rogue only to be quickly interrupted by Denyo in response **81b** in his usual loud style that he (Denyo) is an Adzagbe speaker and a rogue.

Below is a brief conversation analysis of part of Adzagbe Video 1 to illustrate uncooperative interruptions and cooperative overlaps in Adzagbe performance:

77a. Gameli to Denyo: Wò me aloba efũ [ne duamea?]
                        'Does your friend know town?'

77b. Dodzi to Denyo: [Duame vi yea?]
                        'Is he from this town?'

78a. Denyo: AO, MEFŨ O.
         'No, he doesn't know.

MELE WƆ BAGU KPLE SUSU BE WÒ ŊUTƆ ÈFŨ NE EDZƐ ƑE
ALAYI.
I'm trying to trick him as you know, so we can take money from
him.'

81a. Gameli to Dodzi: Melewɔ alayi ne wò be paɖi yia leke [wòlepã piia èyanya be]
paɖia fũ.

'I told you that the way this guy is talking too much you can tell that he is a
rogue.'

81b. Denyo: [ADZA MENYE   TA]…

'I'm a rogue so…'

82. Denyo: PAÐI YIA MƆFƆE, MEFŨ O. MEDO GOE LE MƆA ME.

'The guy is a fool, he doesn't know. I met him on the way.'

In this extract of Adzagbe Video 1 as discussed above, Gameli wants to find out from
Denyo in 77a whether Denyo's friend knows town only to be overlapped by Dodzi posing
the same question in different words to Denyo. Dodzi does not wait for Gameli for Dodzi's
turn. Right after Gameli's use of *fũ* 'know' as regards whether or not Denyo's friend knows
town, Dodzi asks the question Gameli's intends to ask Denyo. We can see from the
English translations *Does your friend know town?* and *Is he from this town?* that this is a
cooperative overlap. Once Dodzi gets the hint of the question Gameli seeks to ask Denyo,
Dodzi quickly overlaps Gameli and asks the same question using different words. This
type of cooperative overlapping turn taking is an integral part of Adzagbe performance.

Denyo in 78a, well aware of the overlaps and interruptions common in Adzagbe
performance, prevents any overlap or interruption by answering Gameli and Dodzi's
questions loudly. In fact, throughout the conversation in Adzagbe Video 1, no one has
overlapped and interrupted other speakers more than Denyo. He is well aware of his

competence in speaking Adzagbe better than his colleagues and demonstrates this awareness by his frequent overlaps and interruptions of his colleagues.

Now in 81a, Gameli turns towards Dodzi to confirm to Dodzi how Denyo's way of carrying himself gives him up as an *adza* 'rogue/hooligan' and that Denyo is well aware of their tactics to make money, only for Denyo, invited, to interrupt them that he is a hooligan. He goes on to say that his friend is a fool and does not know town. Denyo's loudness cuts into the conversation as he directs attention to his own ability of being a hooligan and a competent Adzagbe speaker, which is characteristic of Adzagbe speakers who are regarded by their peers as better speakers of the language. In addition, therefore, to cooperative overlaps in turn taking in Adzagbe performance, uncooperative interruptions are also part and parcel of Adzagbe performance. It is also observed that Adzagbe speakers who consider themselves better at the language than others in a given group interrupt and overlap other speakers in Adzagbe conversations the most. **Figure 4** below is a shot from Adzagbe Video 1 illustrating the use of loudness, interruptions and overlaps as Adzagbe speakers compete to be heard. Except for the non-Adzagbe speaker Amenyo (first from left), all three Adzagbe speakers – Denyo, Dodzi and Gameli are speaking loudly and at the same time as evidenced by their open mouths in the shot.

Figure 4: Loudness, interruptions and overlaps in Adzagbe performance[2]

Gestures, like interruptions and overlaps, in the performance of Adzagbe are so pronounced that one cannot help but notice how they complement words. For example, in Denyo's response **84** as to how to trick Amenyo and take his money, he makes his hand like a cutlass and makes a slashing movement as though to cut through something. This gesture is interesting to explore in that the words employed to mean *to trick someone* in Adzagbe are the Ewe words *wui* 'kill him' and *so ta nɛ* 'behead him'. Even though the Adzagbe speakers clearly understand that the thrust of those words in Adzagbe is to trick Amenyo and take his money, Denyo's gestures betray the source of these Adzagbe terms – Ewe, which is the backbone of Adzagbe. This double thinking of speaking Adzagbe and gesturing in Ewe reveal the consciousness with which Adzagbe is created and performed.

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[2] Picture taken by Cosmas Rai Amenorvi from Adzagbe Video 1 with permission from participants.

Figure 5 below is a shot taken from Adzagbe Video 1 illustrating the speaking of Adzagbe while gesturing in Ewe among Adzagbe speakers. The figure shows Denyo (first from left) gesturing the Ewe words *wui* 'kill him' and *so ta nɛ* 'behead him' which mean *trick someone* in Adzagbe.

Figure 5: Gestures in Adzagbe Performance[3]

Besides, in Dodzi's response **85** *Ele gbedzi* 'You're right' in agreement to Denyo's plan that they deceive Amenyo and take his money, the three friends simultaneously knock their knuckles, which is a very common gesture among Adzagbe speakers, and is a sign of solidarity and agreement among them. Another common gesture noted in the excerpt is that of gaining attention from other speakers by touch, usually on the chest or shoulders. This is done usually by those who have almost been silenced in the

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[3] Picture taken by Cosmas Rai Amenorvi from Adzagbe Video 1 with permission from participants.

competition to be heard. Gameli who seems to be the least heard in the excerpt could not measure up to the loudness of Denyo and Dodzi. Thus, in his response **87** to Denyo not to disclose the true amount Amenyo has to pay to cross the border, he frantically pats Denyo on the chest to get his attention to put his message across. Also, the use of space as regards movement of the body to depict such actions as walking, running and the like are a common feature of a typical Adzagbe performance. **Figure 6** below is a shot from Adzagbe Video 1 illustrating Denyo, Dodzi and Gameli knocking knuckles, a very common gesture of agreement and solidarity among Adzagbe speakers.

Figure 6: Gestures in Adzagbe Performance[4]

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[4] Picture taken by Cosmas Rai Amenorvi from Adzagbe Video 1 with permission from participants.

3.7 Summary

This chapter provides part of the answer to the first research question as to what goes into the creation of Adzagbe among the youth of Aflao, Ghana. Findings have shown that Adzagbe speakers create vocabulary by morphological and phonological word-formation processes of Ewe and foreign materials, with English and French dominating the latter. Adzagbe morphological manipulations involve word-formation processes as prefixation, suffixation, reduplication, coinages, old words with new meanings and fusion. Of these morphological word-formation processes, prefixation, suffixation, coinages by sound symbolism are largely adopted from Ewe, and unsurprisingly so because Ewe is Adzagbe's base language. However, in their process of suffixation, Adzagbe speakers, as a mark of identity, prefer the ownership marker -nɔ which is used to a limited extent in Ewe to the regular ownership marker -tɔ. Adzagbe speakers also employ fusion in tandem with clipping as a word-formation process, a process common in youth languages but not used in Ewe. Phonological manipulations in Adzagbe comprise clipping and metathesis of word syllables. The former is not a regular feature of Ewe while the latter is used to a limited extent in Ewe but used frequently in Adzagbe. Features of Adzagbe performance are loudness, frequent interruptions and overlaps, abrupt change of topics and exaggerated gestures.