The linguistic encoding of landscape in Lokono
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Citation for published version (APA):

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6. Place names

As an object of linguistic inquiry, place names have received quite a lot of attention. The more traditional approaches have focused on the historical ties of place names and their role as repositories of linguistic and cultural heritage (e.g., Cameron 1996; Cassidy 1984; Fowler 2010; Herrick 1983; Hunn 1996; Rjabchikov 1998). Studies taking the sociolinguistic perspective have explored issues such as taboo names, nicknames, the standardization of place names, and the expression of power relations and identity through place-naming practices (e.g., Aikhenvald 1996; Dalberg and Jensen 2008; Gordón Peral 2013; Hendry 2006; Hercus and Koch 2009; Simpson 2001; Yong and Howe 2007). A number of studies have also explored the link between place names and their real-world correlates (e.g., Bohnemeyer et al. 2004; Boillat et al. 2013; Derungs et al. 2013; Lasker and Kaplan 1983; Nash and Simpson 2011; Sousa et al. 2010; Sweeney, Jurek, and Bednar 2007). Nevertheless, despite the continuous research and the variety of analytical angles, the study of place names has as yet not given us an answer to the question: do place names form a category definable on language-internal grounds?

In this chapter, I show that in Lokono place names can be defined by their grammatical behavior. On the one hand, place names are proper nouns—that is, nouns that “denote a unique entity at the level of established linguistic convention to make it psychosocially salient within a given basic level category” (Langendonck 2007:87). As such, Lokono place names are grammatically distinct from generic nouns in how they pattern with verbs of naming, the collective suffix, the indefinite article, and numerals—that is, they belong to the category of proper nouns. The basic level categories referred to by Langendonck are the types of features named, for instance, people, animals, ships, mountains, or rivers. In Lokono, the basic level categories are organized linguistically into what-nouns and where-nouns, distinguished by the type of directionality markers they combine with in spatial expressions. What-nouns include person-, animal-, plant-, object- and part-denoting nouns. The latter include nouns denoting spatial regions (e.g., diako ‘top’), structures (e.g., bahu ‘house’), landscape features (e.g., onikhan ‘creek’), and their parts (e.g., dako ‘tributary’). In Lokono, place names are therefore defined as proper nouns that denote a unique entity at the level of established linguistic convention to make it psychosocially salient within the category of where-nouns.

These findings are of particular relevance to the domain of onomastics. Linguistic studies of place names often lack an explicit definition of their scope. Some authors define place names as proper names referring to places. However, seldom do we come across a definition of the term place in onomastic studies. It is often assumed that the reader can rely on his or her intuitions, irrespective of the fact that the discussion of the concept of place has been continuing since Aristotle’s Physics (e.g., Cresswell 2006). Which entities receive place names is at best suggested by examples or lists of attested names. On the other hand, in the absence of explicit definitions, the focus is often on the syntactic properties of place names. In Lokono, place names are thus defined as proper nouns in accordance with the syntactic behavior of what-nouns.
of the definition of the concept *place*, other researchers have focused on the types of place names. Some authors have zoomed in on a particular type and its features, therefore not focusing on an overarching definition (e.g., David 2011). Alternatively, research has explored place-naming typologies, opposing one type to another (e.g., Tent and Blair 2011). The resultant typologies, reflecting the researcher’s intuitions about the semantic content of place names, do not provide a definition of the domain either. The existing typologies give us a picture of the types of meanings encoded in an *a priori* defined corpus of place names. Finally, there are linguistic descriptions which show that the characteristics of place names can be accounted for by the general architecture of the language (e.g., Nash and Mühlhäusler 2014). Such studies suggest that there is no class of place names, undermining the status of place-naming studies as a subdiscipline of onomastics in particular, and of linguistics in general. It is therefore of importance to balance such claims by showing that this is not necessarily the case in all languages. In Lokono, place names can be singled out from the rest of the lexicon on the basis of their grammatical behavior. Moreover, the Lokono *what*/*where* distinction provides us with a language-internal definition of a place.

The remainder of this chapter is organized into two parts: a descriptive and an analytical one. The descriptive part starts with a short background on the data set used in the ensuing analysis (§ 6.1). I then give an overview of the features of Lokono place-naming practices. I first elaborate on the general features of Lokono grammar and the morphosyntactic make-up of place names (§ 6.2). I then comment on the way the Lokono interact with the local landscape and how this interaction is mirrored by the corpus of place names (§ 6.3). Subsequently, I describe the Lokono sociolinguistic context and show how it is reflected by language contact phenomena in the domain of place names (§ 6.4). Finally, I summarize the types of meanings encoded by Lokono place names (§ 6.5). This descriptive introduction showcases the sociolinguistic, referential, morphosyntactic, and semantic complexity of Lokono place names and provides a necessary background to the following analysis—a language-internal definition of Lokono place names based on their grammatical behavior as proper nouns and as *where*-nouns (§§ 6.6.1 and 6.6.2, respectively). This definition applies to all types of Lokono place names irrespective of their linguistic provenance, morphosyntactic make-up, the type of referent, and semantic content. By way of concluding, I show how the *what*/*where* distinction can help disambiguate expressions that can be understood as referring either to places or to other types of entities, and place the findings within the larger picture of place-naming studies (§ 6.7).

### 6.1 Data set

This study is based on a corpus of almost 180 place names. The data come from two types of sources: a collection of narratives recorded between 2009 and 2014 and a place name survey conducted in 2013 in three villages. Figure 22 shows the locations of the three settlements in the Para district, Suriname, where data were collected, namely Kasuporhi, Korhupa and Pwaka, officially known as Cassipora, Matta and Powakka, respectively.
The narratives contain a number of place names in a robust linguistic context, which allowed for a preliminary linguistic analysis. The survey, inspired by previous work by Bohnemeyer (2001b), expanded on this vocabulary, giving us a better picture of its sociolinguistic, referential, morphosyntactic, and semantic features. In total 16 men and 4 women were interviewed in three villages. All of them are native speakers of Lokono, also fluent in Dutch, the official language, and Sranantongo, the local lingua franca.

Two general tendencies are noticeable in the data. First of all, a few place names appear in more than one village territory. For instance, there is a creek named Urhikoro ‘The Dark One’ both in Cassipora and in Powakka, and a creek called Omadâro ‘Roaring One’ in both Cassipora and Matta. Such names encode the physical features of the place (such as color or sound) or its functional aspect (such as mooring place). Their recurrence may testify to what the Lokono find particularly striking or important—such as rapids, which are fairly rare in this part of Suriname (but commonplace in the South).

Secondly, individual knowledge of places varies to a certain extent even in small communities such as Cassipora, which counts fewer than 100 inhabitants. Usually people tend to know place names in a particular area around the village where they have fields or where they often go hunting or fishing. The etiology of place names in the case of event-based names also depends on the speaker. The name of a temporary camp called Nakora Bitonon ‘The Burning of Their Hammocks’ was
attributed to various incidents such as not putting out the fire before sleeping or the invasion of ant species that the people tried to fend off with fire.

6.2 Internal structure of place names

Lokono is a morphologically complex language with a tendency for suffixation and enclitization. As described in section 3.3.1, within the nominal domain, Lokono nouns are categorized as either masculine or feminine. Masculine gender is restricted to nouns denoting Lokono males. Feminine gender applies to all other nouns, including place names. The gender distinction manifests itself on demonstratives, 3rd person pronouns, and a number of suffixes that are also found in place names.

(242)  *Wakhaitho kho shikwa to Kasuporhi.*

\[
\begin{array}{llllllll}
\text{wak}^{\text{a}} & \text{–} & \text{th}^{\text{o}} & \text{=} & \text{shikwa} & \text{–} & \text{to} & \text{kasip}^{\text{u}} & \text{r}^{\text{i}}
\end{array}
\]

‘Cassipora is a beautiful village.’

In (242), in which the demonstrative functions as a copula, the place name *Kasuporhi* is equated with a complex descriptive nominal phrase headed by the noun *shikwa* ‘village’, modified by a verb combined with a relativizer. Both the demonstrative and the relativizer are feminine, in agreement with the place name and the corresponding generic landscape noun *shikwa* ‘village’.

Lokono nouns are further either alienably or inalienably possessed (§ 3.3.3). Alienable nouns receive a possessive suffix when possessed, while inalienable nouns do not. In their unpossessed form, inalienable nouns require the unpossessed suffix –hV. This pattern is illustrated in example (242) above, in which *shikwa* appears without a possessor, therefore necessitating the unpossessed suffix. Inalienable nouns include kinship terms, configurational nouns, relational nouns, nominalizations, and a few other terms for culturally salient entities. There are also a number of nouns with suppletive possessive forms, for instance, *kabuya/koban* ‘field’. Place names contain quite a few inalienable nouns, for instance *kori* ‘bathing place’, *banabo* ‘camp’, or locative nominalizations in –nale, and less frequently nouns with irregular and suppletive possessed forms. A place name, which has the form of an inalienable locative nominalization is exemplified in (243).

(243)  *Nakodanale, yaranroki nakodâka.*

\[
\begin{array}{llllll}
\text{na} & \text{–} & \text{koda} & \text{–} & \text{nale} & \text{ya} & \text{–} \text{r}^\text{a} & \text{–} & \text{ro} & \text{=} & \text{ki}
\end{array}
\]

‘Nakodanale (lit. ‘Where They Weave’), it is around there that they weave.’

Example (243) explains the etymology of the place name *Nakodanale*—a locative nominalization derived from the introversive verb *kodan* ‘weave’—an area of the
forest dominated by *korrhwa* palm (*Attalea sagotii*), the leaves of which are used for weaving a thatched roof. The possessor is expressed by the same prefixes that encode the subject of active verbs—that is, transitive verbs and intransitive verbs encoding actions. The prefixes are glossed here with the subscript \(_A\) as opposed to personal enclitics encoding the object of transitive verbs and the subject of stative verbs—that is, intransitive verbs encoding states—glossed with the subscript \(_B\). In (243) it is the 3\(^{rd}\) person plural prefix that is lexicalized in the proper name. Importantly, there is no possessive suffix following inalienable nouns, including locative nominalizations.

Lokono place names exhibit some of these general characteristics. A great deal of attested place names contain deverbal nominalizations reflecting a general Lokono tendency for suffixation, while place names containing inalienable nouns include the grammatical possessor. Table 50 lists the attested morphosyntactic types that are discussed in detail below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 50. Morphosyntactic types attested in place names.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Universal</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monomorphemic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unanlyzable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polymorphemic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>na</em>– ‘3PL’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>wa</em>– ‘1PL’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suffixed</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ro</em> ‘f’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>nale</em> ‘LOC,NMLZ’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>koro</em> ‘SPEC:F’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compound</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>konoko</em> ‘forest’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>karhow</em> ‘savanna’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Polyverbal</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possessive phrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Starting from the top of Table 50, let us notice that almost all analyzable monomorphemic place names are nouns referring to species of flora encoding a salient botanical aspect of the location. Take as an example the hydronym *Korrhobali*, a creek named after *korrhobali* trees (*Pentaclethra macroloba*) that grow
along the creek.\textsuperscript{79} Monomorphemic but unanalyzable names, on the other hand, often deviate phonologically from the rest of the Lokono lexicon. Unanalyzable place names such as Mapana, Kasuporhi, Korhopa, Pwaka, or Shiparipabo contain the phoneme /p/, which until the middle of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century was part of the Lokono phoneme inventory, later becoming an /f/. This archaic phoneme is today found only in place names, borrowings, and a handful of other terms. \textit{Nota bene}, Kasuporhi, Korhopa, and a few other unanalyzable place names are found on the oldest maps of Suriname (Bubberman and Koeman 1973), which is indicative of the time depth of the Lokono place-naming system. Analyzable place names show phonological changes typical of modern Lokono, for instance, \textit{Fodiarhan} ‘Monkey is Finished’, containing \textit{fodi} ‘monkey’ in its modern form, marking a chronologically newer layer of place names.

All suffixed place names are deverbal, but they differ in details of their semantics. The suffix \textit{–ro} is a feminine marker typically attached to stative verbs encoding salient physical features of the environment. \textit{Madisero} ‘One Lacking Game’, for instance, is a creek name derived from the stative verb \textit{madisen} ‘lack game’, succinctly describing the area in the eyes of the locals.\textsuperscript{80} The feminine specificity marker \textit{–koro}, on the other hand, is found in place names that single out the referent from a larger class. \textit{Urhikoro} ‘The Brown One’, for instance, is derived from the verb \textit{urhin} ‘brown’. Since many creeks in Suriname are dark-water creeks (Hammond 2005), calling a specific creek \textit{urhiro} ‘Brown One’ (with the suffix \textit{–ro}) would seem to make little sense, but the name \textit{Urhikoro} ‘The Brown One’ specifies that it is the particular brown creek important to the community. Finally, the nominalizing suffix \textit{–nale} derives names of locations where an activity encoded by the base takes place. \textit{Nakubanale} ‘Where They Rest’, for instance, is derived from the active verb \textit{akubun} ‘rest, breathe’ and denotes a place where hunters used to take a break before returning to the village from longer hunting trips. The \textit{nale}-nominalizations are inalienably possessed and hence require a grammatical possessor. They appear with the 3\textsuperscript{rd} person plural prefix \textit{na–}, referring to Lokono people only (the 3\textsuperscript{rd} person feminine prefix \textit{thu–} is used to refer to other ethnic groups). Interestingly, there are also place names with the 1\textsuperscript{st} person plural prefix \textit{wa–}, for instance, \textit{Wakori} ‘Our Swimming Resort’, a type of \textit{kori} ‘bathing place, resort’. It should be noted that both \textit{na–} and \textit{wa–} can encode Lokono actors. However, the 3\textsuperscript{rd} person plural \textit{na}-forms are places believed to have been named by the Lokono ancestors, while the 1\textsuperscript{st} person plural \textit{wa}-forms are all new coinages named by the contemporary inhabitants of the villages. The 1\textsuperscript{st} person plural marker is not sensitive to the inclusive/exclusive distinction, therefore the 1\textsuperscript{st} person plural can include also other ethnicities, which is interesting in that places containing it are swimming resorts catering for outsiders mostly. Nevertheless, the schism between

\textsuperscript{79} I am here not interested in the internal structure of words that is not part of the place-naming process—that is, I treat nouns like \textit{kohohali} as simplex, even though the name of the tree is itself derived with the suffix \textit{–bali} meaning ‘similar to’.

\textsuperscript{80} The stative verb \textit{madisen} ‘lack game’ is a complex form related to \textit{kadisen} ‘abound in game’. The two verbs clearly contain the privative and the attributive prefix, respectively, and the noun \textit{dise} ‘game’ (Bennett 1989).
ancestral and modern place-naming strategies is again reflected in the linguistic material.

Compounds are frequent among the Sranan Tonga and Dutch place names that the participants listed for their territories, but compounding is not a common derivational process in Lokono, and is therefore only marginally attested in the domain of Lokono place names. Apart from a few idiosyncratic names, only compounds with konoko ‘forest’ and karhow ‘savanna’ as heads form a consistent group. In general, Lokono compounds are distinguished from possessive phrases by the fact that the head does not carry possessive marking (the respective possessed forms are konokora and korhowia). The modifying element in such compounds is another place name, with respect to which the place in question is located, for instance, Kasuporhi Karhow ‘Cassipora Savanna’—a savanna located by the Kasuporhi creek. Alternatively, the modifier is a nominalized verb expressing an inherent feature of the referent, for instance, Wadikoro Karhow ‘The Wide Savanna’, derived from the verb wadin ‘wide’ with the specificity suffix –koro.

Interestingly, another compounding pattern is discernible in some of the partly analyzable place names. Take as an example river names Kamaw and Marhow, the abbreviated versions of longer forms, fossilized in the official Dutch names of the two rivers, Commowijne and Marowijne, respectively. The element wijne is a reflex of the Lokono oni ‘rain’ in its non-possessed form, therefore excluding the possessive phrase interpretation. The ending is commonly found in river names across the three Guianas, obliterated by different official spellings (e.g., wijne, wini, oeni, ony, uni). Place names ending in winika—most likely a reflex of onikhan ‘creek’ (lit. ‘rain–DIM’) constitute a rare subtype of such historic compounds, for instance, Kaswinika, a name of a small river. An interesting pattern emerges. The nouns konoko ‘forest’ and karhow ‘savanna’ are generic landscape terms used as heads in compound place names referring to large vegetation assemblages. It appears that names of larger landscape features that extend beyond the village territory were coined with the compounding strategy, whether they were vegetation features (with konoko or karhow as heads) or water features (with oni as heads). Smaller features within the territory, with which the inhabitants of the villages are more familiar have either monomorphemic or suffixed names—two strategies that rely heavily on the knowledge of the ecological properties of the place (e.g., the indicator species, other physical features of the environment, or historical events).

Inalienable nouns, which do not take possessive marking, are problematic—it is impossible in such cases to distinguish a possessive phrase, such as bahu loko ‘inside of the house’, from a compound on the basis of possessive suffixes. Yet, when possessed as a whole it is clear that such forms do not constitute compounds; the expected form of a possessed compound would be, for instance, dabahuloko (with the 1st person prefix). The actual form is dashikwa loko, with the possessed form of bahu, which shows that bahu and loko do not form a unit. The two cases considered as compounds also differ from the other place names in that they do not encode a part-whole relation, nor an ownership relationship, but rather the modifier locates the places with respect to another place. This is not the case for other expressions that lack morphological exponents of possession, but encode either an ownership or part-whole relation, and are therefore treated as possessive phrases with inalienable nouns.
Finally, possessive phrases include names headed either by a nominalized verb or a simplex noun—all of which are inalienably possessed nouns or nouns with suppletive possessed forms. The nominalizations are exemplified by Yawahu Shimashimadun ‘Recurrent Screaming of the Evil Spirit’, with the reduplicated nominalized form of the verb shimakun ‘scream’. Such place names end in the event nominalizer –n and refer to an event that took place, or keeps taking place in the above case, at the particular location. The event nominalizations, being inalienably possessed, require a grammatical possessor—the entity performing the event in question—expressed here not with a prefix but with a full noun phrase yawahu ‘evil spirit’, encoding the agent participating in the event. Possessive place names headed by a simplex noun include the following generic landscape terms: shikwa ‘house.Poss’, banabo ‘hut/camp’, koban ‘field.Poss’, kabura ‘fishery’, and kori ‘bathing place’. Alternatively, the head noun can be a relational noun referring to a part of a plant or animal associated with a place, for instance, toro ‘stump’, daya ‘trunk’, or shi ‘head’. Take as an example Dali Toro ‘Stump of a Dali Tree’, a fishery named after a dali tree (Virola species) that was felled there.

Finally, Lokono has no class of adjectives, hence no adjectival phrases are attested among the Lokono place names, but a few cases were found in the Sranantongo and Dutch names listed for the areas investigated, for instance, Blakka Watra ‘Black Water’—the Sranantongo name of Urhikoro ‘The Brown One’. A few hybrid and outright foreign phrasal place names follow a pattern in which the modifier encodes the size of the place relative to another place, for instance, Klein Powa kaka ‘Little Powa kaka’ or Grote Simon Kreek ‘Big Simon Creek’. This size-based model, only attested in Dutch or hybrid place names, appears to be a contact-induced phenomenon.

The morphosyntactic diversity of Lokono place names is interesting in as far as it reflects the general features of the language: the tendency for suffixation and the obligatory expression of the possessor with inalienable nouns. The presence of the archaic phoneme /p/ and the morphological exponents of the possessor additionally indicate the relative time depth of some place names. The vestiges of the compounding strategy point to an older underlying template: names of larger landscape features are compounded, while names of smaller local landscape features are mostly either monomorphic of suffixed forms—two strategies that rely on the knowledge of the physical features of the surroundings. Nevertheless, irrespective of the type of morphosyntactic structure, all place names pattern in the same way with respect to the proper/generic and the what/where distinctions (§ 6.6 below).

6.3 Overview of landscape features named

The territories of the three villages (Powakka, Cassipora, and Matta) represent similar ecosystems—the border zone between savanna and rainforest, dissected by numerous creeks. The Lokono traditional way of life, though inextricably linked to this landscape, is undergoing radical changes today, as the Lokono people become part of the fabric of the Surinamese society. This, in turn, has ramifications for place-naming practices. Table 51 gives an overview of the types of the referents attested most frequently, the significance of which is discussed below.
Although river names form only a minor portion of the data (since I have focused on the microtoponymy of the villages), it is interesting to notice that the simplex generic term oni ‘river’ (lit. ‘rain’) is not often used. Instead of a generic noun in Suriname the proper names of rivers or the descriptive term barhâ dako ‘tributary of the sea’ are often used when talking about the largest waterways in the country. The form oni is nevertheless found in many partly analyzable river names as discussed above (§ 6.2). Moreover, the term onikhan ‘creek’ (lit. ‘rain-DIM’) forms a size-based pair with the noun oni ‘river’.

As will already be clear from the examples given so far, hydronyms are the most numerous group among Lokono place names—a reflection of the cultural salience of water features (e.g., Goeje 1943; Renselaar and Voorhoeve 1962; Roth 1929). However, the importance of water bodies is decreasing today. Creeks and rivers used to function as a transportation network connecting the different villages. Today roads are used instead, the names of which, nevertheless, still reflect the significance of waterways. The possessive place name Tomorero Waboroko ‘Road of the Bitter One’, for instance, is named after the Tomorero creek, to which it leads (derived in turn with the suffix –ro from the stative verb tomoren ‘bitter’). Hand-operated water pumps and rainwater tanks are present in all villages, rendering natural springs called shiroko less and less important. Traditional bathing places called kori—a private stretch of a creek cleared from vegetation—are becoming a thing of the past too. A few historically important bathing places still have names, for instance, Semethimi Kori ‘Bathing Place of the Late Medicine-Man’, a possessive phrase with the noun semethi ‘medicine-man’ as possessor, modified by the suffix –mi meaning ‘deceased’. However, the noun kori is today also applied to swimming resorts catering for tourists, for instance, Remi Kori ‘Remi’s Swimming Resort’. The Lokono villages, called shikwahu, used to be connected by a network of trails called bunaha, many of them leading to fields or hunting grounds. Only a few names of such trails have been recorded, most of them of Sranantongo origin, containing the Sranantongo equivalent of bunaha, namely pasi ‘trail’. The trail Sedre Pasi, for
example, is named after sedre ‘cedar’, the Sranantongo name of Cedrela odorata tree, exemplars of which flank the trail.

Places associated with subsistence practices are also slowly disappearing. Hunting and fishing have today lost their status as subsistence practices in most households. Hence, the number of designated fisheries called kabura has decreased. Such fisheries were often given a phrasal proper name indicating the most likely catch, for instance, Karhiwaro Kabura, named after Hoplosternium littorale, an armor-plated species of catfish. Places are rarely named after birds or mammals, since these are not as easily associated with a particular location according to the speakers, but there are exceptions, for instance, Anwana Balutadan ‘Sitting Vultures’—a place where vultures come to drink water. Gathering resources in the forest and on the savanna is today rarely practiced, and the relevant ecotopes are usually not named by proper names but by generic ecotope nouns (chapter 5).

However, large stretches of forest and savanna do bear proper names, such as Urhikoro Konoko ‘Urhikoro Forest’. These are consistently compounds, naming the vegetation assemblage after a nearby creek, in this case Urhikoro ‘The Brown One’. The Lokono still practice non-mechanized swidden agriculture on their fields called kabuya (irregular possessed form koban)—a term applied also to old plantations such as Yorhi Koban ‘Tabaco Plantation’. Temporary outfield camps called banabo used to be set up around such fields in times of harvest, but only a handful of them, those set up by extraordinary figures who have impressed themselves on the community’s memory, have names, for instance, Dorhi Banabo ‘Maroon’s Hut’.

Changes have also affected the immaterial culture. Though Catholicism has gained fertile ground, traces of Lokono animistic beliefs are still part of daily life. They are particularly visible in the different practices related to the water spirit orio (from ori oyo ‘mother of snakes’). It is, for instance, forbidden for menstruating women, babies, and their mothers to come close to the creeks, since orio may harm them. Such beliefs are strong enough to be translated into Dutch as part of the rules and regulations of Lokono swimming resorts in order to make sure that visitors do not fall prey to malevolent spirits. Figure 23 below is a photograph of the rules and regulations that the inhabitants of the Cassipora village have formulated. These regulations are enforced at the swimming resort at the Urhikoro creek, known as Blakka Watra in Sranantongo, which passes in the vicinity of the village.
In order not to anger the water spirits of the creeks that are considered particularly potent, an avoidance place name Thusakho (lit. ‘It Has No Name’) is used at the location instead of the official name. I have attested only three such creeks, all in the Cassipora area. Interestingly, all three creeks are considered particularly good hunting grounds, and strict restrictions are placed on hunting and fishing practices in such areas—a phenomenon comparable to the ecological management practices behind the concept of the master of animals of the Tukano people described by Reichel-Dolmatoff (1987). In Cassipora itself, there is also a place called Norwanale, which is clearly a locative nominalization of the reflexive verb oronwan ‘fast’, translating as ‘Where They Fast’—a location where the hut of the medicine-man used to be located. Few people felt comfortable discussing this location, and its name is not transparent to the speakers today or it is not culturally acceptable to discuss its meaning. Most people avoid the place and attribute family feuds, failed business investments, and nightmares to accidental interaction with the location (e.g., passing through it or cutting open a field nearby).

It should be pointed out that the referents of the Lokono place names vary from small spaces of a couple of square meters (e.g., bathing places) to large areas (e.g., stretches of forest). Interestingly, I have not attested any place names referring to landforms (e.g., hills, gullies, but see chapter 4 for the discussion of the generic landform expressions). Most place names refer to water features, including some village names, names of old settlements, and large vegetation assemblages that are

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**Figure 23.**—The Rules of Conduct at the Uriikoro Swimming Resort.

**Number 1:** Menstruating women are not allowed in or near the water.

**Number 2:** Babies under 3 months and their mothers cannot be in the water.
called after nearby water features. Nevertheless, all place names, irrespective of the type of referent, pattern in the same way with respect to the proper/generic and the what/where distinctions (§ 6.6 below).

6.4 Sociolinguistic features of place names

In Suriname, most Lokono people speak Sranantongo, the local creole lingua franca, and Dutch, the official languages of the nation-state, while only the elderly use Lokono. Creole languages have been used by the Lokono in contacts with the colonizers at least since the 19th century (Baarle 1999; 1995; Robertson 1987). The intensification of these contacts started in the 20th century with the establishment of Roman Catholic missions, stimulating language shift toward Sranantongo, and later Dutch. Furthermore, the Lokono Surinamese territories form a network of loosely connected pockets, intermixed with areas settled by a linguistically unrelated Amerindian group—the Kari’na people speaking a Cariban language. The attested place names reflect the sociolinguistic trends in the community—there are both Amerindian and Non-Amerindian names in the corpus. Table 52 gives a quantitative overview of place names by linguistic origin.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provenance</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
<th>Example, referent, meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amerindian</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lokono</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>Urhikoro, creek, ‘The Brown One’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Uncertain</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>Shiparipabo, creek, ‘Where There Were Sting Rays’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Amerindian</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Sranantongo</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Matta, village, ‘Mortar’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Sranantongo/Dutch</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>George Kriki/Kreek, creek, ‘George Creek’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Dutch</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>Marijkedorp, village, ‘Marijke’s Village’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although all Amerindian place names (85% of all collected place names) reported here are of Lokono terms according to the Lokono consultants, their historical provenance may be more complex than anticipated by the speakers. Many place names refer to species of fauna and flora, which belong to a vocabulary shared by the Amerindian languages of the Guianas (see also Carlin n.d.; Goeje 1926; Renault-Lescure 2009; 2005; Rybka n.d.; Taylor 1953). Take as an example the term shibali ‘sting ray’, which is a likely etymology of the creek name Shiparipabo. The term shibali has cognates at least in Lokono (Arawakan), Kari’na and Trio (Cariban), and the Wayãpi language (Tupian). In this particular case, the remaining morphology of the place name is revealing: the ending –pabo may contain the Kari’na locative suffix –bo or even its past tense equivalent –pápo ‘place where someone or something used to be’ (Courtz 2008). Bearing in mind the existence of the shared ethnobiological vocabulary and the fact that the precise distribution and the migrations of the Lokono and the Kari’na in the past are shrouded in mystery, it may be difficult, if not futile, to establish the exact source language of certain place names.
The Non-Amerindian group (15%) includes place names of Sranantongo and, less frequently, Dutch origin, reflecting the fact that Sranantongo is more popular than Dutch as a means of daily communication. Some villages and creeks, for instance, have both a Lokono and a Sranantongo name—the Lokono village Korhopa (etymology unknown) is called Matta ‘mortar’ in Sranantongo. Such double names encode different meanings as in the example above or are calques and adaptations of each other, such as the already mentioned Urhikoro ‘The Brown One’ and Madisero ‘One Lacking Game’, which are known under their Sranantongo names as Blakka Watra ‘Black Water’ and Aboma Kriki ‘Anaconda Creek’, respectively. The latter name is interesting as it adds to the etiology of the Lokono place name—according to the speakers, there is no game in and around the creek because the creek is a home to these gigantic snakes.

The fact that some settlements have Dutch names shows that the official language of the country is slowly encroaching on this domain. This is clearly visible in the names of newly established settlements, where Dutch administrative and political discourses are involved. Klein Powakka ‘Little Powakka’, for example, is a Lokono village established in 2014. The name is a hybrid of both the Lokono (Pwaka) and the Dutch (klein ‘small’) lexicon, forming an adjectival phrase, in which the modifying element encodes size relative to another settlement—a pattern typical of Dutch but not of Lokono place names.

In sum, Lokono place names mirror the major sociolinguistic trends in the community. They reflect the geographic and linguistic ties with the Kari'na and the progressing language shift to Sranantongo and Dutch, on both the lexical and structural level. However, irrespective of their linguistic origin, all attested place names behave in the same way with respect to the proper/generic and the what/where distinctions (§ 6.6 below).

6.5 Semantic content of place names

The previous sections have provided a number of examples showcasing the types of meanings encoded in Lokono place names—this section provides a bird eye’s view of the semantic content of the domain. I provide no table here since many place names combine two or more meaning components described below, making it difficult to quantify the data.

Lokono place names often relate to the biotic and abiotic features of the environment. Many places are named after plant species found at the location, most commonly species of trees. Although most of the plant names found in place names refer to species that are important in some way or another to the community’s cultural practices, as part of place names they usually encode a perceptually salient landmark rather than a patch of a valuable natural resource. The simplex place names Hobo (Spondias mombin), a name of a creek, or Borada (Parinari spp.), a name of a spring, refer to singular exemplars of trees found at the location. Reference is also made to parts of trees, for instance, Pakorhi Daya ‘Pakorhi Trunk’ (Platonia insignis) or Lô Toro ‘Lô Stump’ (Oenocarpus bacaba). Less frequently the plant term refers to more than one exemplar, as in the case of the Korhobali creek, the banks of which are covered by korhobali trees (Pentaclethra macroloba).
Typically, patches of plant resources are, however, referred to with derived generic terms (see chapter 5).

Within the domain of fauna, the Lokono place names encode mostly fish species in the names of the fisheries, such as Ayomarha Kabura ‘Ayomarha Fishery’ (Hoplias malabaricus). The Lokono sense of humor comes to the fore in occasional names such as Yowow Kabura ‘Mosquito Fishery’, which signals that you can only “catch” a few mosquito bites at the relevant fishery. A similarly joking attitude reverberates in creek names such as Fodi Harhan—a phonologically reduced version of an event nominalization Fodi Harhan ‘Monkey is Finished’—which according to the speakers is named so because all the monkeys in that area have been hunted down. Animals are referenced also in relation to an incident, such as Kabadaro Shi ‘Tiger’s Head’—a creek along which a Lokono man killed a huge tiger (kabadaro lit. ‘one with claws’). Not uncommon either is referring to activities of animals through place names, for instance, Warhiro Thanale ‘Drinking Place of the Bush Dogs’, in which the possessor encodes the animal (warhiro) and the possessed locative nominalization the activity (thanale, from the verb uthun ‘drink’). It is my impression, however, that such places are not directly related to hunting or fishing activities.

Place names can also encode the sensory experience afforded by the place. Tomorero, a creek name derived from the verb tomoren ‘bitter’, encodes the taste of the water, Omadâro from the verb omadun ‘roar’ refers to the sound made by the water in the creek, while Urhikoro and Harhirharo Koshi (lit. ‘White Eye/Color’), derived from urhin ‘dark’ and harhirhan ‘white’ respectively, indicate the hue of the water. Sensorimotor experience may also be encoded indirectly, as is the case with the hydronym Manarhibali, a creek surrounded by manarhibali bushes (Pythecellobium spp.), which form an impenetrable mesh similar in pattern to manarhi ‘a cassava sieve’. Such etiologies are directly accessible to the speakers, and regularly bring a smile on the face of a person explaining their meaning to the uninitiated.

Landscape features are explicitly named by certain types of place names, in which case the relevant landscape term is the head of the expression, for instance, Karhiwaro Kabura ‘Karhiwaro Fishery’. Landscape terms attested in place names include kabura ‘fishery’, kori ‘bathing place’, banabo ‘camp’, karhow ‘savanna’, konoko ‘forest’, kabuya ‘field’, and in partly analyzable place names oni ‘rain/river’ and ima ‘estuary’. The referents of such place names always match the landscape feature named. Only one landscape feature—the creek—is referenced not by a full noun (i.e. onikhan ‘creek’) but by a 3rd person feminine prefix thu—referring to a creek in, for instance, Thurhebo ‘Its Bank’ (from rhebo ‘bank’) or Thushirima ‘Its Headland’ (from shirima ‘headland’). These are the only case where the landscape term does not function as the head, but as the possessor.

Person names are occasionally part of place names, usually encoding the person in charge of a settlement, a bathing place, or a fishery. This does not seem to be a common Lokono pattern as most of these place names include Sranantongo or Dutch names of people—that is, strangers to the community, for instance, Draibas Akubanale ‘Draibas’ Resting Place’, named after a Kari’na man called Draibas, who made it his habit to rest under a tree there. Lokono human agents are, however, referenced by the possessive prefixes found with inalienable nouns (1st and 3rd
person plural). This pattern is characteristic of place names that are locative nominalizations encoding the activity typical of the location. Such locative nominalizations, however, name also locations typified by animal activity mentioned above, in which case the agent is encoded by a full noun (e.g., Warhiro Thanale ‘Drinking Place of the Bush Dogs’). Finally, reference to events, though not common, is also attested in the corpus. Examples include place names such as Kambana Òdon ‘The Death of the Blue Butterfly’, a place where a medicine-man, one of whose incarnations is a blue butterfly called kambana, died. The events are encoded by event nominalizations in –n, for instance, Òdon ‘die/death/dying’.

6.6 Lokono place names: a definition

The structurally, referentially, sociolinguistically, and semantically complex picture of place naming strategies described above is unified by a common denominator. All place names are definable on language internal grounds by their morphosyntactic behavior (Figure 24). They are, on the one hand, distinguished from proper nouns on the basis of their behavior with the indefinite article, numerals, the collective suffix, and verbs of naming. On the other hand, they are distinguished from what-nouns (i.e. nouns denoting people, animals, and objects) on the basis of the directionality markers they combine with.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>proper/generic distinction</th>
<th>general term</th>
<th>proper term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>what-noun</td>
<td>* person terms</td>
<td>* names of people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* animal terms</td>
<td>* names of animals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* plant terms</td>
<td>* names of spirits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* spirit terms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* object terms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* relational terms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>where-noun</td>
<td>* landscape terms</td>
<td>* names of places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* configurational terms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* structure terms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 24.—Place names (dark gray) defined by the two grammatical categories.

None of the two parameters is sufficient to define place names. Proper names also include names of people, animals, and possibly spirits. Where-nouns—the category in which place names belong—also include configurational terms (e.g., diako ‘top’), terms for structures (e.g., bahu ‘house’), and generic landscape terms (e.g., kori ‘bathing place’), many of which form part of place names. However, when combined, the proper/generic and the what/where distinctions, discussed in detail below, exclusively define Lokono place names, and help distinguish potentially ambiguous expressions.
6.6.1 The proper/generic distinction

Place names are proper nouns referring to specific landscape features, as opposed to generic landscape terms denoting types of landscape features and other generic nouns denoting places. Importantly, even though the interviews were gauged to elicit proper names only, the consultants named a few generic terms as well, for instance, konoko ‘forest’, onikhan ‘creek’, and omadâro ‘rapids’. In the Lokono case such generic landscape terms can form part of proper place names, for instance, Kasuporhi Konoko ‘Cassipora Forest’. At first glance, some of the complex expressions can be analyzed as descriptive terms with a generic element. In fact, there are also place names which are formally identical to generic landscape terms, for instance, Omadâro ‘Roaring One’ — a name of a creek derived from the verb omadun ‘to roar’, and identical to the generic landscape term omadâro ‘rapids’ (lit. ‘roaring one’). Such overlap between proper and generic terms in the domain of landscape may in fact be common in small communities, where there may be only one exemplar of a certain landscape feature within the relevant territory. It is therefore necessary to distinguish proper names from descriptive generic expressions on language internal grounds in the data. In Lokono, the following linguistic means can be used as tests for the status of an expression as proper or generic: collocation with verbs of naming, the collective suffix, the indefinite article, and numerals.

First, the verb iritin ‘name’ is used only with proper names, as in (244). The iritin-verb frame can be used as a first indicator of the proper status of a place name.

(244) To kia konokoda, neiritada no “Nakora Bitonon”.

In (244), the verb iritin ‘name’ is used with a proper place name Nakora Bitonon ‘Burning of Their Hammocks’. The place name itself is a possessive phrase with a nominalized reflexive verb bitonon encoding an event, the participant of which is expressed by the possessor nakora ‘their hammocks’, including the 3rd person plural prefix na-. The location refers to a hunting camp of the Lokono ancestors where their hammocks mysteriously combusted. The verb iritin ‘name’ cannot be used with generic terms. This distinguishes the verb iritin from its derivational base, the noun iri ‘name’, which means both a proper name and a generic term for something. The verb iritin ‘name’ stands also in opposition to the empty verb a/o, which can mean ‘name’ with both proper and generic terms, as in (245) and (246), respectively.

(245) “Kakhalekoyaro” na thumun, khaleko wabo tholokhodika.

In (245), “Kakhalekoyâro” (lit. ‘One With Quartz’) they call it, pure quartz is in it.”
In (245) the complex place name Kakhalayokoaro ‘One With Quartz’ appears—a form derived with the suffix –ro from a complex possessive verb kakhalayoyan ‘have quartz’, ultimately built out of the possessed form of khaleko ‘quartz’ and the attributive prefix. The same construction with the empty verb a/o can also be used with generic terms, as in (246).

(246) “Konokhodi ron” ban doma, kia doma “Konokhodo” na thumun.

konok^o•d'i–rô–ŋ b–ā–n doma

forest—VIA—REST—NMLZ 2SGA—E.V—NMLZ reason

kia doma konok^o•do n–a t'i–mĩŋ

DSC reason Maroon—DRV: F 3PL: E.V 3F: DAT

‘For you say “only in the forest”, that’s why they call them “Maroons” (lit. ‘forest people’).’

In (246), the generic term konokhodo ‘Maroon’ appears showing that this construction is not a good diagnostic of properhood, as opposed to the îritin-verb frame. Notice that in (244), (245), and (246), the verbs, whether îritin or a/o, appear with the 3rd person prefix na–. Most proper place names and the Lokono vocabulary as a whole are attributed to the way ancestors named things.

The second test involves collective marking. The collective suffix –be indicates that there is an unspecified (but higher than 1) number of referents denoted by the noun, for instance, pêrobe ‘a group/number of dogs’ (from Spanish perro ‘dog’). Generic terms, including landscape terms, combine with the collective suffix, as in (247).

(247) Yo máya kadiseka kiba, onikhanbe, himebe, khotabe.

yo ma:ya ka–dii:se–ka=kiba upi–kãm–be ime–be kõta–be

ANPH:HR side ATR—game—PFV=too rain—DIM—COL fish—COL animal—COL

‘On that side, there is game too, a number of creeks, fish, animals.’

In (247), three generic terms appear with the collective suffix, but since proper place names refer to unique entities they cannot be combined with it. Speakers consider such expressions as *Kasuporhibe ‘Cassipora—COL’ ungrammatical. It is imaginable, though not attested, that the collective suffix –be could be part of a proper name, for instance, *Dalibe, ‘a number of dali trees’.

Related to the incompatibility with the collective suffix is the ungrammaticality of combining place names with the indefinite article. Proper place names cannot be combined with the indefinite aba, derived from the numeral aba ‘one’, nor with its masculine abali or feminine abaro variants. Neither can they be combined with numerals. This opposes them to generic terms, as shown in example (248).

(248) Aba omadāro kiba, mada kia kho sa wabo buduha.

aba omada:–ro kiba ma=da kia=kõ o sa=wabo bi–dik^a

INDF roar—F too BUF=DRECT DSC=NEG good=SPRL 2SGA—see

‘A rapid too, but this one you cannot see very well.’
In (248), which is a description of a picture showing a place unknown to the speaker, the landscape term omadâro ‘rapids’ is used. It is preceded by the indefinite pronoun, signaling that it is used here as a generic landscape term. Interestingly, there is also a creek in the Cassipora territory called Omadâro ‘Roaring One’. Being a place name referring to a specific landscape feature, it cannot be combined with the indefinite article.

Although the indefinite article and numerals can serve as an indication of the generic character of a term, it is worth noting that all Lokono proper names (of places and persons) can appear with demonstratives, which when unspecified for their deictic properties, function as definite articles.

(249) […] ma dakishidwatika âkan to Kasuporhi khonan.

Ma da–kijidwa–tî–ka a:kâ–n to kasipuri kônâŋ
but 1SG–try–DES–PFV talk–NMLZ DEM:F Cassipora about
‘[…] but I will try to talk about Cassipora.’

In (249), the name of the village is preceded by the feminine demonstrative to. The demonstrative is not obligatory with proper names and the difference between the bare form and the form with the demonstrative is not clear.

The combinatorial possibilities of noun phrases with naming verbs, the collective marker, numerals, and the indefinite article allow us to distinguish, on close inspection, proper names from generic terms. It should be stressed, however, that Lokono grammar allows a certain degree of ambiguity. Number is not obligatorily marked on Lokono nouns. The demonstratives and the indefinite article are also not obligatory. In natural discourse therefore some noun phrases remain ambiguous. Take as an example Thurhebo ‘Its Bank’, the name of a mooring place that recurs in all three villages. Thurhebo, as a proper name, refers to a specific instance of the landscape feature rhebo ‘bank’—the place where the dugouts of the villagers used to be moored. As a generic landscape termthurhebo could refer to any part of the riverbank. In the two examples below, there are no linguistic means that can help us understand whether a proper name or a generic term is used.

(250) Thurhebon balabalâko wa shokhanin.

Tî–rebô–n bala–bala–ko w–a fôkânh
3FA–edge–LOC.WHR COL–sitting.on.bottom–CONT 1PLA–E.V a.little
‘We set for a while at the bank of (the creek).’

(251) Kasuporhi wâya wôsa koba Thurhebonro.

Kasipori wa:ya w–o:sa=koba tî–rebô–n–ro
Cassipora SRC:TL 1PLA–go=REM.PST 3FA–bank–LOC.WHR–ATL
‘From Cassipora, they used to go toward Thurhebo.’

Example (250) taken out of context could be interpreted in both ways. Incidentally, in this case the generic reading was intended. Analogically in (251), there are no linguistic clues helping us determine the referent of Thurhebo, which in this case was intended as a lexicalized proper name. The linguistic and extralinguistic
contexts are often crucial to the interpretation of an expression as a descriptive phrase or a proper name. The above tests allow us, however, to single out proper nouns from the Lokono lexicon. This category includes also proper nouns that are clearly not place names, for instance, proper names of people. The what/where distinction, discussed in the next section, excludes such proper names from the corpus of place names.

6.6.2 The what/where distinction

To uniquely define the category of place names, we need to resort to another criterion—namely, the what/where distinction. The what/where distinction is a type of noun categorization system. It bears resemblance to better-known categorization systems in the nominal domain, for instance, the mass/count distinction. It has a specific grammatical locus (i.e. the spatial expression) and it divides nouns in two broad categories (the what- and where-nouns). Certain types of nouns can shift from one category to the other, resulting in systematic modulations of their meaning. Finally, it is grounded in the ontological properties of the real-world referents. Below, I demonstrate how the distinction operates in Lokono, with particular reference to place names (for an analysis extending to other domains of Lokono vocabulary see chapter 7 and for a comparative angle chapter 8).

The locus of the what/where distinction is the spatial expression—that is, the grammatical construction used in the language to describe spatial relations between the Figure, the entity to be located, and the Ground, the entity with respect to which the Figure is located (Talmy 1975). Following Lestrade (2010), I argue that spatial meaning consists of two elements: configuration and directionality. Configuration describes the spatial relation that holds between the Figure and the Ground. Take topological relations as an example. In English these are encoded by configurational prepositions, for instance, in, on, above, under. Directionality distinctions, on the other hand, correspond to the changes of configuration over time:

(252) a. Location—the absence of change in configuration.
    b. Goal—the change into some configuration.
    c. Source—the change out of some configuration.

The difference between configuration and directionality can be exemplified on English data, as in the corresponding examples in (253).

(253) a. The cat is on the shelf.
    b. The cat sprang onto the shelf.
    c. The cat jumped from the shelf.

The location directionality is unmarked in English—a configurational preposition on appears on its own, as in (253). The goal directionality is usually marked with the preposition to, either in combination with a configurational preposition or alone, as in (253). Finally, the source directionality is expressed by the preposition from, which does not normally combine with configurational prepositions, as in (253). The what/where distinction contrasts nouns that receive different types of directionality
marker within a single directionality. Some nouns receive the directionality marking that the interrogative what combines with and others the directionality marking that the interrogative where receives, hence the names of the two categories. This differs per directionality—in (254) the English goal directionality is exemplified. Notice that humans are subsumed under the what-category.

(254)  
   a. He went where? 
   b. He went to what/whom?

In English, the question word where is left unmarked in the goal directionality, but the question word what needs an overt marker, the preposition to. What-nouns are hence nouns that combine with the preposition to in English, and where-nouns are those that are left unmarked, when used in the goal directionality. In English virtually all nouns are what-nouns (e.g., table, chair, John, river, Amsterdam). There are hardly any nouns in English that can pattern like the where interrogative: important exceptions include nouns such as home. However, in some languages the situation is different. The Lokono location and goal directionality markers divide the lexicon into sizeable groups of what- and where-nouns. Importantly, the same source marking can be used with all types of nouns. In other words, the source directionality does not single out any nominal category, and it will not be discussed further.

The location and goal directionality are conflated in Lokono—that is, the same form expresses both functions, which are then disambiguated by the predicate. A static predicate implies the location directionality, as in (255) and (256). Importantly for the analysis of place names, there are two different directionality markers, the free form bithi and the suffix –n, glossed as LOC.WHT and LOC.WHR, respectively. Each of them selects different types of nouns.

(255)  
Murial bithika we.
Muriel bitfi–ka=we
Muriel LOC.WHT–PFV=1PLB
‘We are at Muriel’s.’

(256)  
Thusakho we.
ți–sa–kò–ŋ–ka=we
3FA–name–NEG–LOC.WHR–PFV=1PLB
‘We are in Thusakho (lit. ‘It Has No Name’).’

In (255) and (256), a static predicate is used—a stative verb construction with the perfective–ka—implying the static location directionality. Notice that the subjects of stative verbs are expressed by personal enclitics—the same forms that encode the object of transitive verbs and are glossed with the subscript b. Two different...

82 Nouns such as home are clearly deprived of many nominal features in English, and some would classify them as adverbs. If this is the case, then the where-category is non-existent in English.
directionality markers are used. In (255), the bithi-marker appears with the person name Muriel, while in (256), the n-marker appears with the place name Thusakho—an avoidance term used to refer to the Mapana creek in order not to anger the water spirit.

When a change-of-location predicate is used, the goal directionality is implied, as in (257) and (258).

(257) Wabarhosen bithi wôsa.
    wa–bârôsêm bîtﬁ w–o:sa
    1PLA–chief LOC.WHT 1PLA–go
‘We went to our chief.’

(258) Konokonro wôsa yokhan.
    konokô–n–ro w–o:sa yokbâ–ŋ
    forest–LOC.WHR–ATL 1PLA–go shoot.LTRV–NMLZ
‘We went to the forest to hunt.’

In (257) and (258) the same directionality markers that were used in (255) and (256), appear, but the presence of a change-of-location predicate implies the goal directionality. Again, the two different markers combine with different types of nouns. In (257), the goal of movement is expressed by the person-denoting noun wabarhosen ‘our chief’, while in (258) the goal of movement is encoded by the generic landscape term konoko ‘forest’. It should be mentioned that both markers have an atelic form, –nro and bithiro, respectively, derived with the atelic suffix –ro. The atelic forms are used when the configuration, at location or goal, has not been fully accomplished—that is, when the Figure is merely oriented toward the location or merely moving toward the goal.

It should be reiterated that there are two distinct formal exponents of the location and goal directionality in Lokono, namely bithi and –n, which select different types of nouns. In examples (255) and (257), the directional marker bithi is used, following the person-denoting nouns wabarhosen ‘our chief’ and Muriel, a proper name of a person. The bithi-marker appears only with nouns denoting animate beings, plants, and objects. It also combines with the interrogative noun hama ‘what’ and the interrogative halikan ‘who’. It is called the what-marker and the category it defines is labeled ‘what-nouns’. In examples (256) and (258), the directionality marker –n appears in combination with the avoidance place name Thusakho and the generic landscape term konoko ‘forest’, respectively. The n-marker combines with a select group of nouns—namely, configurational nouns (e.g., loko ‘inside’), nouns denoting structures (e.g., bahu ‘house’), generic landscape terms (e.g., onikhan ‘creek’), and proper names of places. The n-marker appears also with the interrogative term halo ‘where’, and is therefore called the where-marker and the category it defines the where-nouns.

Place names fall within the category of where-nouns, which is grammatically different from the category of what-nouns with respect to the location and goal directionality marking. The linguistic provenance of place names is of no
importance to this classification. Utterances (259) and (260) include examples of a Dutch and Sranantongo place name, respectively.

(259) *Suiker Damnin thunekhebo koba.*

suiker dam–ɲi–ŋ tʰi–nekʰbo=koba

*sugar dam–EP–LOC.WHR 3PST–work=REM.PST*

‘They worked at Suiker Dam (lit. ‘Sugar Dam’).’

(260) *Kia Redi Dotinro thurhurhukha.*

kia redi dof–n–ro tʰi–tiŋkʰa

*DSC red sand–LOC.WHR–ATL 3PST–move*

‘(The school), it moved to Redi Dotti.’

In (259), the epenthetic syllable *-ni-* is inserted for purely phonological reasons—that is, because the where-noun ends in a consonant. Both *Suiker Dam*, the name of an old sugar plantation, and *Redi Dotti*, the name of a mixed Lokono–Kari’na village, appear with the where-marker characteristic of where-nouns. Lokono, Sranantongo, Kari’na, and Dutch place names all pattern as where-nouns when placed in the Lokono morphosyntax.

The type of referent is also of no importance. Proper names of waterways and water bodies, vegetation assemblages, human-made landscape features, whether large or small, all receive the where-marker. Below two more examples are given.

(261) *Dakuthu kudada de Gangami Korin.*

da–kitʰi kita=da=de garga–mì kuri–ŋ

1SG–grandma wash=DIRC=1SG❶ grandma–DEAD baths–LOC.WHR

‘My grandma washed me at Gangami Kori (lit. ‘Bathing Place of the Late Grandma’).’

(262) *Lumoromoroda Sorhinamanro.*


3MA–ITR–fly–VBRZ Suriname–LOC.WHR–ATL

‘He keeps flying to Suriname.’

In (261), the place name *Gangami Kori ‘Bathing Place of the Late Grandma’*—denoting an area of only a few square meters—appears with the telic where-marker expressing the location directionality. In (262), the place name *Sorhinama*—denoting the whole country of Suriname—appears as the atelic goal of motion of the reduplicated verb *moromorodon ‘fly repeatedly’*.

Finally, as evident from the examples presented, the internal structure of the place name has no bearing on the what/where categorization either—all attested morphosyntactic types appear with the where-marker. Interestingly, with place names derived with the feminine suffix *–ro*, the where-marker in its atelic form is often shortened. Take as an example the place name *Madisero ‘One Lacking Game’* (from *madisen ‘lack game’*). The telic form is regular: *Madiseron ‘at/to Madisero’*,

...
but in the atelic form, instead of Madiseronro, the forms Madisenro and Madiseninro are preferred.

It is worth reiterating that neither the proper/generic nor the what/where distinction is by itself sufficient to define place names as a class on language-internal grounds. Place names and personal names both belong to the category of proper nouns. Where-nouns, on the other hand, include also (but not only) generic landscape terms. These terms are often part of place names and can be ambiguous between a generic and a proper reading. When combined, however, the proper/generic and the what/where distinction can delimit the domain of place names and serve as disambiguating devices vis-à-vis personal names and generic terms, as discussed in the next section.

6.7 Discussion

The exponents of two grammatical phenomena, the proper/generic and the what/where distinction single out the domain of place names from the Lokono lexicon. Place names are proper nouns—that is, nouns that “denote a unique entity at the level of established linguistic convention to make it psychosocially salient within a given basic level category” (Langendonck 2007:87). In Lokono, proper nouns are distinguished from generic nouns by means of their combinatory possibilities with verbs of naming, the collective suffix, numerals, and the indefinite article. The basic level categories referred to by Langendonck are the types of features named, for instance, people, animals, ships, mountains, or rivers. Lokono data show that the basic level categories are organized linguistically into two main groups, namely, what-nouns and where-nouns. The former include person-, animal-, plant-, object-, and part-denoting nouns. The latter include nouns denoting spatial regions (e.g., diako ‘top’), structures (e.g., bahu ‘house’), landscape features (e.g., onikhan ‘creek’), and their parts (e.g., diako ‘tributary’) For Lokono, the definition of proper nouns given above can therefore be rewritten in terms of the two categories. Proper nouns denote a unique entity at the level of established linguistic convention to make it psychosocially salient within the category of what-nouns or where-nouns. Consequently, Lokono place names are proper nouns that denote a unique entity at the level of established linguistic convention to make it psychosocially salient within the category of where-nouns.83

The linguistic distribution into what- and where-nouns is not accidental, but grounded in the ontological properties of the referents. Lokono what-nouns denote movable entities delimited by crisp boundaries. Such entities are usually perceptually bounded—that is, they are relatively small so that their contours can be perceived within a single act of perception. Where-nouns, on the other hand, denote entities that are immovable and sometimes lack crisp boundaries—it is unclear, for

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83 I am unaware of Lokono proper names of temporal periods such as the English Golden Age. If such existed they may also pattern as where-nouns. Generic temporal expressions, such as times of the day can be expressed in Lokono as locative stative clauses with the where-marker (see example (187)).
instance, where the boundaries of a mountain, a bathing place, a fishery, a camp, or a spatial region such as *diako* ‘top’ are. Many of such entities are also perceptually unbounded. That the *what/where* distinction is not just a matter of linguistic accident or a residue of a diachronic process is shown by the fact that certain nouns can take both markers resulting in systematic modulations of their meaning. Part-denoting nouns (*what*-nouns), for instance, become configurational nouns (*where*-nouns) when combined with *where*-marker. The body part noun *duna* ‘arm’ when followed by the *where*-marker denotes a spatial region projected from the part, not the part itself. In terms of ontological properties, it represents a change from a more perceptually bounded entity with crisp boundaries to a perceptually less bounded entity with more fuzzy boundaries. More examples of such modulations are described in chapter 7, demonstrating that the distinction is synchronically functional. Such shifts from one category to the other are an inherent part of noun categorization, for instance, the mass/count distinction.

Importantly, the *what/where* distinction can be crucial to the recognition of a term as a place name. This becomes particularly important when a place name is homonymous with a *what*-noun. Take as an example the monomorphemic creek names coined after tree species. Nouns-denoting trees are *what*-nouns, as in (263).

(263) *Kofa bithiro thurhibiwa.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>kofa</th>
<th>bi thi ro</th>
<th>tʰi–tʰibiswa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tree</td>
<td>LOC.WHT–ATL</td>
<td>3FA–ROLL.REFL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘It rolled toward the tree (*Clusia sp.*)’

When *kofa* (*Clusia sp.*) is used as a *what*-noun, denoting a tree, it is followed by the *what*-marker. However, there is also a creek in the Cassipora territory called *Kofa*, named so after the same tree species. As a place name, *Kofa* can only be followed by the *where*-marker in the spatial expression, as in (264).

(264) *Wôsa Kofanro, ma ama kho wôthika.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>w–o:sa</th>
<th>kofa=n–ro</th>
<th>ma</th>
<th>ama=kʰo</th>
<th>w–o:fi ka</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1PLA–go</td>
<td>tree–LOC.WHR–ATL</td>
<td>but</td>
<td>what=NEG</td>
<td>1PLA–find</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘We went to Kofa, but we didn’t find anything.’

The differential directionality marking makes it possible to distinguish between the two different meanings of *kofa*. This is particularly important in a situation in which other clues are absent, especially when the exponents of the proper/generic distinction, which could inform the decision, are not present, as in examples (263) and (264) above.

The same logic applies also to some of the deverbal place names encoding physical features. Take as an example *Urhikoro* ‘The Brown One’, the name of a

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84 English mass nouns placed in a syntactic frame of a count noun systematically imply a type or a quantity of the substance (e.g., two cheeses, three coffees). And *vice versa*, count nouns can be forced into a syntactic frame of a mass noun. Pelletier (1975) discussed a special example of it, which he called the *Universal Grinder* (e.g., *There is cat on the street*).
creek referring to the color of its water, derived from the verb *urhin* ‘brown’. Such nominalizations in –*koro* are also used as descriptive terms referring to people, animals, and objects. In fact such derivations, especially those referring to color, can be used as people’s nicknames, in which case the color refers to the color of the skin or hair.

(265) *Môsun ba to Urhikoro bithi.*

`m–oːšim b–a to ɨɾi–koro bitʃi`


‘Don’t go to *Urhikoro* (person/thing).’

(266) *Dôsa kanba to Urhikoron.*

`d–oːsa kâ–m–ba to ɨɾi–korô–ŋ`


‘I am going to bathe at *Urhikoro* (creek).’

The differential *what*/where marking disambiguates such cases. In (265), in which the privative suffix triggers the empty verb construction, the use of the *bithi* marker implies that a person or an object is the referent of *Urhikoro*. In (266), on the other hand, it is the *where*-marker that implies that *Urhikoro* refers to a place. The *what*/where distinction therefore not only helps define place names, but also occasionally aids in disambiguating the referential scope of homophonous forms.

Place names are a language-externally definable linguistic domain in Lokono, a fact of relevance to the domain of onomastics in particular, and linguistics in general. Although this type of nominal categorization is not yet described for many languages in detail, it is important to point out that the *what*/where distinction has been documented in two other unrelated languages—namely, Marquesan, a Polynesian language spoken in the Marquesan Islands (Cablitz 2008), and Makalero, a Papuan language of East Timor (Huber 2014). A number of other languages show similar patterns in the spatial expression, although detailed studies of the distinction are missing. Although just as in the case of the mass/count distinction the precise membership of the *what*-category and the *where*-category differs from language to language, place names in all three languages are at the core of the *where*-category (see chapter 8). In all three cases, the distinction is made in the location and goal directionality, not in the source directionality, which may be linked to the fact that sources are cognitively less prominent, and thus encode less distinctions (Kopecka and Narasimhan 2012; Regier and Zheng 2007).

Although this study discusses only linguistic categorization of nouns, it should be stressed that linguistic categorization may have repercussions for other types of cognitive processes. In the domain of spatial language, this has been proven for the linguistic frames-of-reference—the major frame-of-reference parallels the way non-verbal spatial tasks are solved (Levinson 2003; Levinson 1996). Future research should determine whether the way we linguistically categorize place names in Lokono and other languages has consequences for the processing of places by other cognitive systems. A language-internal definition of place names is a signal that place names may be a domain of certain cognitive import, opening the domain to
other cognitive sciences. Recently, the theoretical distinction between proper and
generic terms has been taken up by cognitive scientists using state-of-the-art
technologies (Müller 2010; Müller and Kutas 1997; Proverbio et al. 2001;
Schweinberger and Kaufmann 2002; Delazer et al. 2003). Virtually all such studies,
however, revolve around proper names of people, and are often limited to Indo-
European languages. Few experiments look specifically at the psycho- and
neurolinguistic reality of place names (Hollis and Valentine 2001). It is known,
however, that places, the referents of place names, together with persons, the
referents of person names, are hard-wired in the human brain since millennia
(Hartley et al. 2013). Levinson succinctly summarizes the importance of places with
the following words:

*Persons on the one hand and places on the other are our two great mental
index systems – they are the two coordinate systems we use to plot our social
and ecological spaces. Naturally, the two systems intersect: we think of
places in terms of persons, and persons in terms of places. Both systems are
underpinned by specialized neural circuitry. Both derive their cognitive
power from the fact that they name nodes in great networks – a person is
joined by kinship or association links to a field of other persons, and a place
is connected by pathways to a network of other places.*

(Levinson 2011:ix–x)

The linguistic encoding of places can give us an insight into this mental index
system, and bring to the fore the ways in which we, as individuals, linguistic
communities, and humans in general organize the geographic space around us into
knowledge systems. The Lokono data demonstrate that places, whether named by
generic or proper names, are linguistically distinguished from other types of entities
in spatial language. How important such systems are is evidenced by the almost
universal presence of place names in language (but see Vos 2012; Widlok 2008 for
important exceptions).

### 6.8 Conclusions

Lokono place names exhibit a variety of forms and meanings. Many of their features
can be explained by the general architecture of the language and extra-linguistic
factors. The place name corpus reflects the sociolinguistic context—the generic
affiliation of place names mirrors the progressing language shift and the interactions
with the other Amerindian groups in the past. The referents of place names
document the Lokono changing pattern of interaction with landscape—the
importance of water features is changing, resulting in the semantic extension of
landscape terms such as *kori* ‘bathing place, resort’ and new place names for roads.
Semantically, the Lokono place names speak volumes for the Lokono perception of
what the landscape affords. Most place names are coined after physical features of
the environment, including sensorimotor experience and indicator species, but also
activities played out in it (or a *taskscape* in Ingold’s (1993) terms). Structurally, the
names reflect the general tendencies of Lokono grammar—a predisposition for suffixation and the obligatory expression of possessor with inalienable nouns.

Irrespective of this variety, Lokono place names share two common denominators. First, they can appear in the iritin-verb frame and cannot combine with collective marker, the indefinite article, and numerals—the defining features of Lokono proper nouns. Second, they take the n-marker when used as locations or goals in spatial descriptions—the exponents of the where-category. These two parameters, when combined, single out Lokono place names from all other types of nouns: other proper nouns and other where-nouns. Both distinctions are productive processes, motivated ontologically and attested in other languages. The Lokono case shows that place names can be a language internally definable class and calls for the inspection of other languages from this angle, and for the attention of other cognitive scientists to the what/where phenomenon.