

THE GHANA LANGUAGE



PREPARED BY IVAN ANNAN

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FL 9189

PL
8191
A56
1964
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MUSIC LP

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FOLKWAYS FL 9189

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THE GHANA LANGUAGE

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FL 9189

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

"So This Is Ghana"

... BY IVAN ANNAN.

VOL. 2.

Many people in the recording business have for a very long time been mostly concerned with music that will sell rather than the value of the materials being sold. Among the few whose have devoted much of their time, finance and efforts to record the art, music and folklore of many lands, Folkway Records stands up to date with the many existing peoples of the world. I am grateful for this opportunity in presenting on Folkway records, a cross section of music played by traditional groups in their traditional manner without any western influence, and to record for the first time an African dialect translated into English for the tourist as well as the child or the interested person who wishes to learn an African dialect.

The interest of many people in recent years have been focused on the newly independent states of Africa, and the tremendous treasures of art, music and culture that is unique in all its forms which the rest of the world have for many years taken for granted. Children of many races attending primary schools in Africa today, are already speaking many languages which are foreign to their parents and guardians, but a common medium among them who will be the keepers of this universe when we are gone tomorrow. It is never late to learn how to save one's life especially this age of living side by side with fear and hate, this may not be the solution to the problem, yet the harmony that exist between the little children that does not exist among the older people of today is due to suspicion and non communication between peoples of the world. Let us not under estimate the values of our neighbour's language, but learn few of the most important words that will form the basis of the our contact and the eventual elimination of suspicion and distrust, for more difficult and proverbial languages among the people of the earth. On the west coast of Africa are nations and tribes who have their distinct language and cultures, among them is the controvercial nation of Ghana.

Ghana is bounded on the north by Upper Volta, on the east by Togo, and the West by Ivory Coast. Accra is the capital city and the seat of government. In recent years Accra has turn out to be a cosmopolitan city, and the many inhabitants have been influenced by the tonal language of the Ga people, the aboriginal people of the Ga state, which lies between the beautiful shores of the Awutus on the West, the green and fascinating cool hills of the Akwapims and the fabulous rocks of the Shai hills which spreads into the sea, at the point where the dialects fades into a near Ewe (Ev Eh).

The Ga language can not be learn thoroughly by this medium since like many other languages have certain word that do not have meaning in English, visa visa, like Jelly. : and Aboloe. : But it hoped that these fundamental words will help the beginner to start and progress to the more advance and new creations of our time.

Writing in Ga is another problem, since the alpha-bet are slightly different from the regular English alphabet, I have therefore devised this form of pronunciation to make it easier.

PRONOUNS

| <u>English</u> | <u>Ga</u> |
|----------------|--------------|
| I. | ME or MI |
| YOU singular | BO |
| HE OR SHE | LEH. |
| WE | WOH |
| YOU plural | NYE OR GNEH. |
| THEY | AMEH. |

OBJECTIVES

| | |
|----------|-----------|
| ME | MI |
| YOU | BO |
| HIM | LEH |
| HER (IT) | LEH |
| US | WOH |
| YOU | NYEH GNEH |
| THEM | AMEH |

DAYS OF THE WEEK

| | |
|-----------|---------------|
| SUNDAY | HORGBAH JU |
| MONDAY | DZU JU |
| TUESDAY | DZUFOH |
| WEDNESDAY | SHOH |
| THURSDAY | SOW |
| FRIDAY | SOW-HAA |
| SATURDAY | HOH |

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GREETINGS AND RESPONSES

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| GOOD MORNING | O, WONG |
| GOOD AFTERNOON | O, SHWEE. |
| GOOD EVENING | O, MANG NII |
| WELCOME | HE NI ODZEH |
| GOOD BYE | YAABA |
| HOW ARE YOU | TEY O YOH TENG JO |
| I AM FINE | MI YE ODZOSBANG |
| I AM NOT FEELING WELL. | JO MI BE ODZO GBAANG |
| TODAY IS SUNDAY | MME NE HOGBAH |
| TOMORROW IS MONDAY | WOH JU |
| I SHALL GO TO KUMASI ON TUESDAY | MAYA KUMASI JU FOH |
| I SHALL ARRIVE ON WEDNESDAY | MA KU MISEH SHOH. |
| I SHALL ARRIVE IN THE MORNING | MA SHEH SHI LEY BI |
| WE SHALL GO TO THE MARKET IN THE AFTER- NOON. | WOHBAA YA DZAA LE NOH SHWANNEY. |
| <u>TIME</u> | |
| TODAY | MMENE |
| TOMORROW | WOH |
| YESTERDAY | GNEH |
| THIS YEAR | AFI NEH |
| LAST YEAR | GNEH SIR AFI |
| MORNING | LEBI |
| AFTERNOON | SHWANE |
| EVENING | GBEHKEH |
| 1 O'CLOCK | MMELEH KO MEY |
| 2 " | MME JI EGNOH |
| 3 " | MME JI EY TEH |
| 4 " | MME JI EDWEH |
| 5 " | MME JI ENUMOH |
| 6 " | MME JI E KPAA |
| 7 " | MME JI KPAWO |

| | |
|------|------------------------------|
| 8 " | MME JI KPAA GNOH |
| 9 " | MME JI NEHH HU |
| 10 " | MME JI GNOHGMA |
| 11 " | MME JI GNOHGMA, KE EKOMEY |
| 12 " | MME JI GNOHGMA, KE ENYOH. |

WE SHALL REST IN THE
HOUSE IN THE EVENING WOHBAA JOH WOH
HE YE SHIA LEH
GBEKEH.

I SHALL GO TO BED
EARLY MA WOH MLA

I HAD GOOD (SOUND)
SLEEP MI WOH JO GBANNG

I WOKE UP AT
7 O'CLOCK MI TEY SHI MMEH
JII KPAWO

NUMERALS

| | |
|--------|-----------|
| ONE | EKOMEY |
| TWO | E GNOH |
| THREE | E TEH |
| FOUR | E JWEH |
| FIVE | E NUMOH |
| SIX | E KPAA |
| SEVEN | KPA WO |
| EIGHT | KPAA GNOH |
| NINE | GNOH GMAH |
| AND... | KEH |

CURRENCY

| | |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| PENNY | KPAA EJWEH |
| HALF PENNY | KPAA E GNOH |
| TWO PENCE | KPAA KPAAGNOH |
| THREE PENCE | TROH |
| SIXPENCE | MEO |
| ONE SHILLING | YI KOME |
| TWO SHILLING | YI E GNOH |
| ONE POUND | PAUN KOMEY. ETC. ETC. |

THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME OF THE USEFUL WORDS IN THE HOME.

WHAT IS THIS MENI NEH
WHAT IS YOUR NAME TE A CHE OR BO
 TEHNG
MY NAME IS JOHN A CHE OR MI, JOHN.
HOW OLD ARE YOU? AFII E GNI EH OYE?
HAVE YOU BROTHERS? OYEH GNEHMI ME HII?
" " SISTERS? " " " YEI?

WHAT IS THE NAME OF
YOUR BROTHER TE A CHE OR O GNEHMI
 NUU LEH TEHNG

HOW OLD IS YOUR
BROTHER? AFII E GNIEH O
 GNEHMI NUU LEH E YE

HOW OLD IS YOUR
SISTER? AFII E GNIEH O
 GNEHMI YOO LEH E YE

IS THIS MY ROOM? MI CHU NEH LO?

THANK YOU OYI WALA DONG

PLEASE GIVE ME
ME A GLASS OF WATER OFAI NEH, HAMI NU
GLASS OF WATER KEH GLASSEY

OFAI NEH, YEH NU KE
GLASSEY O HAMI.

PLEASE I DON'T
UNDERSTAND OFAI NEH, MI NOO

SAY IT AGAIN WI EY MO E KONG

SAY IT SLOWLY WI E MO GNAA

I WILL TRY NOT TO
FORGET MA BOH MOH DENG NI IHI
 EH A KA KPAHOH

WHAT DO YOU CALL
THIS TE A CHE OR E NEH
 TEH EH

A SPOON AWA LEY

A FORK FAKA

A GLASS NU KPU LU (GLASSEY)

KNIFE KA KLA

TABLE OKPOH LOH

A CHAIR SEH I

I LIKE THIS GROUND
NUT SOUP VERY MUCH MI SUMOH N'KATI EH
 WONU NEH JOGBANG

IT TASTES VERY NICE E N'GOH JO GBANG

I WANT TO GO OUT
PLEASE DFAI NEH MING TAO
 MA JE KPO

CAN YOU ARRANGE
TAXI FOR ME? O OGNEH O CHEH TAXI
 O HAMI?

VERY WELL THANK
YOU O JO GBANG, O YI
 WALA DONG

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

CAT ALON TE'

HEN WU OH YOE

SHEEP GWANG TENG

GOAT A BOTIA

BIRD LO FLOH

MONKEY A DUNG

PARROT A KOE

TURKEY KRA KOONG

DUCK DOH KOH DOH KOH

COW CHI NA

HORSE O KPONGNOH

PIG KPLO TOE

PARTS OF THE BODY

HEAD YI CHO

HAIR YI CH WEH

EYE HI N'GMEI

NOSE GU GOH

MOUTH NAA BU

TEETH GNAH GNONG

LIP NAABU

CHEEKS KPAI

FACE HI EH

EARS TOII

NECK KE EH

CHEST CHI CHI

ARM NI NEY
 CHIN CHENG
 HAND NI NEY KOH KOH
 PALM DEY

THE FARMERS LITTLE SON

UPON HIS FATHERS SHOULDERS HE SAT

THROUGH THE JOURNEY HOME, AND
 WATCHED THE MANY BIRDS SANG.

WITH THE CROPS OF MY FATHERS TOIL
 UPON MY MOTHERS HEAD,

WE FOLLOWED, AS THE LITTLE GIRL SLEPT
 BEHIND HER BACK.

AROUND THEM, THE BARK OF THE TREE
 WHICH MY FATHER MADE FOR THEM,
 FLOAT IN THE BREEZE.

SOME DAY, I WILL GROW UP TOO, BUT I
 WILL FISH BY THE

RIVER THAT FLOW BETWEEN THE TOWN
 AND THE MOUNTAIN

NOT ONLY FOR THE GOLDEN FISH, BUT THE
 PRECIOUS STONE WITHIN ITS HEAD.

THE TOWN FOLKS WILL COME TO PAY
 HOMAGE TO A GREAT MAN,

WHO ONCE SAT UPON HIS FATHERS SHOULDERS
 WITH A DREAM, AND PRECIOUS STONE.

YOU AND I HAVE WALKED THIS PATH A
 MANY TIME,

YET NEVER HAVE YOU NOR I HAVE TURNED
 TO LOOK AT THE LONELY FLOWER BY
 THE ROADSIDE.

WE HAVE NEVER BOTHERED TO KNOW THE
 VALUE OF THE LITTLE LONELY FLOWER,

NOW THAT WE SEE IT AS WE PASS BYE.

WHO EVER PLANTED THE LONELY FLOWER BY
 THE ROADSIDE?

YOU NOR I WILL NOT KNOW.

A DAY WILL COME WHEN SOME LONELY PERSON
 WILL PLUCK THIS LONELY FROM THE ROADSIDE.

TO KEEP EACH OTHERS COMPANY. AND AS WE
 WALK OUR USUAL PATH, WE SHALL LOOK I'M
 AFRAID AND THERE WILL BE NO MORE LONELY
 FLOWERS, BUT YOU AND I.

THE LONELY FLOWER BY THE ROADSIDE.

THE LITTLE BIRDS ALSO SANG

NIGHTS AT BLEKUSO WERE SOMBER AND SWEET,
 SOME TIME POWERFUL GREAT. THE HEAVY
 THREATENING VOICES OF THE BIGGER BIRDS
 VIBRATE AND SHOOK THE PEACEFUL NIGHT. I
 COULD SEE THE SMULDERING FIRE ACROSS A
 FACE WITH EYES THAT BLINK WITH FEAR, IT
 WILL BE MORNING SOON, AND AS WE SLEEP
 PEACEFULLY IN THE MORNING BREEZE, THE
 THREATENING VOICES OF THE BIGGER BIRDS WILL
 LOST, AND FORGOTTEN, AS THE SWINGLE VOICES
 OF THE LITTLE BIRDS ALSO SANG.

PARTS OF THE BODY

| | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| HEAD | YI CHOE |
| HAIR | YI CHO EH I |
| EYE | HI NM EH I |
| NOSE | GU GOH |
| FINGER | WAO |
| STOMACH | MU SU |
| FINGER NAILS | WAO NAA |
| NAVEL | LANG NMOH |
| WAIST | HEH |
| LEGS | NA JII |
| KNEE | NAKU CHOE |
| ANKLE | NANE TA LOHG |
| TOES | NANE WAA BIA NA |
| FEET | NA JII |

FAMILY RELATIONS

| | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| FATHER | CHEH |
| MOTHER | GNEH |
| BROTHER | GNEH MI NU |
| SISTER | GNEH MI YOE |
| MATERNAL UNCLE | CHEH QUEH (KU EH) |
| AUNT | GNEH " |
| COUSIN | YEI E GNOH BII |
| GRANDFATHER | NII |
| GRANDMOTHER | NAA |
| NEPHEW | GNEH MIBI NU |
| NIECE | GNEMI BI YOE |

HUSBAND WU
WIFE GNAH
CHILDREN GBE KEH BII

IN THE MARKET

BANANA A QUA DU
ORANGE A KU TU
PEAR PEH YA
TOMATO A MEY O
PLANTAIN AMA DAA
YAMS (S) YEH LEH (JII)
EGGS WU OH WOH JII
CHICKEN WU OH BII

WHAT IS THE NAME OF
THIS MARKET? TEY A CHEH OH JRA
NE TEHNG?

IT SEEMS A BIT CROWDED
E TAMOH E WO SAANG
FIOO

WHERE DO THEY SELL
FRUITS? NING GBEH AHOH A DUA
WAI YEH?

WHERE CAN I BUY
NING GBEH MA NA MA
HEY YEH

THESE ARE BEAUTIFUL E NEH I MEH YE FEH O

WHAT IS THE PRICE
OF THIS? E N'YIEH NE? (CHOH
MOH MI E NEH NA)

HOW MUCH DO YOU
SELL THIS? E N'YIEH A HOH E NEH?

I WANT TO BUY SIX
PENCE M MA HE SIX PENCE.

WHAT IS THE PRICE
OF THIS E N'YIEH A HOH E NE

THE PRICE IS TWO
SHILLINGS E JRA JI SLEY LEY
E GNOH

IT IS TOO DEAR E JRA WA CHOH

I DON'T LIKE THIS ONE MI SU MOH E NEH

PLEASE GIVE ME THIS
ONE HA MI E NEH

GIVE ME MY BALANCE
PLEASE O FAI NEH DAN MOH
MI SEH

ARE THESE FOR SALE? A NI AA HOH LO

PLEASE SHOW ME THE
ROAD TO O FAI NEH CHOH MOH
MI GBEH KEH YAA

I AM A STRANGER GBOH JI MI

I DO NOT KNOW THIS
AREA MI LEY AKUCHO NEH
MLI

TAKE THIS ROAD ON
YOUR LEFT CHOH GBE NI KA O
BEH KU

TAKE THIS ROAD ON
YOUR RIGHT CHOH GBE NI KA O
NI NEY JROH

GO STRAIGHT AHEAD YAA O HI EH
TEH EH

YOU HAVE MISSED
THE ROAD O LAA JEY GBEH

TURN BACK KU U O SEI

ASK ANYBODY BI MOH FE EH MO

IS IT LONG TO THE
POST OFFICE? A NI POST OFFICE
GBE JEH KEH?

NO IT IS NOT DAA BI E JEH KEH EH

THANK YOU O YI WALA DONNG

I AM LOST MI LAA JEY

I AM LOOKING FOR WHERE
I LIVE MI N'TAO MI SHI A
GBEH

I LIVE AT THE AMBASSADOR
HOTEL MI YEH AMBASSADOR
HOTEL

AT MR. OR MRS.
HOUSE MI YE ... SHIA LEH

IT IS NOT FAR FROM
HERE E KEH BI EH JEH
KE-EH

IT IS NEAR (SO & SO) E BENKEH (SO & SO)

CAN YOU TAKE ME
THERE? O ON'YIEH O KE MIA
YA JEHNG

THIS IS THE HOUSE NA A SHI A LEH

THANK YOU VERY
MUCH MING DA BO SHI JO
GBANG (OYI WALA
DONNG)

GOOD BYE YAA BA

I LOST MY WAY MI LA A JEY
GBEH (MI DU GBEH)

IS THAT SO NAKAI LO

YES... NAKAI (HEH EHH)

A KIND FRIEND SHOWED
ME THE WAY NAA N'YO MIN JOLEH
KO CHOH MI GBEH

A KIND FRIEND BROUGHT
ME HERE NAA N'YO MIN JOLEH
KO, KE MI BABIEH

I DON'T THINK YOU
WOULD MISS YOUR WAY E FEE MI AKEH O
BAADUGBEH

WHY DIDN'T YOU TAKE
A TAXI? MEHBA O WOE TAXI?

YOU DON'T SEE ENOUGH
FROM A TAXI O NAA CHOH KE JEH
TAXI MLI

I WANT TO SEE THE
SHOPS MIN TAO A NA SHWA
PO LEH AMIN

I AM GLAD TO BE BACK
HOME E N'GOH MI NAA AKEH
MI SHEH SHIAH

AT THE AIRPORT

I AM LEAVING GHANA
TODAY MIN SHI GHANA N'MEH
NEH

I AM GOING TO KUMASI
BY AIR MIN YA KUMASI KEKOR
YOHNG LEHLEH

THANK YOU FOR SEEING
ME OFF O YI WALA DONG NI OBA
QUEH N'YISEH

WHEN DOES THE PLANE
ARRIVE MEH BEY KOHYOHNG
LEHEEH LEH SHEH OH
SH

WILL YOU ARRIVE
TODAY? ANI OBAA SHEH SHI
N'MENEH?

THIS PLANE IS VERY
FAST KOHYONG LEHLEH
NEH JO OHFOI WAA

AT TEMA

WHERE IS THE HARBOUR?
NIN'GBEH MEYLEY
DAAMO HE LEH YOR

WHEN WAS IT BUILT? MEH BEY A FEY

WHERE IS THE OLD
VILLAGE? NIN'GBEH AKLOWA
MOMO LEH YOH?

WHERE ARE THE OLD
BUILDINGS? NIN'GBEH SHIAI
MEYMEY JII LEHYOH?

THE OLD HOUSES HAVE
BEEN PULLED DOWN AKU MOH SHIAAI
MEYMEY JII LEH

WHAT IS THE WORK
OF THE PEOPLE? MEH NI MEINI YOH
BI EH LEH CHU OH,
(OR)

AT THE LORRY PARK

WHERE IS THE LORRY
PARK? NIN'GBEH CHONEY
AMAAMOH HEY YOH?

I WANT A LORRY MINTAO CHONEY

WHAT IS THE FARE TO
(SO) E N'YI EH A HEY
OH KE YAA (SO)

I HAVE SOME LUGGAGE MI YEH JA CHUI KO MEH

HOW MUCH FOR MY
LUGGAGE? E N'YI EH A BAA HE
MI JA CHU LEH?

HELP ME TO CARRY
MY LUGGAGE WA MI KEH TEY
LEY MI JA CHU LEH

I HAVE ONLY A SMALL
BAG JA CHU FIO OKO
MI HIE

GET ME A TAXI
PLEASE O FAI NEH CHEH
TAXI O HAMI

AT THE SHOP

WHERE IS KINGSWAY? NEN'GBEH KINGSWAY
YOH?

WHERE IS U. T. C. ? NEN'GBEH U. T. C.
YOH

WHERE IS LEVENTIS OR
GHANA HOUSE NEN'GBEH LEVENTIS,
LO GHANA HOUSE YOH

COMMON EXPRESSIONS

COME... BA. CQME HERE
BA BI EH NEH

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| GO... YAA. | GO THERE YAA BI EH NEH. | I AM GOING TO (SO) | MIN YA (SO) |
| CAN I SEND YOU.. | MI CHU BO LO? | CAN YOU SHOW ME WHERE I CAN GET (SO) | OO N'YEH O CHOH MI HEY NI MANA.. YE |
| BUY ME SOME ORANGES | HE MOH AKUTU O HAMI | WHERE CAN I SEE (SO) | NEN'GBEH MA'NA ... YEH? |
| CALL HIM FOR ME | CHEH LEH O HAMI | IT IS VERY BEAUTIFUL | E YEH FEO WAA |
| FIND ME MR.. (SO) | TAO MOH MR.. (SO) O HAMI | I LIKE YOU | MIN' SU MOH BO |
| <u>AT THE TRAIN STATION</u> | | WILL YOU BE MY FRIEND? | OO SUMOH NI WOBOH N'YAA N'YO LO? |
| WHICH TRQIN IS THIS? | MEH OKETHEY KEY NEH | WHERE IS THIS BUILDING | MEH EH CHU NEH |
| WHEN DOES THE KUMASI TRAIN ARRIVES? | MEH BEY KUMASI TRAIN BAA SHEH SHI? | WHERE CAN I FIND (SO) | NEN'GBEH... YOH? |
| WHEN DOES THE KUMASI TRAIN DEPART? | MEH BEY KUMASI TRAIN LEH SHIO BIOEH | THE POST OFFICE | WOLO MAJE MOH HEY |
| HOW FAR IS IT TO KUMASI? | BI EH KEH KUMASI JEH KEH? | BLANK OF WEST AFRICA(SAME) | |
| <u>COMMON EXPRESSIONS</u> | | BANK OF GHANA | (SAME) |
| DO YOU GO TO SCHOOL? ANI O YAA SCHOOL? | | BARCLAYS BANK | |
| YES I GO TO SCHOOL | HEH EH MI YAA SCHOOL | HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT | MLA WOE KPEE HE LEH |
| NO, I DON'T GO TO SCHOOL | DAA BI, MI YAA SCHOOL | STATE HOUSE | MAN' SHIA LEH |
| I AM VERY HAPPY | MI MIN EY SHEH MI HEY JO GBANG | KWAME N'KRUMAH CIRCLE | KWAMI N' KRU MAH GBEH N'TAH |
| I AM VERY HUNGRY | HOH MOH N' YEH MI JO GBANG | AMBASSADOR HOTEL | (SAME OR AMBASSADOR GBOY A TOE HEY LEH). |
| GIVE ME SOME WATER PLEASE | OFAI NEH YEH NU O HAMI | | |
| I DO NOT KNOW | MI LEY | | |
| WHAT IS THIS | MENI NEH | | |
| I THINK SO | E FEOMI NAKAI | | |
| I HAVE NOT BEEN HERE BEFORE | MI BA KO BI EH DA | | |
| WHERE CAN I CHANGE MY MONEY | NEN'GBEH MA CHA KEY SHIKA YEH | | |
| I COME FROM (SO) | N'JEH (SO) | | |
| WHERE ARE YOU GOING | NEN'GBEH O YAA | | |

Folkway records have provided the world with a cross-section of music, literature and poetry etc., etc, and today its the first African language on disc. You will not regret anything from Folk way Records, because while others rejected things for quick returns, Folkways preserved them, and you will not be disappointed also if you ask for a very rare recording of any part of this world. You don't only build a record library, you also learn many things the easier way. Check now with Folkway Records.