

COMFORT AHENKORAH

Ph.D. in Linguistics, Yale University

Yale Linguistics Department

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Research Interests: Morphology, Morphosyntax, Semantics, Syntax, Language Variation, Psycholinguistics

Research Languages: Akan, English, other Kwa languages

Education

Yale University, New Haven, CT 2020–2026

Ph.D. in Linguistics

Dissertation: *One Feature, Many Layers: From Morphosyntax to the Semantics of Number in Akan*

Advisors: Veneeta Dayal and Jim Wood

University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana 2015–2019

B.A. in Linguistics

Thesis: *A Re-look at Akan Plural Morphology in Contextual Allomorphy*

Advisor: Sampson Korsah

Publications

Journal Articles

- Ahenkorah, Comfort. “Multiple Pluralization Strategies in Akan: A Split Number Approach.” *Linguistic Inquiry*. Accepted.
- Korsah, Sampson, Augustina Owusu, and Comfort Ahenkorah. 2023. “On Unexpected Exceptions to Prosodic Vacuity and Verbal Resumption in Akan.” *Snippets*.
- Thompson, Rachel, Comfort Ahenkorah, and Wendy Amoako Kwakye. 2022. “Natural Semantic Metalanguage of Akan.” *Journal of West African Languages* 49(1): 46–66.

Book Chapters and Conference Proceedings

- Ahenkorah, Comfort. 2025. “The Descriptive and Syntactic Properties of the *ànáá* Particle(s).” In Akinbiyi Akinlabi, Sampson Korsah, Sharon Rose, and Abdul-Razak Sulemana (eds.), *Cross-disciplinary Approaches to Information Structure in Niger-Congo Languages*, 155–179. Berlin: Language Science Press.
- Ahenkorah, Comfort. “Three Morphological Paths to Kind Reference.” *Proceedings of GLOW 48*. Forthcoming.
- Ahenkorah, Comfort and Ka-Fai Yip. “Exclusive Focus in Akan and Type Flexibility.” *Proceedings of NELS 55*. To appear.
- Yip, Ka-Fai and Comfort Ahenkorah. 2022. “Non-agreeing Resumptive Pronouns and Partial Copy Deletion.” *University of Pennsylvania Working Papers in Linguistics* 29(1): 206–215.

Manuscripts

- Ahenkorah, Comfort. “From Morphosyntax of Number to a Compositional Semantics: The Case of Akan.” Submitted to *Linguistics and Philosophy*.

- Ahenkorah, Comfort. “The Split Pluractionality Analysis: The Case of Verbal Reduplication in Akan.” Submitted to *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory*.
- Ahenkorah, Comfort and Ka-Fai Yip. “Subject Resumption in Akan and vP Phasehood.” Manuscript in preparation.
- Ahenkorah, Comfort. “The Structure and Dynamic Implementation of Aspectual Verbs in Akan.” Manuscript in preparation.

Dissertation

- Ahenkorah, Comfort. 2026. *One Feature, Many Layers: From Morphosyntax to the Semantics of Number in Akan*. Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University.

Presentations

Conference Talks

- 2026 “From Morphosyntax to the Semantics of Akan Number Morphology.” 56th Annual Meeting of the North East Linguistic Society (NELS 56), The Graduate Center, City University of New York (CUNY), October 16–18, 2026. *Upcoming*.
- 2025 “Exclusive Focus in Akan and Type Flexibility.” TripleA 12 Workshop, University of Tokyo, September 10–12, 2025. [with Ka-Fai Yip]
- 2025 “The Semantics of Ewe Number Marking.” 31st Annual University of Edinburgh Linguistics and English Language Postgraduate Conference, Edinburgh, UK, June 4–6, 2025.
- 2025 “The Semantics of Ewe Number Marking.” 56th Annual Conference on African Linguistics (ACAL), University of Minnesota, May 15–17, 2025.
- 2024 “Navigating Number Marking in Akan Nominals and Predicates.” Gaps and Imprecision in Natural Language Semantics Workshop, ZAS Berlin, October 8–9, 2024.
- 2024 “The Split Number Analysis for Akan Plural Morphology.” 55th Annual Conference on African Linguistics (ACAL), Montreal, Canada, May 2–4, 2024.
- 2024 “Two Types of Subject Resumption in Akan.” 55th Annual Conference on African Linguistics (ACAL), Montreal, Canada, May 2–4, 2024. [with Ka-Fai Yip]
- 2023 “The Syntax-Semantics Analysis of Akan Plural Morphology.” 45th Annual Conference of the German Linguistic Society (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Sprachwissenschaft, DGfS), Cologne, Germany, March 7–10, 2023.
- 2022 “We Want to Know, Must You Answer This Question?” Southern New England Workshop in Semantics (SNEWS), Yale University, November 12, 2022. [with Yuyang Liu]
- 2022 “On the Particle(s) of *anaa* in Akan.” African Linguistics School Workshop, Porto-Novo, Benin, July 28–30, 2022.
- 2021 “Non-agreeing Resumptive Pronouns and Partial Copy Deletion.” SYNC 2021, CUNY Graduate Center, December 4, 2021. [with Ka-Fai Yip]
- 2021 “A Reply to Kandybowicz or a New *ye* in Akan.” Structural Asymmetries in African Languages (SAIAL), April 15–16, 2021. [with Sampson Korsah]

Invited Talks

- 2026 “One Feature, Many Layers: From Morphosyntax to Semantics of Number in Akan.” Syntax Brown Bag, New York University, May 1, 2026.

- 2022 “Non-agreeing Resumptive Pronouns and Partial Copy Deletion.” University of Connecticut LingLunch, April 26, 2022. [with Ka-Fai Yip]
- 2020 “Say *tweaa* (Not *apuutɔɔ*): A Linguist’s Contribution to the COVID-19 Fight.” Faculty of Arts Public Lecture, University of Cape Coast, August 25, 2020. [with Sampson Korsah]
- 2020 “A Reply to Kandybowicz or a New *yɛ* in Akan.” Ghanaian Languages and Linguistics Departmental Seminar, University of Cape Coast, March 2, 2020. [with Sampson Korsah]

Poster Presentations

- 2026 “Three Morphological Paths to Kind Reference.” GLOW 48, Siena, Italy, April 21–23, 2026.
- 2025 “Exclusive Focus in Akan and Type Flexibility.” NELS 55, New York University, October 17–19, 2025. [with Ka-Fai Yip]
- 2024 “Multiple Plural(s) in Akan.” Workshop on Morphology at Princeton, Princeton University, March 23, 2024.
- 2023 “Pluralization Strategies in Akan.” SALT Satellite, Yale University, May 4, 2023.
- 2023 “Pluractional Reduplication in Akan.” 97th Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, Denver, Colorado, January 5–8, 2023.
- 2022 “Non-agreeing Resumptive Pronouns and Partial Copy Deletion.” 96th Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, Washington, DC. [with Ka-Fai Yip]
- 2022 “The Four *anaa* Particle(s).” Language Diversity, Linguistic Theory and Cultural Identity in South Asia, Yale University.

Research Experience

Qualifying Paper II	2023
<i>The Structure and Dynamic Implementation of Aspectual Verbs in Akan</i>	
Supervisor: Maria Piñango	
Qualifying Paper I	2022
<i>The Semantics of Akan Number Morphology</i>	
Supervisors: Veneeta Dayal (Chair) and Jim Wood	
Bachelor’s Thesis	2019
<i>A Re-look at Akan Plural Morphology in Contextual Allomorphy</i>	
Supervisor: Sampson Korsah	

Teaching Experience

Teaching Fellow, Yale University	2022–2026
• Language and Gender, Spring 2026 • Introduction to Linguistics, Fall 2025 • Language and Gender, Spring 2024 • Syntax I, Fall 2023 • Grammatical Diversity in U.S. English, Spring 2023 • Introduction to Linguistics, Fall 2022	
Teaching Assistant, University of Cape Coast	2019–2020

- Introduction to Linguistics
- Introduction to Morphology
- Research Methods

Professional Appointments

Instructor, Introduction to Semantics 2027
African Linguistics School 8

Thesis Committee

Jacob Berger, Oregon State University 2026
Undergraduate Thesis Committee Member
Parsimonious Decoding: Guiding Semantic Legality in LLMs for Reductive Paraphrasing

Fellowships and Awards

2020–2026 University Fellowship, Yale University

2025 Graduate Student Assembly Conference Travel Fellowship, Yale University

2024 MacMillan Center International Conference Travel Grant, Yale University

2023–2024 Nathan Hale Associates Fellowship Award, Yale University

2023 MacMillan Center International Conference Travel Grant, Yale University

2021–2022 Nathan Hale Associates Fellowship Award, Yale University

2019 Faculty of Arts Best Graduating Student, University of Cape Coast

2019 Ghanaian Languages and Linguistics Best Graduating Student, University of Cape Coast

Academic Service

Conference Organization

2024 Organizing Committee, 55th Annual Meeting of the North East Linguistic Society (NELS), Yale University.

2023 Organizing Committee, 33rd Meeting of Semantics and Linguistic Theory (SALT), Yale University.

2022 Organizing Committee, Southern New England Workshop in Semantics (SNEWS), Yale University.

Other Service

2025 Community Engagement Fellow, Yale Center for Language Study.

2018 Treasurer, Faculty of Arts Students Association, University of Cape Coast.

Additional Academic Training

2024 Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Writing-in-Residence Dissertation Working Group, Yale University, June–July 2024.

2023 LSA Linguistics Institute, Linguistic Society of America, University of Massachusetts Amherst, June–July 2023.

2022 African Linguistics School, Porto-Novo, Benin, June–July 2022.

2019 African Linguistics School, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa, June–July 2019.

References

Prof. Veneeta Dayal

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