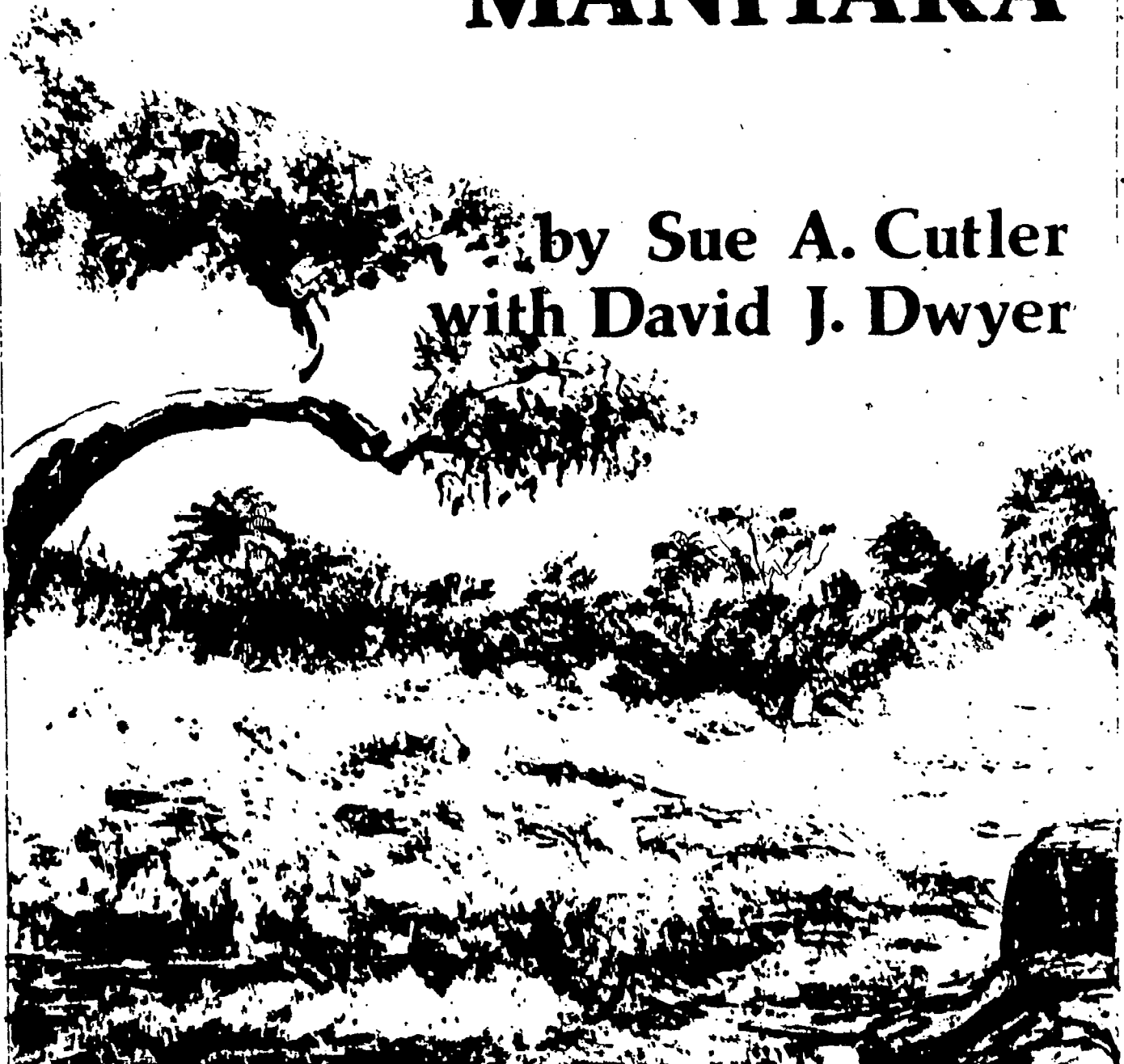


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A Reference Handbook of MĀNIYAKĀ

by Sue A. Cutler
with David J. Dwyer



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MĀNIYAKĀ

A Reference Handbook

of

PHONETICS, GRAMMAR, LEXICON

AND

LEARNING PROCEDURES

by

Sue A. Cutler

with

David J. Dwyer

for

THE UNITED STATES PEACE CORPS

at

THE AFRICAN STUDIES CENTER

of

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

1981

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INTRODUCTION

Most language textbooks are written with a presumption that the language would be taught under the auspices of a trained and experienced language teacher. And while this situation does prevail in the teaching of European languages, such is not the case with the lesser-known languages of the third world, particularly outside the walls of higher learning.

In the learning of African languages, it is more frequently the case that language teachers are untrained (owing to the minimal demand for such teachers) or that the learning situation is outside the classroom. Although I have no access to statistics, my impression of Peace Corps language training is such that even with 100-200 hours of language training, the learner will need additional study before being able to use the language with any facility.

Thus, it is the reality that much of the learning of African languages will inevitably take place outside the classroom in situations that are in some ways ideal, but which lack an experienced language tutor. It is this reality that gives rise to this volume for it was written for the learner who has the commitment to further his/her language study, but who lacks the general knowledge of how to proceed. It is the purpose then to give the learner the sufficient skills and knowledge to be able to carry out the orderly study of a foreign language on his/her own.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE LANGUAGES OF LIBERIA

In addition to English, which is widely spoken in Liberia, there are three major groups of languages spoken there: West Atlantic, Kru and Mande, all of which are subdivisions of the Niger-Congo branch of Niger-Kordofanian, the largest grouping of languages in Africa (see figure 1).

The Kru languages, spoken in both southern Liberia and the western part of the Ivory Coast, include the following Liberian languages: Krahn, Bassa, Kru, Grebo, Dei and Kuwaa (also known as Belleh). The West Atlantic languages are spoken from Liberia north to Senegal and include the Gola and Kissi, spoken in the northwestern and northern parts of Liberia respectively. These languages are virtually surrounded by languages of the third group known as the Mande languages. This group covers a much larger area than the other two, including not only the above-mentioned countries, but Guinea, Upper Volta and Mali as well.

The Mande languages have a Western branch and a (South)eastern branch. Mano and Gio (hard g) are Southeastern Mande languages spoken in Nimba county. The Western branch has two sub-branches, Northwestern and Southwestern. Both Vai, spoken in the Capé Mount area, and Manya (also known as Mandingo) spoken in the border area between Guinea and Liberia are Liberian languages of the northern branch. The other branch contains a set of very closely related languages called the Southwestern Mande languages of which only Loko is spoken outside of Liberia, in Sierra Leone. The rest, Mende, Bandi, Kpelle and Lorma are spoken in the northern part of Liberia.

The location of the Mande languages in Africa is shown in figure 1, the location of the languages of Liberia is shown in figure 2, and figure 3 shows how these languages are related.

FIGURE 1: THE DISTRIBUTION OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES



FIGURE 2: LOCATION OF LIBERIAN LANGUAGES
(from Liberia in Maps, von Gnielinski (ed. 1972))

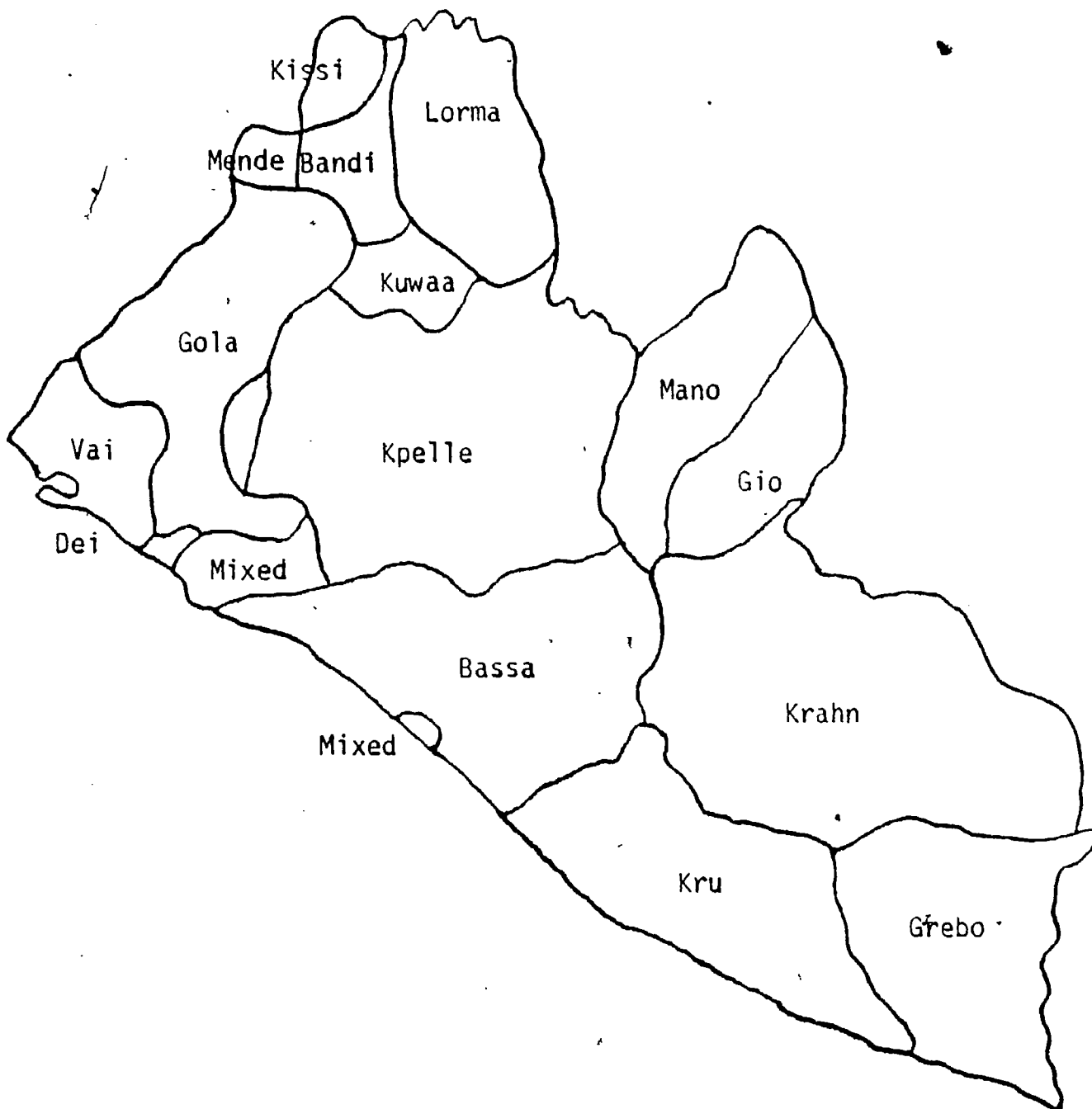


FIGURE 3: THE RELATEDNESS OF THE LIBERIAN LANGUAGES

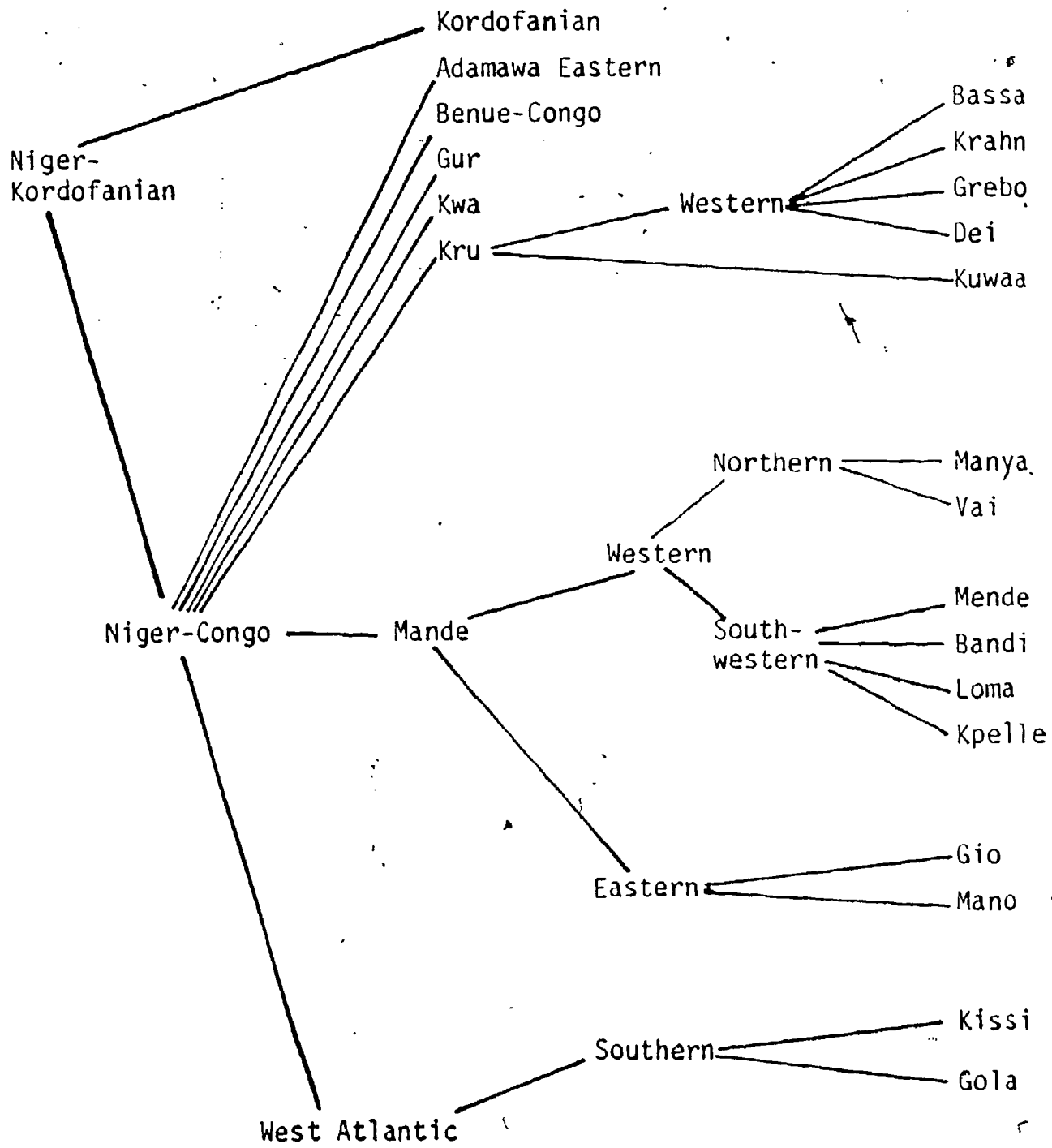


FIGURE (4A)

Indo-European correspondences from Greenberg (1957:42)

LANGUAGE	ONE	TWO	THREE	HEAD	EYE	EAR	NOSE	MOUTH	TOOTH
Breton	ünan	dau	tri	penn	lagad	skuarn	fri-	genu	dant
Irish	ō:n	do:	tri	kjan	su:lj	kluas	sre:n	bjal	fjakalj
Welsh	in	da:	tri	pen	blagad	klist	truin	keg	dant
Danish	en	to:?	tre:?	ho:dhe	a:ə	o:rə	na:sa	mon?	tan?
Swedish	en	tvo	tre	hüvud	öga	öra	näsa	mun	tand
Dutch	e:n	tve:	dri:	ho:ft	o:x	o:r	nō:s	mont	tant
English	wən	tuv	θriʃ	hed	aj	ihr	nowz	mawθ	tuwθ
German	ajns	tsvaj	draj	kopf	augə	o:r	na:ze	mont	tsa:n
French	œ. yn	dō	trwa	te:t	œi/jö	ore:j	ne	buuʃ	dä
Italian	uno.	due	tre	testa	okkjo	orekkjo	naso	bokka	drente
Spanish	una	dos	tres	kabesa	oxo	orexa	naso	boka	diente
Rumanian	un	doj	trej	kap	okju	ureke	nas	gura	dinte
Albanian	n'a	du	tre	kokj	sü	vesh	hunda	goja	dbamj
Greek	enas	dhjo	tris	kefall	mati	affi	miti	stoma	dbondi
Lithuanian	vienas	du	tris	galva	akis	ausis	nosis	burna	dantis
Latvian	viena	divi	trīs	galva	atss	auss	deguns	mute	zobs
Polish	jeden	dwa	trzy	glova	oko	uxo	nos	usta,	zöp
Czech	jeden	dva	trzy	hlava	oko	uxo	nos	usta	zup
Russian	adjin	dva,	trj	galava	oko	uxo	nos	rot	zup
Bulgarian	edin	dva	tri	glava	oko	uxo	nos	usta	zob
Serbo-Cro-	atjan	dva	tri	glava	oko	Uho	nos	usta	zub
Finnish	üksi	kaksi	kolme	pa:	silmä	korva	nena	su:	hammas
Estonian	üks	kaks	kolm	pea	silm	vilja-pea	nina	su:	hammas
Hungarian	ed	ke:t	há:rom	fü:, fej	sem	fül	orr	sa:j	fog
Basque	bat	bi	hiru	buru	begi	belart	südü	aho	orts

FIGURE (4B)

Some West African Language Correspondences

LANGUAGE	ONE	TWO	THREE	EAR	EYE	MOUTH	TOOTH	HEAD	NOSE
Fulbe	do	di	tati	nofru	ytere	hunnuko	nyitre	hoore	kinal
Blafada	numa	bihe	biivo	nufa	-gire	musu	keede	gaga	-sini
Themne	-in	reŋ	-sas	lens	-for	-sen	-sek	-bump	sot
Limba	funte	taae	tatat	ifa	-ifa	-foti	tiiti	kafa	peren
Kissi	pelee	miüü	ngaa	nilen	-ifo	sondoo	kinde	bolon	milindo
Bullom	bul	tin	ra	nlu	-hol	nyhol	chan	-bol	-min
Gola	gun	tiel	taal	kenu	efe	onya	kesla	edi	emia
Bambara	kilen	fila	saba	tulo	nyin	da	nyin	kuŋ	nun
Dyula	kele	fla	saba	toro	nyaden	da	nyl		nun
Kuranko	geien	fla	sawa	tule	ye	de	namen		
Manyakan	kele	fila	sawa	tolo	nya	da	nyl	ku	nü
Kono	nkele	fela	sawa	toro	ya	daa	gire	kun	nun
Vai	dondo	fela	sagba	tolo	ja	da	nyin	kun	suŋ
Sosso	keden	firin	saxan	tuli	ye	de	nyinnt	xü	norm
Loko	ngila	fele	sawa	nguo	ngau	nda	ngongou	ngu	hokpa
Mende	ita	fele	sawa	ngolf	ngahü	ndo	ngongolu	ngu	hokpa
Bandi	ngila	fele	sawa	ngolf	ngasü	nda	ngongolu	ngu	sokpa
Lorma	gila	felego	saago	goi	gaazuve	daa	nin	wun	sokpal
Kpelle	tano	feere	saaba	woli	nel	la	nyin	ŋuŋ	soa
Mano	doo	peete	yaaka	too	nye	le	sü	wäkele	nyu
Dan	do	pira	yaka	tu	nyaga	di	sö	goga	nyü
We	do	pire	yaka	туру	nyawe	le-bo	so	wun	ne
Nwa	do	pilo	a	pe	lon	laga	sü	me	nye
Mwa	do	ple	yaga	trona	yirebe	di	so	moru	nyl
Bé	do	plao	ngad	trun	yowore	ye	so	nwunu	nye
Guro	du	fla	yaa	tone	yü	le	sü	mbü	mi
Bisa	dinne	hira	karko	tur	yer	le	sü	min	mi
Bobo Fing	tele	pla	saxa	туру	nyono	do	nyini	ŋwon	bi
Dei	boo	sü	täa	lso	gire	nucen	gire	duru	merä
Bassa	do	sü	täa	lso	gire	uno	gire	tru	möla
Guere	doo	sü	tä	ngü	gile	ngü	nye	debo	mera
Grebo	do	so	tä	nua	yile	uuno	nye	lu	mia
Kwaa	dee	sü	täa	no	si	wü	kala	wulu	nyu
Akan-Twi	baako	abien	abiesa	aso	ani	ano	eso	eti	ehwene
Ga	ekome	enyc	etä	toi	hinwei	daa	no	yitso	guco
Yoruba	eni	aji	eta	eti	oju	eno	enwi	oli	imu

Invariably, the question of language versus dialect arises in the discussion of African languages, as in the phrase "he spoke an African dialect." The implication of this phrase is of course that there is but one African language. If we draw the recognized distinction between language and dialect, that of mutual intelligibility (if you can't understand the speech of someone, he is speaking a language different from your own, while if you can, it is a dialect of your own language) then the notion of dialect discussed earlier is quite wrong. By the above definition, Africa has somewhere between 1000 - 1500 distinct languages (estimates vary). Many of these languages also have several dialectal variants. At least four distinct dialects have been identified for Kpelle and for Lorma.

Although we may have resolved the problem of dialect, the reader may still be wondering just how closely these languages are related and in what ways they are related. The answer to this question is unfortunately quite complicated so that in the following paragraphs only a partial answer can be given.

To begin with, languages can be compared on the basis of their sound systems, their syntax, their vocabulary and their meaning (see Chapter II for definitions). The most common way to compare languages is to compare how two or more languages will represent a given word. As a general rule, the more basic words two languages have in common, the more closely the two languages are related. Figure 4 shows a comparison of some common words in European languages and in some of the languages in West Africa.

One of the assumptions behind the comparison of figure 4 and the chart in figure 3 is that of divergent development. At one time there was a single group of people who later separated into two or more groups. Once isolated, the language of the two groups developed in different ways until finally after a long period of time, they were no longer mutually intelligible. Presumably, this process has continued repeatedly and is the primary explanation for the degree of linguistic diversity in Africa today.

Yet in addition to divergence, there is also convergent development, that of two different languages becoming more similar as a result of contact and commercial intercourse. It is possible to find two distinct language groups living together, sharing not only similar words, but turns of expression and cultural items. Thus with both the processes of convergence and divergence the precise relation of any one language to another may prove to be extremely complex, much more so at least than figure 3 would have you believe.

CHAPTER II

HOW TO STUDY A MANDE LANGUAGE ON YOUR OWN

1. Introduction

People have been learning foreign languages for centuries both with formal instruction and without. This fact is at least encouraging, though at this point, history has revealed no outstanding method or approach to language learning. Here in Zorzor, I know some high school students who are studying French in school...they are getting nowhere, at the same time, there are high school students who came from other parts of Liberia who learn Lorma within a year outside their daily academic studies.

This anecdote suggests two things, 1) a formal approach does not guarantee learning and 2) an informal approach does not necessarily inhibit it. Furthermore, most efforts to determine what is the most effective method to learn language have usually concluded that the most crucial differences in classroom effectiveness center around the quality of teacher, the organization of classroom procedures and learner interest and discipline. The method involved has rarely been deemed significant.

What this evidence means is that crucial to learning a language is a well-organized learning procedure (no matter what method is involved) and hard work; the more you work, the more you learn (within reason).

What this also means is that any method can be used to learn. Nevertheless it is important that the learner be aware of the variety of these approaches and their implications.

2. Aspects of Language Learning to Consider

If you have ever studied a foreign language before, you probably

encountered most of the following situations:

- (a) You know what you want to say, but you don't know how to say it either because you don't know the word or how to use it;
- (b) Two or three words sound alike, but have very different meanings;
- (c) You figured out how to ask the question, but couldn't begin to comprehend the answer;
- (d) You said something that you thought was appropriate and everybody laughed.

All of these problems are real, and represent different aspects of language learning that you need to know about.

The first problem points out that there are two modes of meaning in language: that found in words, and that found in the relationship between words. These two modes of meaning are more formally called vocabulary and syntax.

The second problem is another system, the means by which these modes of meaning are signaled. This system, more formally termed the sound or phonological system, concerns the contrastive sounds used by the language.

The third problem concerns an overemphasis on the production of sentences and an underemphasis on the comprehension of sentences.

The fourth problem concerns the social context in which the language is embedded, that is, what you said was technically correct in terms of (a) and (b) above, but appeared out of context. Your comment could have been humorous for any of the following reasons:

- (a) Thus it was correct, but not expected. That is, since so few foreigners say the right thing at the right time in the right way that the very correctness of the response is out of context.

- (b) Your comment may have been correct, but inappropriate, that is, in the specific context, another comment is required. You would no more think of greeting people at a funeral with "hi there" than you would of showing up in a bathing suit.
- (c) Your comment may have been humorous for other reasons as well. It may have been correct, but carried an additional meaning. In French if you say you are full rather than satisfied you mean that you are pregnant...a strange thing to say after a fine meal, particularly for a male. When you are in the process of learning the vocabulary and syntax of a language, you can expect some surprisingly humorous developments.
- (d) Your comment may have meant something other than intended. In The Lonely African by Colin Turnbull, one missionary is credited with saying "your bottom" rather than "good morning" because the user failed to make a tone distinction. This kind of error is normal when learning the sound system of the language.

For Lorma speakers learning English, the pronunciation of final consonants (the consonants at the end of words) are a problem. One of the general strategies which speakers use is that "when in doubt add an l." Thus I have heard will for way. But for good humor dead bottle for dead body (John Singler, personal communication) is supreme. Let's face it, these things are funny and the best way to deal with them is to laugh together. You may as well, for you are certain to be next if you are serious about learning a Liberian language.

These differences may be due to pronunciation, as in the above examples or to the wrong choice of words (malaprops).

These problems then, underscore the aspects of language that you need to know about in order to effectively study language. These can be summarized as 1) the organization of language: vocabulary, syntax, phonology; 2) speaking vrs. listening; and 3) social context (usage).

3. The Organization of Language

Language consists of three subsystems: 1) phonology (the sound system of the language); 2) the lexicon (the vocabulary of the language); and 3) the syntax (the system of putting words together to make sentences). In everyday language, language consists of 1) a set of distinctive sounds, 2) a vocabulary, and 3) a grammar: a set of rules stating how sentences are formed.

3.1 Phonology (the sounds of a language)

Every language has a finite set of distinctive sounds which are used to convey meaning. These sounds are called phonemes. While the inventory of these sounds is not the same from language to language, they are similar enough in most cases not to cause problems. Yet there are inevitably cases, however, where one language makes a distinction which the other doesn't. For some reason, if these distinctions are not part of your native language they will be hard to hear and hard to produce, yet with practice they can both be heard and pronounced giving you the same access to the phonemic distinction that native speakers have. Chapter VI contains sound drills designed to help you learn to hear the differences between those sound contrasts found in Liberian languages, but not in English.

3.2 Lexicon and Syntax (vocabulary and word order)

With the distinction between lexicon and syntax as that of words and their combination into sentences, it is worth while to consider what this means. Meaning in language is of two types, that which is general and systematic, and that which is individual and idiosyncratic. For example, we can say that elephants are big and mice are small or we can say that some elephants and some mice are big for their species, or small for that matter. This way of relating size to different items is general and systematic and can be constructed by relating one word to another, that is it can be expressed syntactically.

But it is also possible to express size in another way as the following sets illustrate:

drop, puddle, pond, lake, sea, ocean
 baby, child, youth, adult, aged
 pebble, rock, boulder

This usage is idiosyncratic, that is: drop, puddle, etc., are not systematically related to each other in form, but are simply different words. Thus the expression of systematic and general meanings is the domain of syntax while the expression of idiosyncratic meanings is the domain of the lexicon.

3.3 Syntax:

It is important to bear in mind that the division between lexical and syntactic meanings is not exactly the same from language to language though it is nearly so. Nevertheless, we may find one language expressing a notion syntactically whereas the other uses a single word. Below are some examples:

<u>English</u>	<u>Typical Mande</u>
calf:	cow child
to dance:	to do dance
sea:	big water
house:	place where one lives
potash:	bitter salt

Thus in your exposure to a new language, you will find that what you expect to be one word is actually several. One of the nice things about Mande languages is that if you learn that the way to say "worker" is literally "farm-work-do-person" and you know the words for "farm", "work", "do" and "person", you do not have to really learn any new words, only a new combination which turns out to be easier for most people. You can also expect to find words which require several words for translation into English.

4. What Does Language Ability Entail?

Everyone has heard of someone who speaks six or seven languages. The questions that this raises are what does this entail and how did they do it.

4.1 Competence and Performance:

In order to speak a language, you have to have considerable knowledge about the language. You have to know the sound system, though perfect knowledge of it isn't absolutely necessary. You have to know some words and some syntactic rules. The question arises, how many words and how many rules?

The number of words one needs to know varies from language to language because of differences in the way concepts are expressed, whether by syntactic devices, or by word compounding or by having one word covering a wide range of concepts. But by rephrasing the question as "how many concepts are necessary?", the question can at least receive an answer, though to my knowledge little systematic study of this question has been carried out. Rather cautiously, then, I throw out the figure of 1,000 to 2,000 concepts as being necessary to comprehend 90-95% of a conversation. This percentage marks the level at which one can keep up with the general meaning of the discussion.

A language is not just a collection of words but, as we have pointed out, it also contains a syntactic system. This syntactic system consists of a set of rules about how to combine words to make sentences. The answer is that you need to know most of them, something any good language text should present. While the general set of syntactic expressions are fixed, the way they are expressed may be straightforward or complex. Plurals in English are easy, but complex in German. Pronouns in English are straightforward but complex in the Mande languages.

4.2 The Question of User Utility:

It is one thing to talk about the kind of information you need to speak a language and another to talk about how it is actually used. For example we can tell someone about how to do multiplication, which principles are involved. That is, we can say that 6×7 is 7 added 6 times. Yet when we ask someone "what is 6×7 ?", the answer will be given in less time than it could possibly take to add seven six times. In doing arithmetic, we found it to our advantage to memorize the individual products rather than calculate them each time we need them. The calculator, on the other hand does just the opposite.

This example is intended to emphasize that simply stating the kind of knowledge that is involved in language does not necessarily mean that this is the form in which this information is used. In language teaching, two positions have been taken. One which might be called a "deductive" approach, and the other an "inductive" approach.

The deductive approach presents the learner with a set of rules to learn. Once these rules are learned, the learner is free to construct sentences. The inductive approach argues the reverse, that if you present the learner with a set of sentences that the learner will figure out the general patterns.

This second approach usually also presumes that there is relatively less to generalize about than the first. That is, what people do in learning a language is to learn a sentence type and develop variants of it by substituting words at various places.

These two views are quite different and presume two different notions of the human mind. The deductive approach presumes that the mind is like a calculator with little memory capacity and prefers therefore to generate new information rather than store it. The inductive approach considers the mind to have a much greater capacity for memory.

In this regard, it is true that the mind has a vast capacity for memory. Think of all the experiences, events, jokes and facts you can recall. Think of the words that are available to you, these number somewhere between 10,000 and 20,000 items. What is truly remarkable about this is you can inventory them all within a split second. If I ask you which of the following are English words: "house", "tire", "fleurten", "vice"; you will have no difficulty whatsoever picking out fleurten as the non-English word. In this regard, the human mind is far superior to the computer.

It is this tremendous memory capacity that leads me to emphasize the importance of an approach which stresses the importance of the inductive approach: working with real sentences.

4.3 Integrating the Two Approaches:

This conclusion does not exclude a deductive approach however. The formal presentation of rules and generalizations can help a learner understand why a given sentence is expressed the way that it is and why each element is present. This kind of knowledge cannot be obtained directly from a native speaker of any language unless that person has been trained in linguistics. Such knowledge can be most easily obtained from the grammatical section of a language textbook which has been prepared by someone with formal linguistic training.

These rules are particularly useful in the beginning stages of language learning because they provide the learner with a set of statements with which to evaluate and interpret both incoming and outgoing sentences. However, when the learner becomes more competent in the language, to the point of actively producing and comprehending sentences in an ongoing conversation more or less spontaneously, the learner will no longer have need of these devices. That is, the kind of knowledge that they represent will have been converted into a more useable form.

5. Listening:

Much of traditional language teaching has placed great emphasis on production: the generation of sentences. This approach has implicitly assumed that if you can speak sentences, then you can also comprehend them. We are beginning to take note that these two skills (production and listening) are quite different activities and should be treated separately.

Earlier, we mentioned a problem of learning how to generate questions, but being unable to comprehend the answers. This is a typical problem of traditional approaches. At this time, language teachers are beginning to place more emphasis on being able to comprehend what is said during the earlier stages of language learning. This is not to say that no language production is emphasized, but rather that that comprehension should precede production at all times. This means that early emphasis is placed in understanding what is going on about you rather than being able to talk about it, and emphasis is placed on why a given sentence has the form that it does, rather than how to produce it.

After the learner has developed a listening fluency in certain areas, and knows what is being said and why, then is the time to encourage production of sentences for that topic.

6. Context

The process of communication involves two aspects; the message and the context in which the message is situated. A traffic light presents to us very little information (red, green and yellow) yet the context (a street intersection) permits us to provide a rich interpretation of the message: to stop, to go or to proceed with caution.

Learning a language can also be seen in this light, the message and the context. That is, in understanding a sentence, one can take advantage of the context in which the message is embedded for the interpretation of the communication as well as the message. The use of context is particularly useful for a beginning learner of a language, with only an incipient ability to interpret a message. For example, the context in which a greeting takes place is easily identifiable. The messages which can be asked are finite. The learner does not need to know the entire language, or even hear the entire sentence to know what is being said. A key word identified from a sentence may be sufficient for full comprehension of the message.

In teaching children to read, educators have found that context is very important. Beginning readers have a large amount of context (pictures) compared to the message (one sentence per page). When a child first approaches a new page, he/she will first examine the picture to delimit the range of possible messages that the sentence could represent. At one stage my son only used the first letter in each word, along with the context to construct the message. Not knowing how to recognize the words beyond the first letter, he would guess at its meaning, given the context, and pick a word that started with the same sound as the one he was reading and which made sense in the given context. Quite often he was correct and in so doing gradually built up his reading competence, but often he was not, though he might even complete a sentence having missed two or three words in the process. But the interesting thing was

that if the sentence made sense given the context he would continue reading, while if it did not, he would rescan the sentence for a better reading.

The point here is not how to teach children to read, but the value of context in learning a language. This means that if you can control the context, you have a better chance of comprehending the messages.

6.1 Ways of Controlling Context

Of course, the classroom is an ideal way of controlling context. Here you can define the range of what is being expressed within very narrow limits and thereby optimize context. Some of these techniques are given as follows:

(a) Sen-sit Build Up:

In this drill, the learner is given a list of messages which will be presented to him/her, whether a list of nouns, commands, activities, numbers of anything. Ideally this list should be in the form of pictures, real objects or demonstrations. The important thing however, is that the learner knows the order of presentation.

The tutor then says the first message. (The learner should know in advance the meaning of what is being said.) If it is a command then the learner should carry it out. If it is a picture, the learner should point to the cell. If it is a thing, then the learner should point it out.

The learner should know at this point, that the tutor will either repeat the message or utter something new. If it is a new message, it has to be the second item. Once the second item has been introduced, the tutor then drills the learner on the first two messages.

At this point, the learner can expect one of two messages which are known, or if not that, a new message will be the third item on the list. When the third item is introduced, the tutor will drill the learner randomly on the first three items until the learner can identify them easily.

Then the fourth item is introduced and drilled in the same way until the list is complete.

Usually only seven items should be introduced in this way during one drill, and if more messages are to be introduced, then the messages should be divided into two drills.

(b) Practical Sentences:

This approach can also be used to drill practical sentences that the learner would like to use. Here the learner draws up a list of seven practical sentences that he/she would like to know and the tutor introduces them to the learner in the target language in that order.

(c) Comprehending a Text:

Dialog and monolog drills can be initially presented as totally unknown messages (no context). Learners then attempt to pick out what is already familiar to them from previous lessons or experience. This can profitably be repeated only two or three times.

Next the learner is allowed to look at the text to see how it is written, this helps the learner separate the flow of sounds into word sequences and will usually result in the identification of more words and more of the meaning of the sentence.

Next the learner is permitted to study the translation and go over the analysis of the text so that every aspect of the text is understood: the meaning of each word, and the reason for the presence of each element in the sentence. At this point, the learner should know what is going to be said, that is, the context has now been provided, but the usefulness of the text has not yet been exhausted.

The learner can listen to the text again, following along the written text, but this time he/she should be aware of what is being said and should know the meaning of each sentence. In order to do this, it may be necessary to hear the text several times, or to refer back to the analysis to be sure.

Finally, the learner can listen to the text without the use of written material, and should continue to do so until comprehension is 100%.

These texts should be returned periodically to be sure that comprehension is retained, and to reinforce the retention of this knowledge.

NOTE: To repeat a text verbatim is a virtual impossibility for most tutors, either due to boredom or to lack of experience in reading the language you are studying. For this reason it is preferable to record the text initially and rely on your recorder for repetitions rather than your tutor.

By the time the learner has gotten this far, he/she will know a lot of the language even though he/she still cannot produce it. Nevertheless, the production stage will be a lot easier because of this breakdown.

(d) Translation Drills:

One of the problems in production as well as recognition is figuring out or knowing how things would be said in a language. One method is trial and error, (learner says something and is, if lucky, corrected). An alternative to this is the translation drill. The learner either writes a composition in English for the learner to translate, or asks the learner to translate sentence by sentence. Here the learner knows what is going to be said and should have some idea of the words to be used and the kind of construction involved. Thus when the sentence appears, most of the context has already been provided.

Such drills should be taped, so that they can be reused.

(e) Known Event:

Here the learner asks the tutor to talk about a commonly shared event, such as going to the market, visiting a friend's house, or

even a folktale told in English. Again the learner will have narrowed the range of contexts and should be able to interpret the message more richly than otherwise.

(f) Picture Drills:

Another way of controlling the context is to use a picture of some scene or activity that the learner is (1) interested in learning about or (2) has some familiarity with already. The learner then asks the tutor to talk about the picture or asks the tutor questions about the picture.

(g) Eavesdropping:

If you find yourself in a situation where the language is being spoken, e.g. a bar, in a taxi, or cookshop, listen to the language with the aim of trying to pick words you know and getting a general idea of what the conversation is about.

(h) Outside the classroom there are also techniques which can be used to narrow the context. One is to place one's self in a place where a known activity will take place. Greetings, marketing, bartering and so forth. When I was in Mexico City a few years ago, I had at my grasp very little Spanish, but I did know the seeming useless sentence "where is the post office?" Well, I found the post office, walked about a block away and asked my question. I knew what the answer had to be so I was able to figure out what the Spanish had to mean. Then I moved two blocks away and repeated the drill. Variations to this kind of exercise are limited only by lack of imagination.

We cannot underestimate the important role that memory has in language learning. We have already suggested that to have a minimum operating capacity a user must have a minimum of 1,000 to 2,000 concepts available for use both in recognition and production, as well as the understanding of how these words are organized into sentences (syntax).

In describing how to develop recognition skills, we suggested that the learner should spend considerable time listening in context: sentences should appear in a context in which their meaning would be clear, words should appear in the context of a sentence. This approach also suggests developing a familiarity with a fixed number of sentences.

Just think what this means: that while the specific goal of the exercise was the recognition of the given words, it is clear that in addition familiarity with these words has developed so that they might be recognized in other contexts. Furthermore, the specific sentences learned serve as the basis for recognizing a set of sister sentences in which only one word has been changed so that, even if the learner does not know the new word, the sentence may be understood due to context. Finally, the learner has learned to listen, a technique which will provide the primary source of new information about the language.

7. Learning Production

But production deserves its due. One cannot go around listening all the time, though I suspect one would be better off with an ability to comprehend what was going on about than with an ability to talk about it. Anyway, learning to produce sentences is also an important language ability.

To this end, particularly during the beginning we recommend that sentences as a whole be memorized. Now everyone claims that they have a weak memory and that memorizing scores of sentences is a real impossibility. Yet such is not the case, though one's language learning memory may not be operating at full capacity. That is, whether it is true or not, one should take the view that one's brain is like a muscle (an increasingly popular view) and that the more you exercise it, the stronger it gets. In partial support of this view is a report by August Schliemann, the archaeologist who discovered Troy, who incidentally claimed that he had a weak memory. Source: Ilios by Henry Schliemann. 1880; London, John Murry).

First of all I took pains to learn to write legibly, and this I succeeded in doing after twenty lessons from the famous calligraphist Magnée, of Brussels. Afterwards, in order to improve my position, I applied myself to the study of modern languages. My annual salary amounted only to 800 francs (£32), half of which I spent upon my studies; on the other half I lived---miserably enough, to be sure. My lodging, which cost 8 francs a month, was a wretched garret without a fire, where I shivered with cold in winter and was scorched with the heat in summer. My breakfast consisted of rye-meal porridge, and my dinner never cost more than two-pence. But nothing spurs one on to study more than misery and the certain prospect of being able to release oneself from it by unremitting work. Besides, the desire of showing myself worthy of Minna created and developed in me a boundless courage. I applied myself with extraordinary diligence to the study of English. Necessity taught me a method which greatly facilitates the study of a language. This method consists in reading a great deal aloud, without making a translation, taking a lesson every day, constantly writing essays upon subjects of interest, correcting these under the supervision of a teacher, learning them by heart, and repeating in the next lesson what was corrected on the previous day. My memory was bad, since from my childhood it had not been exercised upon any object; but I made use of every moment, and even stole time for study. In order to acquire a good pronunciation quickly, I went twice every Sunday to the English church, and repeated to myself in a low voice every word of the clergyman's sermon. I never went on my errands, even in the rain, without having my book in my hand and learning something by heart; and I never waited at the post office without reading. By such methods I gradually strengthened my memory, and in three months' time found no difficulty in reciting from memory to my teacher, Mr. Taylor, in each day's lesson, word by word, twenty printed pages, after having read them over three times attentively. In this way I committed to memory the whole of Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield and Sir Walter Scott's Ivanhoe. From over-excitement I slept but little, and employed my sleepless hours at night in going over in my mind what I had read on the preceding evening. The memory being always much more concentrated at night than in the day-time, I found these repetitions at night of paramount use. Thus I succeeded in acquiring in half a year a thorough knowledge of the English language.

I then applied the same method to the study of French, the difficulties of which I overcame likewise in another six months. Of French authors I learned by heart the whole of Fenelon's Adventures de Télémaque and Bernardin de Saint Pierre's Paul et Virginie. This unremitting study had in the course of a single year strengthened my memory to such a degree, that the study of Dutch, Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese appeared very easy, and it did not take me more than six weeks to write and speak each of these languages fluently.

With the effect of the moist air of Holland, my complaint in the chest gradually disappeared during my first year's residence in Amsterdam, and it has never returned. But my passion for study caused me to neglect my mechanical occupation in the office of Mr. F. C. Quien, especially as I began to consider it beneath me. My principals would give me no promotion; they probably thought that a person who shows his incapacity for the business of a servant in an office proves thereby his unfitness for any higher duties. At last, however, through the intercession of my worthy friends, Louis Stoll of Mannheim and J. H. Ballauf of Bremen, I had on the 1st of March, 1844, the good fortune to obtain a situation as correspondent and bookkeeper in the office of Messrs. B. H. Schröder & Co. of Amsterdam, who engaged me at a salary of 1200 francs (£48); but when they saw my zeal, they added 800 francs a year more by way of encouragement. This generosity, for which I shall ever be grateful to them, was in fact the foundation of my prosperity; for, as I thought that I could make myself still more usefull by a knowledge of Russian, I set to work to learn that language also. But the only Russian books I could procure were an old grammar, a lexicon, and a bad translation of Les Aventures de Télémaque. In spite of all my enquiries, I could not find a teacher of Russian, since, with the exception of the Russian Vice-Consul, Mr. Tannenberg, who would not consent to give me lessons, there was not one in Amsterdam who understood a word of the language. So I betook myself to the study of it without a master, and, with the help of the grammar, I learned the Russian letters and their pronunciation in a few days. Then, following my old method, I began to write short stories of my own composition, and to learn them by heart. As I had no one to correct my work, it was, no doubt, extremely bad; but I tried at the same time to correct my mistakes by the practical exercise of learning the Russian Aventures de Télémaque by heart. It occurred to me that I should make more progress if I had some one to whom I could relate the adventures of Telemachus; so I hired a poor Jew for four francs a week, who had to come every evening for two hours to listen to my Russian recitations, of which he did not understand a syllable.

As the ceilings of the rooms of the common houses in Holland consist of single boards, people on the ground-floor can hear what is said in the third storey. My recitations therefore, delivered in a loud voice, annoyed the other tenants, who complained to the landlord, and twice while studying the Russian language I was forced to change my lodgings. But these inconveniences did not diminish my zeal, and in the course of six weeks I wrote my first Russian letter to Mr. Vasili Plotnikoff, the London agent for the great indigo dealers, Messrs. M.P.N. Malutin Brothers, at Moscow, and I found myself able to converse fluently with him and the Russian merchants Matweieff and Froloff, when they came to Amsterdam for the indigo auctions. After I had completed my study of the Russian language, I began to occupy myself seriously with the literatures of the languages I had learned.

8. F.S.I. Levels

There can be no doubt about it, Schliemann's system worked. Most people however would say, is this the most direct way to language mastery? Can't this approach be made more efficient? The answer is of course yes. And to explain this, we need to examine the system by which the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) determines the language competence of an individual.

The FSI examination is based on six levels ranging from S-0 (no competence) to S-5 (equivalent to that of a native speaker). The crucial level however is S-3 which is really the first stage at which the speaker has good control of the language and can continue developing language competence without special study. I call this level minimal language working capacity.

To attain an S-3 in a foreign language is a real accomplishment and one which a learner who has attained this level can really feel proud of, though this should not by any means undervalue the attainment of the intermediate S-1 and S-2 levels. Furthermore, the development of these intermediate levels should be seen as targets in themselves and as steps along the way. These levels are summarized by the following self-test check list.

A CHECK LIST FOR SELF-APPRAISAL
OF SPEAKING PROFICIENCY

(All answers must be YES to achieve at least the level of proficiency listed on the left, except for four items at the S-3 level.)

		YES	NO
S-0+	Can you use a minimum of thirty words in appropriate contexts? (i.e., not just count or recite the days of the week).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
S-1	Can you tell someone how to get from here to the nearest hotel, restaurant, or post office?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Can you ask and tell the time of day, day of the week, date?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Can you order a simple meal?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Can you negotiate for a hotel room or a taxi ride at a just price?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Can you buy a needed item of clothing or a bus or train ticket?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Can you understand and respond correctly to form questions about your nationality, marital status, occupation, date and place of birth, etc.?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Can you make a social introduction and use appropriate leave-taking expressions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Can you use the language well enough to assist someone who does not know the language in coping with the situations or problems covered by the S-1 range?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
S-1+	Can you meet all S-1 requirements and at least three of the S-2 requirements listed below?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
S-2	Can you describe your present or most recent job or activity in some detail?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Can you give detailed information about your family, your house, the weather today?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Can you give or take simple messages over the telephone? (Forget the telephone, can you give or take simple messages?)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Can you hire an employee or arrange for special services, taking care of details such as salary, qualification, hours, special duties?(can you order a table from a carpenter?)

Can you give a brief autobiography including a statement of your immediate plans and hopes?

Can you describe the geography of the United States (or some other country) or familiar location?

Can you describe the basic structure of the United States government?

Can you describe the function and purpose of the organization you represent?

Do you feel confident that you understand what native speakers want to tell you about the above topics at least 80% of the time?

S-3

Are you afraid that you will misunderstand information given to you over the telephone?

(Answers should be YES)

Can you speak to a group of educated native speakers on a professional subject and be sure you are communicating what you want to, without obviously amusing or irritating them linguistically?

Can you listen, take notes, and summarize accurately a speech or an informal discussion on your area of special interests, heard on the radio or over a public address system?

Can you (on a social occasion) defend U.S. attitudes toward culture, race relations, or foreign aid from attack by an anti-American student or politician?

Can you cope with such trying linguistic situations as broken-down plumbing, an undeserved traffic ticket, a serious social or diplomatic blunder made by you or a colleague?

Can you follow connected discourse on a non-technical subject, e.g., a panel discussion on the status of women?

Can you serve as an informal interpreter on subjects in the S-3 range?

Do you feel that you have a professional command (rather than just a practical one) of the language?

S-3+ Can you meet all S-3 requirements and at least three of these S-4 requirements?

S-4 In professional discussions, is your vocabulary always extensive and precise enough to enable you to convey your exact meaning?

Are you able to alter your speech deliberately, depending upon whether you are talking to university professors, close friends, employees, etc.?

Can you serve as an informal interpreter for a U.S. senator or cabinet official on all diplomatic and social functions?

Do you practically never make a grammatical mistake?

Do you think you can carry out any job assignment as effectively in the language as in English?

S-4+ In discussions on all subjects, is your vocabulary always extensive and precise enough to enable you to convey your exact meaning?

S-5 Do native speakers react to you as they do to each other?

Do you sometimes feel more at home in the language than in English?

Can you do mental arithmetic in the language without slowing down?

Is your vocabulary at least as extensive and precise as in English?

Do you consider yourself a native speaker of the language?

The difference between S-2 and S-3 is really that between knowing a language so that you can use it in any context, and knowing enough of the language so that you can use it in a fixed context. This means that the skills listed under S-1 and S-2 can be specifically targeted for. That is, it is possible to define a specific set of contexts: biography, greetings, simple messages, etc. in which it is possible to build a working language competence. This can be accomplished by developing a listening ability for the range number of sentences which are likely to appear in that context and a speaking capacity for the specific skills.

By specifically targeting for these goals, it should be possible to achieve an S-1 after 50-60 hours of study (assuming that this time is being used effectively) and it should also be possible to achieve an S-2 after another 100 hours. One of the important things to remember about this phase of language study is that performance rather than competence is being measured, thus it is not how much you know, but how well you use it that counts. This is why context is so very important, for comprehension is as much anticipating what is to be said (context) as it is understanding the content of what is being said. Thus, "hanging in there" and making the effort to communicate (even if by gesture) is at least half the battle.

But while these targets are goals in themselves which the learner can aim for and accomplish, they can also be seen as steps on the way toward real language competence (S-3). The internalizing of a few hundred sentences can serve as the basic corpus of messages which can be expanded and applied to other situations.

In the communications handbook that accompanies this text, this has been the design: the first lessons are aimed at S-1 skills, while the later lessons aim at S-2 skills, so that by the time the book is completed, the learner should achieve an S-2 level and be well on the way to achieving an S-3 ability. Though in all honesty that level will require continued study.

Earlier we suggested ways of developing listening comprehension, what follows is a way of completing the use of the text, the learning of how to produce it.

9. Memorizing a Text (Layering)

Memorization of a text can be viewed as a sequential process beginning with the first word and going on to the next and so forth. Yet there is another way to view the process, and that is to see the text as a series of layers. For example, in learning to comprehend a text (discussed earlier) several steps were outlined, each one gleaning more information from the text, building up in the learner's mind layer upon layer of information about the text. When a learner has learned to comprehend a text, the job of memorizing the text is already half completed. The following steps are listed below:

- A. Go over the text sentence by sentence (phrase by phrase and even word by word if necessary) with your tutor to develop as accurate a pronunciation as possible.

One procedure for doing this is for the learner to attempt to say the sentence. If the sentence is correct the tutor will say that it is correct (or signal so by not saying anything); if the sentence is incorrect, the tutor will repeat the sentence. This should continue until the learner at that point has done his/her best.

The major problem at this stage is the generosity of the tutor. The tutor really has to be encouraged to be critical. Thus the learner must repeatedly ask the tutor if that is the real way it is said, or whether it can be said better and should show enthusiasm in the tutor's pointing out these fine points. Otherwise the tutor will be inclined to let pronunciation slide.

- B. Once the text has been gone over carefully, the text should be repeated sentence by sentence until a normal rate of speed is achieved. This can be practiced using a variety of techniques. Repeating the sentences after the tutor (or a tape recorder), along with the tutor or by tracking.

Tracking is a technique of repeating a sentence after about a second's delay. This has the effect of separating the listening part of the task from the production part of the task.

- C. To be sure you are aware of all the distinctions, the learner should practice writing the sentence down after hearing it. This dictation drill should be done sentence by sentence, and in beginning stages, the sentence should be repeated as many as three times.
- D. Writing down the text from memory is also a good exercise. This is a form of self-test which will give the learner a good idea of what is known and what isn't.
- E. This stage should be followed by the learner attempting to say the text from memory with the tutor prompting at first.
- F. The task is complete when the learner can rattle off the entire text at a normal rate of speed.
- G. This exercise can be followed up by a question-answer drill in which the tutor asks questions in such a way that the memorized sentences will be the answers to the questions.

NOTE: Initial texts do not have to be long, as few as five sentences. But the learner should try to increase the length of these texts as soon as possible.

10. Self-Instructed and Learner-Centered Approaches

There are a number of reasons for emphasizing this kind of approach to language acquisition.

- 1. African languages are usually under such low demand for foreign language instruction that, teachers are unavailable, untrained or at best minimally trained. This means that when a tutor is hired, that person will never make the teaching of the targeted language his profession (unlike French, Chinese or Russian) and will probably be given a crash course in how to teach the language. Inevitably, this person will feel awkward because of the expectations.

placed on him/her and the inadequate training given. This situation will create an avoidable tension in the classroom.

2. It is the learner who is the person who will either profit or suffer from the experience. It is the learner who has the most at stake. A successful language learning program will lead to a deeper and a more effective experience for the volunteer or other language learner. This being the case, it would be better to concentrate efforts on helping the learner to learn rather than on helping the teacher to teach.
3. Many language training programs allow insufficient time, regardless of how that time is used to allow for the achievement of a minimal speaking competence. This means that serious learners will have to continue their learning outside the classroom anyway.
4. Learners trained in a teacher-centered program in which they have little control in how the class will be run, are ill equipt to make the transition to learning on their own.

For these reasons, many educators are moving to learner-centered approaches. These approaches place more attention on the learner, giving the learner the sophistication in the types of learning techniques that are available, the ways drills should be run and so forth. While these approaches have their own drawbacks and may be slower during the initial stages, they do have a number of advantages.

1. Tutors are released from their anxiety. Their responsibilities are consonant with their training and experience. They are responsible for (1) providing a model of the target language (2) correcting learner responses and (3) running drills which the learner will help to establish. The tutor is not responsible for preparing lessons, for the success of the student, or for grading the student's progress. Thus the tutor is only responsible for what any native speaker of a language is capable of doing. This situation eliminates the tension of the classroom that arises when these responsibilities are placed on the tutor. As a result the relationship between tutor and learner **36** more of cooperation rather than apprehension.

2. The learner being placed fully in charge of learning no longer must bear the burden of suffering under a tutor whose methods the learner objects to. If the methods being used are unsuitable, they can be changed.

3. Given insufficient time in a training program, learners will be forced to switch to a learner-centered program anyway if they are going to continue their language learning, so why not begin a learner-centered emphasis from the start?

4. A learner who has experienced learner-center training from the start, will be well prepared to make the transition program to learning on their own.

However, learner-centered language training requires a considerable amount of training of the learner in the techniques and approaches of language learning. This cannot only be done in the abstract, but requires supervision by an experienced language teacher and ideally a textbook which is oriented toward this approach to language learning such as the following textbook. In the communications handbook accompanying this volume, each lesson is both aimed at the learner (though it can be used by a classroom teacher or a partially trained tutor) and contains detailed instructions as to how drills should be run and dialogs used. It presents the grammatical notes in terms which an untrained learner can understand and contrasts the target language with English so that the learner can see exactly where the major points of contrasts. Finally the handbook contains a set of suggestions for self-study, procedures which the learner can carry out on his/her own to continue language study.

11.1 Tutor Selection

When making the transition from a formal language training program to a totally learner-centered program, the first major task will be to locate a tutor who will be willing to help you.

In this regard, it is important for the learner to remember that a number of factors are involved in the tutor learner relationship. Some of these are listed as follows:

1. Personality. There is always the possibility of a personality clash. That for some reason the tutor and the learner do not hit it off, or for that matter they may. Factors here may be age, sex, education and cultural background as well as pure personality differences.
2. Relationship. In most cases, a learner-tutor arrangement will necessarily develop into a deeper relationship involving mutual reciprocations based on available resources. The learner will be given things, have things done for him/her as well as being informed about the workings of the community. In return, the learner can be expected to return the favor in terms of textbooks or school fees if the tutor is a student, money or other gifts. This relationship can be controlled by both parties, and it is in general sound advice to deepen the relationship slowly.
3. Knowledge of language. It is commonly accepted that the real language is known by old people, and not by young schoolboys and girls, therefore, it is often said that if you want to learn the real language it is best to contact the old people. This approach too, has its problems, however, for it may well be that old people do not know English or any other medium of common communication, therefore the learner may actually at first engage a tutor who knows English.
4. Knowledge of how to write the language. For most Liberian languages, a writing system has been established, and which is in use by at least some members of the community. If this is so, it is preferable to find a tutor who can read and write in the target language; for it will help you in recording texts and writing down sentences. You can even ask your tutor to prepare texts, dialogs and sentences for you to study.
5. Reputation of the tutor. Not everyone in the town has the same esteem in the eyes of the community. To some extent the esteem of the tutor will rub off on the learner and vice versa.

These points suggest that in engaging a tutor that one should proceed cautiously. The learner should wait until he/she is established in town or until sufficient contacts are made before showing interest in a tutor. Then one should ask respected members of the community who might be recommended. (Hiring someone without a recommendation is a real gamble.) One might ask other volunteers, teachers, your landlord, village head, pastor or other such persons.

It is always good to not commit one's self too soon. That is by saying that the period is temporary, for a few weeks only or that one wants to try a number of people, one can avoid the problem of being stuck with someone who isn't working or of the embarrassment of having to fire someone.

Finally, when the learner has found a tutor with whom he/she feels confident, the arrangement can be made more permanent. It is only at this time that the learner should gradually allow the relationship to deepen.

11.2 Organizing a Learning Schedule

The most important point to be made here is consistency. That is whatever program the learner decided to set up, it should be followed religiously. It is far better to maintain a modest commitment of only a few hours or even less than to set a schedule of learning that is too ambitious to keep. The learner should endeavor to establish learning times that are unlikely to be disturbed by special events, and in the event that they are, the language session should be rescheduled.

The second most important thing is to structure the sessions so that the learner and the tutor are aware of what is supposed to take place during the session and what is supposed to be done by the learner as preparation or follow-up. The following schedule is designed for a learning session involving three contact periods per week. This structure is probably too ambitious for the learner who is also holding down an 8 hour job, but if followed will allow the learner to progress rapidly. In the event that the learner has less time to commit to the learning of the language, the schedule can be pared down.

A well-written language textbook ought to have a large number of drills that can be used in the self-instructional mode. Most such textbooks are organized so that a chapter be completed each week by a class meeting five hours per week. The following outline suggests one way in which a textbook chapter can be organized into a weekly lesson plan.

11.3 Use of a Spoken Dialog

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Class
Period
#1 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Listen to the dialog with book closed, for comprehension. Record the dialog with a cassette tape recorder for later use. (2) Listen to the dialog, this time following the book (listening for word-divisions and other phonological cues). (3) Analyze the dialog for content. Work with your tutor if necessary so that you understand the full meaning and structure of each sentence. |
| Home-
work
#1 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Listen to the dialog on the cassette recorder for comprehension so that each sentence is correctly identified and each word is heard as a separate entity. (2) Repeat the above as often as is necessary. If the structure of the dialog is unclear, return to the written text, following the spoken dialog word by word until it becomes clear. (3) Write the dialog several times, copying directly from the text (not from memory). (4) Enter new vocabulary items into your notebook. |
| Class
Period
#2 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Listen again to the dialog spoken by the tutor. (2) Practice saying each sentence with the tutor (using a backward buildup if necessary) until each sentence of the dialog is said flawlessly at a normal rate. (3) Practice dialog with tutor or with other learners in the class. |

- Home-work #2 (1) Memorize dialog for following class. For beginners this dialog will be quite short (3-4 lines) but by the end of the first year, these dialogs will enlarge to about 20 lines per week.
- Class Period #3 (1) Use the dialog in class. Remember to simulate the context of the dialog completely; stand, sit, look the other person in the eye at the appropriate times, use props.
- (2) Develop variations on the dialog using word substitution or sentence "transformation" as appropriate to your level of knowledge.

11.4 Use of Written Texts

Written texts should consist of short (ten-sentence) descriptions, stories relevant to a specific context. As the course progresses, the texts will become longer.

- Class Period #1 (1) Presentation, recording and analysis of the text.
- Home-work #1 (1) Listening comprehension of the text (sentences as units; words as discrete entities) and the writing out of the text (not from memory).
- Class Period #2 (1) Practice in hearing the text with phonemic accuracy, practice in saying the text at normal speed with phonemic accuracy.
- Home-work #2 (1) Memorization of the text (now that it is understood both syntactically and phonetically). This will involve writing it out, saying it orally, and tracking the taped version to achieve normal speed and timing.
- Class Period #3 (1) Recitation of text orally and/or writing it down from memory.
- Homework #3 (1) Correction of noted errors.

11.5 Use of structural drills

All drills should be taped for home listening and practice.

1) Phonological drills:

Basic phonological transcription can be learned through dictation exercises. Errors in these dictation exercises will reveal problem areas in phonemic discrimination.

In consultation with the language coordinator and the textbook, discrimination drills, including minimal pair exercises can be prescribed, recorded and used, both in class and at home.

It is important to remember that learners must be able to hear phonemic differences before they can be expected to articulate them.

Once phonemic differences are mastered, accuracy can be further improved through transcription exercises. Articulation can be further improved through dialog and text repetition, tracing and memorization.

2) Syntactic Drills:

Each drill begins with listening comprehension. It is important that learners comprehend what is going on: the purpose of the drill, the meaning of the words and constructions involved, and what they are supposed to do with it.

Once the drill is understood, learners should go through the drill, repeating each sentence after the tutor if necessary until normal speed and accurate pronunciations are achieved.

The drill is run according to the specifications given in the textbook. Answers and responses must be given at normal speed. If that is impossible, either go back to the preceding step or abandon the drill and consult with the language coordinator. The drill should be practiced until it is carried out perfectly, though this mastery need not be achieved during the first running of the drill in class.

3) Vocabulary:

A minimum of 40 lexical concepts should be acquired each week. These may come from the text or from the generalized vocabulary lists.

Several types of drills have been developed for the learning of vocabulary in the Communications Handbook companion volume. Space does not permit a detailed statement of these drills, but the following list is indicative of the types involved.

- (a) vocabulary
- (b) flash cards with pictures on one side
- (c) related vocabulary lists
- (d) the sens-it-cell

12. Conclusion

This chapter has summarized the thinking, strategy and methodology involved in the study of a foreign language and has gone into the planning and construction of these learning materials. It is presented here for the express purpose of providing the learner with a general understanding of the task and the way to proceed.

CHAPTER III

INSTRUCTIONS TO TUTORS

1. General Remarks

The chances are that if you have been asked to tutor someone in a Liberian language, you probably have never taught your language to a foreigner before. If this is the case, you may be very worried because you are not sure about what to do. If you are worried, continue to read this chapter, for it contains a set of suggestions about what is important in a language learning situation.

2. Preliminary Considerations

Even before you get started, there are some important considerations, the first is the organization of the learning situation. The learning sessions have to be considered important by both the tutor and the learner. To emphasize the importance of these sessions, it is important to "mark" these learning sessions as follows.

A. Time:

The sessions should have a specific beginning time and a closing time. These times should be kept the same from week to week. There should also be a penalty for lateness and no matter what the reason, missed sessions should be made up.

B. Place:

The sessions should be held in a specified place which is considered good for learning. Tables and straight chairs are considered better than sofas and beds. Classrooms are better than homes, but homes are better for most people than bars.

C. Agenda:

There should be an agenda or class plan of what is to be done during each period. This can be prepared either by the learner or by the tutor, depending on what has been arranged. An agenda should contain a list of topics to be covered, including: (1) pages in the textbook, (2) correction of homework, (3) practice of dialog, (4) taping of dialogs, (5) vocabulary study, (6) free conversation and so forth. These agendas (technically called "lesson plans") should be stored somewhere (a file, notebook, etc.) as a record of accomplishment during the course of study.

D. Preparation/Followup

A learner should expect to do out-of-class preparation and followup for each session. This may involve studying the dialog, grammar, cultural notes, taped aspects of the class session, vocabulary work, preparation for class discussions or taking excursions into the language community to practice what has been learned. Whatever the event, the tutor and learner should agree to the preparation and followup activities, preferably in writing (see agenda) before the end of the preceding class.

3. The Role of the Tutor

In most cases, the tutor is not required to be an experienced language teacher or someone who knows a great deal about the grammar of the language being studied. Rather, what is expected of the tutor is simply what follows:

- A. An ability to speak your language clearly
- B. An ability to be patient
- C. An ability to point out and correct mistakes.

4. Classroom Rules of Order

There are a number of rules of running a class, which if followed, will help to make the class situation useful and productive.

- A. Always have a session agenda and stick to the topic.
(see 2C above)
- B. Always begin on time and stay within agreed upon time blocks.
- C. Emphasize the use of the target language. The tutor should try at first to explain things, directions, concepts and so forth in the target language using English only if absolutely necessary (the use of English is usually a hinderance rather than an aid to learning another language).
- D. Drills should be run smoothly with no delays or interruptions. If the learners are taking too long to respond, it will be necessary to simplify or change the drill. The instructions for running each drill are given along with each drill in the communications handbook. A drill can be simplified either by skipping the drill altogether or by eliminating some of its complexity. One way to do this is to treat the drill like a dialog to be learned (see instructions for learning dialogs in the communications handbook). Once familiar with the content of the drill, it can then be reintroduced as a drill; this time with better results.

Another way is to have the students read the drill from the textbook, though the normal way to run a drill is without student use of textbooks. These drills should also be recorded onto tape so that they can be replayed as one of the homework activities.

If you and the class are still having trouble with a drill, ask the language supervisor or whoever is in charge of the program to help you.

While many tutors think that they have to provide more than this, this is all that is truly necessary. But, at the same time, the ability to do these things is very important. Because of this, the above points are discussed in more detail below.

A. Speaking Clearly

When you speak your language to your students, you should try to speak at a normal rate of speed. This means that you should not speak too rapidly as if you were in a hurry, or too slowly, as if you were talking to a small child.

B. Being Patient

It is important to remember that learning a language is a slow process because it requires a lot of learning: not only new words, but new ways of saying things which are very different from the way that the learner is used to saying things. You will find that a learner will forget much of what you tell him and that is why you must repeat things frequently: dialogs, stories, drills and so forth. From the viewpoint of the tutor, it appears as though the learners are not very smart. This is why it is so necessary for the tutor to be very patient with the learner.

C. Correcting Responses

While it is important to be patient, it is also necessary to correct errors in the responses that learners give. If they say something incorrectly, they should be told that it is incorrect and be asked to say it again correctly. One way to do this is to simply repeat the response correctly following an incorrect response. The learner hearing this will then correct his response following the model of the tutor. If it is a matter of pronunciation, and the student is unable to pronounce it correctly after two or three tries, then the tutor should tell the learner that the pronunciation is still incorrect, but that it will be possible for him/her to correct it later on. Remember, if the student is shown that his pronunciation of certain sounds is incorrect, the chances are that the student will learn to pronounce the sounds correctly in time.

CHAPTER IV

REFERENCE GRAMMAR OF MĀNIYAKĀ

A. THE SOUND SYSTEM OF MĀNIKAYĀ

The Contrastive Sounds of Māniyakā

Every language has a finite set of discrete, contrastive sounds called phonemes. Combinations or strings of these phonemes serve to represent the various words of the language which can themselves be strung together to make sentences.

Māniyakā phonemes are of two major types: segmental and suprasegmental. Segmental phonemes are divided into two major classes, consonants and vowels.

1. Consonants

1.1 The chart on the following page lists the consonant sounds of Māniyakā and, when appropriate, their English approximates.

THE LIBERIAN MANDINGO/MĀNIYAKĀ ALPHABET:

THE CONSONANTS

Letter	English approximate	Mandingo example	Translation of example
b	<u>b</u> eat	buku	'book'
c	<u>c</u> hime	cama	'between'
d	<u>d</u> ig	dunu	'rooster'
f	<u>f</u> ish	fa	'father'
gb	-----	gbāgbā	'dust'
*h	<u>h</u> ope	hakili	'knowledge'
j	<u>j</u> udge	joona	'early'
k	<u>k</u> ite	kami	'guinea fowl'
l	<u>l</u> ight	lulu	'star'
m	<u>m</u> eat	malo	'rice'
n	<u>n</u> ear	nene	'cold'
ny	<u>ny</u> on	nyi	'good'
*ŋ	<u>ŋ</u> ing	ŋalā	'mat'
*p	<u>p</u> op	pitiki	'shop'
*r	-----	rumu	'room'
s	<u>s</u> ee	sene	'farm'
t	<u>t</u> aut	tā	'ten'
w	<u>w</u> in	wuse	'potato'
y	<u>y</u> earn	yano	'here'
*z	<u>z</u> ip	zipu	'shirt'

*The 5 starred consonants appear rarely and most often are in borrowed words.

The Liberian Mandingo/Māniyakā /r/ is not directly equivalent to the English /r/. The English /r/ is generally described as a liquid sound. The Mandingo /r/ is more similar to that used in Spanish, and may sometimes sound like a /d/. The sound is made by tapping the tip of the tongue against the area directly behind the front teeth.

1.2 Most Māniyakā consonants are pronounced essentially the same as the one's they correspond to in English. Below are some examples using these sounds in Māniyakā words.

b. ba...mother	j. jawa...onion	p. pipo...prayer gown, male
balokeya...talking place	jo...god	pōdi...nail (for building)
biwōlo,...sixty	ji...water	pese...to weigh
c. cama...between	k. kala...pencil	r. re...hook (for fishing)
coya...ugly	kesu...box	rumu...room
cəmənu...old man	kini...rice	s. sa...snake
d. dagbolo...lip	l. lafē...bed	sene...to plant
duuma...on the ground	lasili...bunch	sisī...smoke
duniya...world	lu...yard	t. taa...to go
f. fa...father	m. mina...deer	timi...to cross
fasola...vein	mifē...drink	tu...forest
fila...two	mulu...knife	w. wōsū...a type of tree
g. Gola...Gola	n. nō...dirty	wula...afternoon
Grebo...Grebo	nū...nose	wuli...to boil
gb. gbe...open area	nee...iron	y. yeno...there
gbā...okra	ny. nyama...in front of	yano...here
gbi...owl	nyaye...to understand	ye...with
h. hakili...intelligence	nyi...good	z. zanu...rabbit
hara...peace	o. ŋalā...mat	Zorzorwu...Zorzer
halijehi...heaven	ŋalā...street urchin	

1.21 With one exception, Māniyakā has no contrastive r, that is, l and r are not distinguished from one another. Therefore, it is common to hear a word pronounced using either an l or an r, and for there to be no difference in meaning for the two pronunciations.

The Māniyakā consonant, gb, is not found in English and may cause difficulty for a speaker of English.

Some of the sounds in Māniyakā have English equivalents but have different distributional restrictions in Māniyakā. For this reason, they also may cause difficulty to the speaker of English. These sounds are ny and ŋ.

1.22 gb is an implosive "b" and is easily confused with a plain b. To pronounce an implosive consonant requires that the air be drawn into the mouth rather than pushed out as for most consonants. gb is formed by preparing to say g and then closing the lips at the same time as saying b. The learner can develop an ability to discriminate between gb and b by using the following table as a drill. See section K.33 of Lesson 1 for additional examples.

ba	goat	gba	kitchen
bā	finish	gbā	okra
bi	today	gbi	owl
basi	medicine	gbasi	hit
bele	small amount	gbele	different

1.23 ny is the sound in the English words onion and canyon. Unlike its English counterpart, the Māniyakā sound ny may occur at the beginning of a word. It is sometimes confused with n.

nyi	good	ni	when
nya	eye	na	to come
nyene	urine	nene	cold
nyo	corn	no	to stop

1.24 ŋ is the ng sound in the English word singing and coming. The Māniyakā sound ŋ, unlike the English one, may occur at the beginning of a word. It seems to have limited usage in Māniyakā.

ŋalā	mat
nalā	street urchin

1.25 The Māniyakā sounds h, p, and z, appears rarely in the language. The words they are found in are generally borrowed words, that is, words taken from a different language. Māniyakā contains words from many different languages. Words related to items introduced to Africa by Western cultures often are called by a word which sounds similar to an English or French counterpart. Words related to Islamic religion are borrowed from Arabic. Words that refer to other ethnic groups or items originally from these groups in Liberia are generally borrowed from one of the indigenous Liberian languages.

2. Vowels

While Māniyakā vowels are similar to those used in English, they are not identical. For more details consult Chapter VI which is entitled Learning the Sound System of Mande Languages. The Māniyakā vowels are i, e, ɛ, a, u, o, and ɔ.

i.	jii	to go down	a.	saa	sheep	ɔ.	mɔɔ	person
	bilini	pigeon		fala	to tear		kɔlɔ	old
	kini	cooked rice		jawa	onion		bɔɔ	dish
e.	se	to be able	u.	duu	ground			
	gbe	field		kunu	yesterday			
	nee	tongue		mulu	knife			
ɛ.	fɛ	calabash	o.	dolo	beer			
	bɛɛ	small amount		boo	feces			
	sɛɛ	farm		ɔlo	hand			

3. Suprasegmental Features

Tone, long vowels, nasalized vowels.

3.1 Tone

Māniyakā is a tone language which means that two words can be distinguished from one another according to the pitch of the voice. There are a large number of words in Māniyakā that have identical consonants and vowels but they constitute a minimal pair with respect to the tones that each has.

Māniyakā has two tones which are referred to as HIGH and LOW. Low tones are represented throughout the book as a line drawn under the appropriate vowel. High toned vowels are left unmarked.

dunu	load	<u>dunu</u>	rooster
gbāgbā	dust	gbāgbā	bracelet
sē	leg	sē	bridge
so	horse	<u>so</u>	town
wula	afternoon	<u>wula</u>	forest

As it can be difficult to distinguish the tone of a word used in isolation, after learning a new word, it is best to hear the word in a sentence.

3.2 Long Vowels

Māniyakā has both long and short vowels. A long vowel is indicated by a doubling of the vowel letter, e.g., i vs. ii. Long vowels, as the term implies, have a longer duration than short vowels. Long vowels may be nasalized.

ii.	j̄ii	to descend	.uu.	duu	ground
	d̄iini	small		t̄uu	muscle
	k̄ūtii	leader		l̄uūlu	five
ee.	nee	tongue	oo.	sōō	price
	keeya	sickle		boo	feces
	seelā	needle		doobō	barr
ee.	nee	metal	oo.	bōō	swamp
	j̄ee	fish		l̄ōōfe	market
	tee	cut		nyōō	together
aa.	saa	sheep			
	baabaa	termite			
	naani	four			

3.3 Nasalized Vowels

All Maniyaka vowels may occur in a nasalized form. These vowels are written as ĩ, ẽ, ẽ̃, ã, ũ, õ, and õ̃.

ĩ.	bĩ	fall	ã.	dã	comb (one's hair)
	fĩ	dark		sã	to buy
	ĩ	yes		tã	ten
ẽ.	dẽ	to hang up	ũ.	tũ	set (a bone)
	fẽ	thing		sũ	tree
	sẽ	bridge		kũ	head
ẽ̃	dẽ̃	child	õ.	bõ	house
	mẽ	hear		nõ	dirty
	bẽ	good		sõ	thief
õ	bõ	spill			
	sõ	liver			
	tõ	grasshopper			

3.31 A Note On Timing

Māniyakā is a syllable-timed tongue. This means that every syllable has the same duration as every other one (long vowels are considered to be two syllables.) In English this is not the case because English is a stress-timed language. This means that not all syllables have the same duration. Rather, English attempts to establish equal intervals between major stresses in the sentence. In the following sentences, the words went and store receive the major sentence stress.

The reader will note when saying the following sentences that it is necessary to speed up in the longer sentences to maintain the equal timing between stresses.

He went to the store.

He went to the new store.

He went quickly to the new store.

He went quickly to the new super store.

He went quicly to the big new super store.

Plural Formation - Culture Note

To form the plural in Mandingo, attach the suffix -lu to the end of a noun or noun phrase (more on the noun phrase later). The suffix is used only if there are three or more. The suffix has a low tone. The suffix is combined with alienable nouns in the following manner:

kala	"pencil"	kalalu	"pencils"
buku	"book"	bukulu	"books"

Inalienable nouns do not always use the plural suffix -lu. It is used when referring to two or more of the same body part on a single individual. For example:

n bolokoni	"my finger"	n bolokonilu	"my fingers"
i sē	"your leg"	i sēnu	"your legs"

The plural suffix -lu is not used with inalienable nouns if a single body part and two or more individuals are referred to. This usage differs from its English equivalent. The assumption is that each person has only one. For example:

n kā	"my throat"	mō kā	"our throats"
a nyaloya	"his face"	ai nyaloya	"their faces"

Notice that -lu is pronounced (and written here) as -nu if the noun ends with a nasal vowel. For example:

kolā	'light'	kolānu	'lights'
sē	'leg'	sēnu	'legs'

Placement of Numbers within the Noun Phrase

- a. The number immediately follows the noun in the following examples:

dɔɔmuso fila "two younger sisters"
wulini tā "ten dogs"

Note that when a number is present, the plural suffix -lu is not used.

- b. In more complex noun phrases, such as "four cups of rice", the number appears at the end of the phrase. For example:

tia lasili fila "two piles of peanuts"
fɔlɔtɔlɔ bɔlɔ wɔɔlɔ "six bags of peppers"

Numbers

In the Mandingo counting system, to form the numbers 30, 40, 50, ... 90, the prefix bi- is added to the numbers 3, 4, 5, ... 9; that is, bisawa, binaani, biluulu, ... nikɔnɔ. (See the vocabulary list at the beginning of this lesson for the complete list.) The number, 20, is translated as the word, mũã, not as "bifila".

Number as Head Noun

Numbers can appear as the subject of a sentence in Māniyakā as they do in English.

Fe tā ye duuma.

Tā ye duuma.

Ten calabashes are on the ground.

Ten are on the ground.
or There are ten on the ground.

Ordinal numbers

Ordinal numbers in Mandingo are formed by adding the suffix -na to the cardinal form of a number. For example:

fila	"two"	tã	"ten"
filana	"second"	tãna	"tenth"

The only exception to the above is the word "first". In Mandingo jɔɔna means "first", NOT kelēna. The word for "last" is labã.

Time Expressions

To express the English concepts of "in the (time of day)", one must use a postpositional phrase as the following examples demonstrate.

sɔɔmãda_la	in the morning
su_lo	in the evening
wula_la	in the afternoon

ka na ne X_la le ni

The phrase ka na ne X_la le ni, may be translated into English as "to come (time expression) ago". X represents a time expression like 'ten months' or 'five days'. When used in a sentence, the verb requires the suffix -ni, this is the same suffix that was described in the Grammar and Culture Notes of lessons 4 and 8.

N nani yano a kalo naani_la le ni.	I came here four months ago.
Ai-nani te Labiya a sã kelē_na le ni.	They didn't come to Liberia a year ago.

The negative is formed by placing the negative auxiliary te after the verb, nani.

Notice that:

1. if there is a locative phrase (naming 'where' the person came to) that the phrase immediately follows the verb
2. there the pronoun a immediately precedes the time expression.

Days of the Week

The word lõ, 'day', is used when forming the days of the week in Mandingo. The word for 'Saturday', does not require the use of lõ.

jumasilõ*	Sunday
tenelõ	Monday
talalõ	Tuesday
alabalõ	Wednesday
alamisalõ	Thursday
jumalõ	Friday
sibili	Saturday

Adjectives

Formation

Adjectives in Mandingo follow the noun and require the suffix -ni. For example:

Ji sumayanj.	The water is cold.
Māgolo diyani.	The mango is good/pleasing/sweet.

The negative of the above sentences is formed by using the auxiliary te. The auxiliary appears after the adjective. For example:

Nyo diyani.	The corn is sweet.
Nyo diyani te.	The corn is not sweet.

An exception to the above is the adjective nyi "good". It uses the auxiliary ka in the positive sense; the auxiliary appears between the noun and nyi. In the negative the auxiliary ma is used; it also appears between the noun and nyi. For example:

Mātiliē ka nyi.	The lemon is good.
Mātilie ma nyi.	The lemon is not good.

Past Tense

Adjectives form the past tense by using the auxiliary tæε in the positive sense and the auxiliary tite in the negative sense. These auxiliaries appear after the adjective. For example:

<u>K</u> afe gbani.	The coffee is hot.
<u>K</u> afe gbani tæε.	The coffee was hot.
<u>K</u> afe gbani tε.	The coffee isn't hot.
<u>K</u> afe gbani tite.	The coffee wasn't hot.

Modifiers

The adverbs bale and kubē "very" and kuyu "too" may be used to modify adjectives. In a sentence they appear after any auxiliary. For example:

<u>N</u> a komuni kuyu.	The sauce is too hot.
<u>N</u> a komuni tæε bale.	The sauce was very hot.
<u>N</u> a komuni tε kubē.	The sauce isn't very hot.

jā, jāya

The adjective jā/jāya is used to mean both "tall" and "far". The meaning is distinguished by the structure of the sentence. For example:

<u>A</u> _ma jāyani.	It is far. (Lit., To-it-is far.)
<u>A</u> _ma jāyani tε.	It is not far. (Lit., To-it-is far-not)

versus

<u>A</u> jāyani.	She is tall.
<u>A</u> jāyani tε.	He is not tall.

ba

Ba may be translated as 'many, lots of'. It functions as an adjective and follows the noun it modifies.

Dē ba ye Fanta bolo.

Fanta has lots of children.

In some instances, it may be translated as 'very'; for example:

A sāye ba le ni.

She is very old.

Placement of o

O, 'that' appears in front of the noun it modifies, e.g.,

N nato o waati.

I will come at that time.

This differs from the normal placement of adjectives, which is after the noun it modifies.

X we Yla

When giving instructions in Maniyaka, it is common to repeat information. One commonly used structure is X we Yla, which means "after X has Y-ed."

Ji na sitala.

The water boiled.

Ji we sitala, i be se k'a mĩ.

After the water has boiled, you can drink it.

Physical Needs

Formation

To express the English concepts of a person being hot, cold, hungry, thirsty or tired in Māndingo, the structure X ye Y_la "Y is X" (lit., X-is-Y-to) is used. The negative sense of the structure is expressed as X tē Y_la "Y is not X". For example:

Tala y'a_la.	He is hot.
Sunɔ ye Musa_la.	Musa is tired.
Jilɔ tē Fanta_la.	Fanta is not thirsty.
Kɔgɔ tē n_na.	I'm not hungry.

Past Tense

To form the past tense for states of physical need, the auxiliary tē is used for the positive sense and the auxiliary titē for the negative sense. For example:

Tala tē a ba_la.	Her mother was hot.
Nene titē n kɔlɔmuso_la.	My older sister was not cold.

Demonstrative Adjectives

The equivalents of English 'this one', 'that one', 'these', and 'those' are mī kelē, wo kelē, mulu and wulu respectively. They function much like their English counterparts.

Alienable Possession

The majority of nouns in Mandingo are alienable, that is, they are not considered intimately related to the possessor. With nouns this possessive form is made by using the connector ya. For example:

Seku ya <u>bõ</u>	Seku's house
Hawa ya <u>buku</u>	Hawa's book

The same connector is used with pronouns but like the ye in verb phrases it combines with some of the pronouns. While it is helpful to know how these forms arise it may be easiest to just memorize the forms as given.

na <u>buku</u>	my book
i ya <u>buku</u>	your (sing) book
a <u>buku</u>	her/his book
mwa <u>bukulu</u>	our books
aya <u>bukulu</u>	your (plur.) books
<u>aya bukulu</u>	their books

Inalienable Possession

As mentioned in Lesson 1, there are two types of possession in Mandingo, alienable and inalienable. Inalienable nouns include body parts, names for family members, and a few miscellaneous nouns. To mark inalienable possession the following pronoun forms are used.

n	'my'	mõ	'our'
i	'your, singular'	ai	'your, plural'
a	'her, his, its'	<u>ai</u>	'their'

The pronouns are combined with nouns in the following manner:

n kũ	"my head"	mõ nee	"our tongues"
i bõlo	"your hand"	ai kõ	"your backs"
a kõnõ	"her stomach"	<u>ai si</u>	"their hair"

ka kã

The phrase ka kã is translated into English as "must, should, ought to". It is followed by the word ka and the verb of the sentence. The negative, "must not, should not", requires the auxiliary ma.

I ka kã ka taa lakolila.

You must go to school.

I ma kã ka taa lakolila.

You must not go to school.

ka lõ

The past tense of the verb lõ "to know" is used to indicate both the present and past tense English translations. So when lõ is used in a sentence its meaning might be unclear. For example:

N k'a lõ.

and

I know him.

I knew him.

Generally, the intended meaning will be clear from the context in which the sentence is said.

ka se

The verb se, meaning "to be able" or "can", requires the auxiliary bɛ in the present tense, positive sense.

A bɛ se ka buku sã.

She can sell the book.

Fanta tɛ se k'a fo.

Fanta can't say it.

ka kɔ

The verb means 'to want, need'. It is unusual in that it often does not take the -la suffix in the present tense. Check with your tutor for local usage.

ka fe "to want" in complex sentences

In Lesson 6, the verb "to want" was expressed as ka ko. This item is used only in simple sentences, such as Fanta ye malo di ko "Fanta wants some rice." To express "to want" in more complex sentences, such as "Fanta wants to go to school" ka fe must be used followed by the auxiliary connector ka.

Fanta a fe ka taa lakoli_la. Fanta wants (it) to go to school.

Ai a fe ka ya sene_lo. They want to come to your farm.

A must appear after the subject for the sentence to be correct. The phrase reads, literally, "They want it...", the "it" referring to the information following the auxiliary ka. Note that the verbs appearing after ka do not require any tense markers. Negation and tense is expressed in the first part of the phrase. For example:

Fanta t'a fe ka dōni ke. Fanta doesn't want to eat.
or Fanta wants to not eat.

Mamadi tee a fe ka taa Mamadi wanted to bring the book.
buku_le.

Abu tite a fe ka malo tibi. Abu didn't want to cook the rice.

As you can see, ka fe forms its past tense as described in Grammar Note L2. "To want" is a state of being.

2. The Present Progressive

To express the equivalent of the English 'he is ...ing', referring to an activity that is in progress, one generally adds the suffix -la (-na after a verb ending in a nasal vowel) to the verb; for example:

ka kalā 'to read' E kalāna. 'She is reading.'

Some verbs require that the suffix -li be added to the verb before the -la suffix. Because there is no way to predict which verbs take the -li suffix, they must be memorized. Examples are:

ka sebe 'to write' E sebelila. 'She is writing.'

ka tibi 'to cook' E tibilila. 'He is cooking.'

Still other verbs form the progressive with the addition of the suffix -to. There are only a few of these verbs. In this lesson you have seen taa 'to go' and na 'to come.'

3. -ni

The suffix -ni was used in several of the personal information questions introduced in this lesson. When attached to the verb it gives the meaning of 'being in the state of'. It is also used in the formation of adjectives (See Lesson 8), so it can be thought of as attributing the quality of the verb to the subject.

I b_oni mīni?

Where do you come from?
Where do you come out of?

You will have noticed that the negative of such verb forms follows the verb, unlike the verbs introduced in Lesson 3, where the negative preceded the verbs.

N b_oni te yano.

I don't come from there.

Simple Past Tense

Most verbs express the past tense in the following way:

1. the positive form uses the auxiliary na after the subject and the suffix -la (-na after nasal vowels) after the verb;
2. the negative form employs the auxiliary ma after the subject.

For example:

Fanta na kini di dōna.

Fanta ate some rice.

Fanta ma kini dō.

Fanta didn't eat rice.

Sentences which do not express the past tense using the method outlined above involve postpositions and adjectives. The formation of the simple past tense in these types of sentences will be discussed in Lesson 7.

There is a great deal of dialectal variation in Liberian Mandingo/Māniyakā regarding the formation of the simple past tense. If your tutor disagrees with the examples in this book, find out how she/he would express the idea of the past tense and use that form.

Past tense with postpositions, states of being and statives

The past tense of postpositions, states of being and statives is formed differently from that of most action verbs. There is also a difference in meaning. For action verbs, the past tense (as outlined in Lesson 6) refers to an action that took place at one moment in time and then ended, e.g. Mike dropped the stick. For postpositions, states of being and statives, the past tense usually denotes an action that started at one point in time and then continued to occur over some length of time; this past tense is best translated into English as "Hawa was going to school (and is still going)" or "Hawa was talking (and is still talking)."

To form the past tense for postpositions, replace the present tense auxiliary ye with tee for positive statements, and for negative statements, replace the auxiliary te with tite. For example:

Fanta ye mĩni?	Where is Fanta?
Fanta tee mĩni?	Where was Fanta?
Nisilu te lakoli_koma.	The cows aren't behind the school.
Nisilu tite lakoli_koma.	The cows weren't behind the school.

To form the past tense for states of being (adjectives) and statives, place the same auxiliaries used for postpositions after the stative or the adjective. For example:

N siini n ba fe.	I live with my mother.
N šiini tee n ba fe.	I lived with my mother.
N siini tite n ba fe.	I didn't live with my mother.

These auxiliaries, tee and tite, may also be used with action verbs. The meaning of the sentence will be different. For example:

Fanta na buku kalāna.	Fanta read the book.
Fanta tee buku kalāna.	Fanta was reading the book.
Fanta ma buku kalā.	Fanta didn't read the book.
Fanta tite buku kalāna.	Fanta wasn't reading the book.

Completive/Narrative Past Tense

The completive or narrative past tense is generally used in relating a narrative or a sequence of events that have been completed. Its use suggests that the events being discussed are in some manner (space, time or experience) further removed from the present than does the use of the simple past tense. (See Lesson 6.) There is a time period where the two past tenses overlap. It is best to use your tutor as the deciding factor of usage.

The auxiliary used to form the completive/narrative past is dependent on the verb.

Most verbs, especially verbs which take a direct object, use the auxiliary ka after the subject. No suffix is attached to the verb.

Examples:

Seku ka malo tibi.

Seku cooked the rice.

M_o ka dēke mina.

We caught the boy.

A small number of verbs, including taa "go", se "arrive", na "come" and dīnye "agree", use the auxiliary we in their positive form. Again no suffix is attached to the verb. For example:

Fanta we taa.

Fanta left.

Saalu we na so lo.

The sheep came into town.

To form the negative, all verbs require the auxiliary ma. For example:

N ma taa.

I hadn't left.

Lasana ma f ye kunu.

Lasana didn't see you yesterday.

Imperative Commands

The positive form of the imperative is formed by using the verb alone without a pronoun, e.g.

Taa.

Go.

Na.

Come.

If the verb has a direct object, the direct object, whether a pronoun or a noun, comes before the verb, e.g.

Ya buku ta.

Pick up your book. (lit., your-book -pick up)

A ta.

Pick it up. (lit., it-pick up)

If the sentence includes a locational phrase, such as 'to the store,' 'on the table,' or 'here', the phrase follows the verb, e.g.

Taa tabulo la.

Go to the blackboard. (lit., go-table-to)

Na yano.

Come here.

The negative of the imperative is formed by using the pronoun 'you' i and the negative word ka, e.g.

I ka ya buku ta.

Don't pick up your book. (lit., you-not-your-book-pick up)

I ka taa da la.

Don't go to the door. (lit., you-not-go-door-to)

K.1 Polite Command Form

To make a command less harsh-sounding either (1) add the verb na 'come' to the beginning of the command; or (2) preface the command with the phrase i jö 'I beg you' which is the Liberian English form of English 'please.'

Fani ko.

Wash the clothes.

Na fani ko.

Come wash the clothes.

I jö, fani ko.

Please wash the clothes.

11.1 The Future Tense

In Māniyakā the future tense for action verbs, including transitive verbs is formed as follows. (1) kete is the auxiliary used for positive statements. The suffix -la is added to the verb. (2) tena is the auxiliary used for negative statements. The use of the suffix -la is optional in negative statements.

N kete kini t ī bila sini.	I will cook rice tomorrow.
N tena kini t i bi sini.	I will not cook rice tomorrow.
or N tena kini t ī bila sini.	

The future tense for intransitive verbs, like "go" and "come", is formed as follows. (1) For positive sentence the suffix -to is added to the verb. (2) For negative sentences the auxiliary tena is used. The use of the suffix -la is optional in negative sentences.

Keneya nato k o tuni.	The sky will be light again.
Keneya tena na k o tuni.	The sky will not be light again.
or Keneya tena nala k o tuni.	

Habitual Action

To express the Māniyakā equivalent of English 'always', there are two options: (1) a simple declarative sentence may be used;

Ni m a lo d ō na.	I eat rice ('everyday' is implied)
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or (2) the phrase tuma be 'all the time' can be added to any sentence.

N t a malo d ō na.	I never/do not eat rice.
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Indirect Objects

In English the indirect object is usually expressed as the person to or for whom an object is acted upon; "John read the book to Mary," "Michael cooked the food for the children." In English the prepositions to and for may be understood: "John read Mary the book," "Michael cooked the children the food."

In Mandingo postpositions like nye and ma are used to indicate the indirect object. Unlike their English counterparts, they must always be present in a sentence. For example:

N nala dɔnife le i nye. I am bringing food to you.

A te letale sebela ma ma. She is not writing a letter to us.

Different verbs may require different postpositions to express the indirect object. It is important to check new verbs with your tutor to know what postpositions are used in your area as the choice is connected with dialect differences. In this lesson the examples employed only nye and ma, but it is possible that other postpositions may serve the same function.

Postpositions and Their Functions--Culture Note

- a. Postpositions fulfill the same function as English prepositions. The major difference between the two being that postpositions follow the noun they modify:

loɔfe lo

'to the market'

Abu fe

'with Abu'

- b. The noun in the postpositional phrase is followed by a low tone.
c. In general postpositions are not used with names of cities, towns or countries.

N bɔto Gbarngo.

'I came from Gbarnga.'

A siini Ngapa.

'He lives in Ganta.'

- d. Certain of the postpositions have restrictions on their use. Nyama 'in front of' is not widely used with non-living objects, i.e., one does not say:

Abu ye səne_nyama. 'Abu is in front of the farm.'

rather one would probably say:

Abu ye səne_tɔɔfɛ. 'Abu is near the farm.'

Simple Postpositions

The simple postpositions introduced in this lesson are:

la/lɔ (na after nasals)	"to"	kɔnɔ	"in, inside of"
ma	"at, to"	kɔlɔ	"under, underneath"
fɛ	"with"	ka	"on, on top of"
cama	"between"		

K.4 Complex Postpositions

The postposition ma and, to a lesser extent, fɛ, combine with nouns to express directions. The examples found in this lesson are:

banama	"outside"	tɔɔfɛ <u>or</u> dafɛ	"near, next to"
duuma	"on the ground"	kɔma	"behind, in back of"
'nyama	"in front of"		

N.1 Instrumental

The instrument of a sentence is the item "by means of which" the action is completed. It is often expressed in English as "by." In Māniyakɔ this concept is represented by the use of postpositional phrases. It is impossible to predict which postposition will be used in a particular phrase; their usage must be memorized.

Fanta taato toda_la a sɛ ma.

Fanta is going to town on foot.

A nāto Dukɔr takisi kɔnɔ.

He will come to Monrovia by taxi.

ʌi tena taala yeno kulɔ_ka.

They will not go there by boat.

1. X ye Y le le or Y le X le

This structure is used to equate one noun or pronoun with a second noun. There is no basic difference in meaning between using one or the other form. However there does seem to be a difference in emphasis, although this is variable among speakers. Ask your tutor if one structure is more common. There is only one negative form, for example māniya te n le 'I am not Mandingo'.

E <u>senkeba</u> le le.	He is a farmer.
Senkeba l'a le	He is a farmer.
Senkeba t'a le.	He is not a farmer.

ka

The auxiliary ka can be used to conjoin two or more sentences that have the same subject and is often translated as "and"; in negative sentences it may be translated as "or." When the two sentences are joined, only the first verb will reflect the tense of the sentence; the other verb(s) appear in the infinitive form. In general, the sentences that are joined must both refer to actions taking place within a short space of time.

Fanta tena <u>baale</u> kela sini.	Fanta will not work tomorrow.
Fanta tena <u>tibili</u> kela sini.	Fanta will not cook tomorrow.
Fanta tena <u>baale</u> kela ka <u>tibilia</u> ke sini.	Fanta will not work or cook tomorrow.

N.2 ni

If-then constructions begin with the word ni, meaning 'if.' The ni clause employs the auxiliary ka in positive sentences and ma in negative sentences. No suffix is attached to the end of the verb. The 'then' clause employs the usual manner of tense marking. ni may also be translated as 'when.'

Ni n ka <u>malo</u> sã, mo kete a dõna nyõõ ye.	If I buy rice, (then) we will eat it together.
Ni n ma wali di Fanta ma, a kete a <u>bo</u> lo.	If I do not give the money to Fanta, she will not have any.

sani

Sani appears at the beginning of a sentence and means 'before.' The auxiliary na is used in the 'sani' clause and no suffix is attached to the verb.

Sani i na na yano, taa Before you come here, go to the market.
lɔɔfɛ lɔ.

Sani i na buku sɛbe, a sã. Before you read the book, buy it.

nya X ka bã

To express the English concept of 'after X' the Māniyakã phrase, nya X ka bã is employed. Its literal meaning is 'after X finishes.....' It appears at the beginning of a sentence. The suffix -la is attached to the verb following bã.

Nya i ka bã laso kola, After you was the floor, wash yourself.
i jele ko.

Nya mɔ ka bã dõni kela, After we finish eating, we will lie down
mɔ keté mɔ lalá ka nõni ke. and rest.

'already'

To convey the concept of having 'already' completed a task, the auxiliary we is used in conjunction with the verb bã 'finish'. There is no actual word in Māniyakã that means 'already.'

N we bã taala lakoli_la. I already went to school.

Ai we bã malo dõnila. They already ate the rice.

CHAPTER V

MANDINGO-ENGLISH AND ENGLISH-MANDINGO DICTIONARY

The process of writing a dictionary is a large and tedious process of checking and rechecking entries against usages not only by one speaker, but by many speakers. A good dictionary should contain samples of sentences to illustrate usage of the entry. What follows then by definition is less than a dictionary, but on the other hand it is more than a word list, for it does contain information on parts of speech, dialectal variants and usage. When using this dictionary the reader is encouraged to correct or modify transcription in the light of experience and to make additions when new words are identified.

ABBREVIATIONS

adj.	adjective
adv.	adverb
al.	alienable
aux.	auxiliary (appears between the subject and either the verb or the direct object of a sentence.)
conj.	conjunction
esp.	especially
inal.	inalienable
L.E.	Liberian English
lit.	literally
n.	noun
neg.	negative
num.	number
phr.	phrase
pl.	plural
pp.	postposition
pro.	pronoun
prop.	proper
q.w.	question word (used when asking questions)
sg.	singular
suf.	suffix (only used attached to the end of another word)
t.e.	time expression
v.	verb
vs.	versus

DICTIONARY (MÁNDINGO - ENGLISH).....a to bama
A.

a (pro.)
she, he, it, her, him, it

a?
question marker,
not commonly used

ai (pro.)
you (pl.)

ai (pro.)
they, them

alabalõ (n.)
Wednesday

aladio (n.)
radio

aladiokaba (n.)
radio battery

alamisaḷõ (n.)
Thursday

alijeni (n.)
heaven

Alla (n., prop.)
Allah, God

allakabõ (n.)
church, mission
lit., God-house
also jisebõ

amu (n.)
rice dust

Angili (n., prop.)
Sierra Leone
also Freetown

B.

ba (n.)
goat

ba (adv.)
yet
(used in neg. sentences)

ba (n., inal.)
mother

baabaa (n.)
termite

baale (n.)
work

baalekenyõõ (n.)
co-worker

bake (adv.)
quickly

bala (n.)
drum

bala (n.)
naval

balajili (n.)
umbilical cord

balamoo (n.)
relative

bale (adv.)
very, too
(in a positive sense)

ka balo (v.)
to chat

balokeya (n.)
talking place, often an
open round building set
apart from the house

bama (n.)
crocodile

banama.....ka bila X kɔ_ka

banama (pp.) outside	bě good <u>also</u> kubě
basa (n.) lizard	ka X bĕ (v.) to meet X
basalō (n.) eyeglasses	ka nyōō bĕ to meet one another
basi (n.) medicine	bĕke (n., inal.) uncle
basikɔɔ (n.) pill	bĕni (n., inal.) cousin
bā (n.) desk, bench	bi (n.) today
ka bā (v.) to finish, end	bibi (n.) hawk
ka bā (v.) to be ready, done	bikɔɔ (num.) ninety
Bādi (n., prop.) Gbande, an ethnic group in Liberia	ka bila (v.) to put down, set down
bānaku (n.) cassava	ka X bila (v.) to wear X
bɛ (adj.) all	ka X bila a kã_ka (v.) to put on X
X bɛ (t.e.) all X, every X <u>also</u> XX, X o X	ka X bila a kã_na (v.) to put X on
bele (n.) gravel	ka Y bila X_ka (v.) to add Y to X, put X on Y
bele (adj.) small amount, a little	ka bila X_kɔ (v.) to follow X (X = a person)
bemecɔ (n., inal.) grandfather	ka bila X_kɔ_ka (v.) to follow X (X = a thing) <u>lit.</u> , to put (yourself) on X's back
ka besɪ (v.) to slice, chop	bilafĕ (n.) domestic animal

bilafi.....böbösi

bilafi (n.)
black cobra

bilini (n.)
pigeon

biluulu (num.)
fifty

binaani (num.)
forty

ka bine (v.)
ka duniya bine
to be alive
also ka duniya

bisawa (num.)
eighty

bisei (num.)
eighty

biwɔɔɔ (num.)
sixty

biwɔɔɔwula (num.)
seventy

bi (n.)
grass

ka bi (v.)
to fall

bijene (n.)
grass snake

bi nye (n.)
arrow

ka boli (v.)
ka mōbili boli
to drive a car

ka boli (v.)
kɔnɔ ka boli
to have diarrhea
(runny belly)

ka boli (v.)
nūji ka boli
to have a runny nose

ka boli ka taa (v.)
to run

ka boli X kɔ (v.)
to chase, be behind

bolo (n., inal.)
hand, arm

ka X bolo (v.)
to have X (X = name of
possessor, a common
noun or a pronoun)

ka X bolo (v.)
ce/muso k'i bolo?
are you married?
lit., do you have a
husband/wife?

bolokanaya (n., inal.)
wrist

bolokani (n., inal.)
finger

bololamatolo (n.)
wrist watch

bomba (n.)
bullfrog

boo (n.)
feces, stool

bō (n.)
house

bōbō (n., inal.)
chin

bōbōsi (n., inal.)
beard
lit., chin-hair

bõnaděni.....buyõ

bõnaděni (n.)
houseboy

bõya (adj.)
fat, big

ka bõ (v.)
kene bõni
day broke, the sun rose

ka X bõ (v.)
to take some off X,
to lower X's price

ka X bõ (v.)
ka fani bõ
to decorate cloth

ka bõ X ka taa Y
from X to Y

ka bõ (X la) (v.)
to come from/out of X

ka bõ X le
to go on X, carry X,
bring X

ka bõ (v.)
k'i kũ bõ
to comb one's hair
(male)

ka X bõ (v.)
to carve an X (need to
say what is being carved)

ka bõ (v.)
ka sene bõ
to weed (a garden)

ka bõ (v.)
ka wuse bõ
to dig potatoes
ka jabibi bõ
to pick pineapple

bõlõ (n.)
bag

bõõ (n.)
bowl, plate, dish

bõõ (n.)
soil, clay

bõõ (n.)
swamp

bõõmalo (n.)
swamp rice

ka bõõ (v.)
to spill

ka bõõ X la (v.)
to resemble X, look like X

bubolo (n.)
mattress, straw bed

buku (n.)
book
also sebe

bulu (n.)
bread

-bulu (n., suf.)
leaf (edible)

bulubala (n.)
flute, country band

butu (adv.)
now, right now
also kulaleni

buyõ (n.)
pig

cama.....dagbolo

C.

cama (pp.)
in the middle of,
in the center of,
between
also ce

camaya (n., inal.)
waist

ce (n., inal.)
husband, man

ce (pp.)
between
also cama

ceɲe (num.)
one hundred

ceɲɔba (n.)
old man (term of respect)

ceya (adj.)
good-looking

coya (adj.)
ugly

ceɲɔnu (n.)
old man

D.

da (n., inal.)
price
also sōō

da (n.)
door

da (n., inal.)
mouth

daa (n.)
pot

daa (n.)
sore

daafolo (n.)
scab

daagbolo (n.)
pus, yellowish, pflgm

daaji (n.)
pus, clear

-daatũ (n., suf.)
cover, lid

dabɔ (n.)
breakfast

dabulu (n., inal.)
cheek

ka dade (v.)
to sharpen

dafe (pp.)
near, next to, beside
also tɔɔfe

dagbe (n.)
white clay, used
for white wash

dagbolo (n., inal.)
lip

dakɔɔsi.....X do?

dakɔɔsi (n., inal.)
beard

dala (n.)
dollar

dala kɛlɛ̃ (n.)
one dollar, \$1.00
also sumu luulu

ka X dalaka (v.)
to open X

ka X dalatũ (v.)
to close X

ka damina X ka sii Y
from X to Y

dawa (n.)
hoe

dayã (n.)
copper

dã (n.)
border

ka X dã (v.)
to weave

k'i kũ dã (v.)
to plait one's hair (female)

dãna (n.)
wall

ka dẽ (v.)
to hang up

ka deme (v.)
to help, assist

dẽ (n., inal.)
child

dẽbaya (n.)
immediate family

dẽce (n., inal.)
son

dẽmuso (n., inal.)
daughter

dɛnyene kula (n.)
newborn baby

di (adj.)
some, one particular

di gbele (adj.)
another
lit., some-different

di? (q.w.)
how?

ka X di (v.)
to push

ka X di Y ma (v.)
to give X to Y

ka X di Y ma (v.)
ka sũ di dɛni ma
to breastfeed a child

diini (adj.)
small, a little
also dɔɔni

diini diini (adv.)
slowly
also dɔɔni dɔɔni

dila (pp.)
out of, away from

ka dimi (v.)
to hurt

diya (adj.)
good, sweet, pleasing

dĩnye (n.)
weather, sky
also sãnye

ka dĩnye X ma (v.)
to agree to X

X do?
what about X?

dolo.....dūgulū

dolo (n.)
cheek, used in abusive
language, 'fat face'

ka domāda 'X lɔ (v.)
to hide in X

doobō (n.)
bar, saloon
lit., beer-house

ka X dō (v.)
to enter into X

dɔlɔtɔlɔ (n.)
nurse, doctor

dɔlɔtɔlɔbō (n.)
hospital, clinic
lit., doctor-house
also dɔlɔtɔlɔ

dɔɔcɛ (n., inal.)
younger brother

dɔɔmuso (n., inal.)
younger sister

dɔɔni (adj.)
small, a little
also diini

dɔɔni dɔɔni (adv.)
slowly
also diini diini

dɔɔya (adj.)
thin, young, small

ka dɔ (v.)
to eat

dɔɔnifē (n.)
food

dɔɔnikafē (n.)
utensil
lit., eat-thing

dɔɔnikafē (n.)
food

ka dɔɔnila (v.)
to sing

dɔɔalē (n.)
mirror

Dukɔr (n., prop.)
Monrovia

duniya (n.)
world

ka duniya (v.)
to be alive
also ka duniya bine

dunu (n.)
load, burden

dunu (n.)
rooster

duu (n.)
land, ground

duufi (n.)
black soil

duuma (pp.)
on the ground

duunyɔɔ (n., inal.)
friend

duuwulē (n.)
red soil

dūgulū (n.)
bump (in the road)

eti.....ka X file

E.eti (n.)
fifteen cents, 15¢falimatōdolo (n.)
ringwormfaliso (n.)
bodyfana (adv.)
too, alsofani (n.)
clothfani (n.)
shirt
also kānafanifanikalaba (n.)
tailor
also tayelefasaa (n.)
veinfasola (n.)
hometownfā (n.)
bellowsfāga (n.)
strengthfē (n.)
thingfē (n.)
çalabaşhfē (pp.)
withka fē (v.)
to want (used in complex
sentences)fila (num.)
twofilabulu (n.)
greens, cabbageka X file (v.)
to sell X**F.**fa (n., inal.)
fatherfajili (n.)
morning prayer, at 6 a.m.ka fala (v.)
to tearka falabu (v.)
to peelfalagbe (n.)
foreigner, Peace Corp
volunteerfalagbejamana (n.)
America, England, France
lit., white's countryfali gbani (n.)
to have a feverfalifibasi (n.)
country medicine

ka filē.....fufu

ka filē (v.)
to sprout

ka X fili (v.)
to throw X

fiti (n.)
fifty cents, 50¢

fitili (n.)
evening, evening prayer,
about 7 p.m.

fī (adj.)
black

fini (adj.)
dark, black

flefle (n.)
butterfly

fo (conj.)
since

ka fo (v.)
to tell, say

k'a fo (v.)
to say it

ka X fo (v.)
kā gbūdo fo
to tell a secret

k'a fo i kō (v.)
to say it again, repeat
lit., to say it behind you

ka X fo Y ye (v.)
to say X to Y, to tell Y X

k'a fo X ye (v.)
to say to X

k'a fo ko X (v.)
to say that X
(X = a sentence)

ka fo (v.)
ka wia fo X nye
to lie to X (X = a person),
tell a lie to X

ka foa (v.)
to kill, die

folo (adv.)
still (rare usage)

fō (n.)
five cents, 5¢
also kapa luulu

ka X fōlōse (v.)
to force X, make X do
something

fōloto (n.)
hot pepper

fōfō (n., inal.)
lung

foto (n.)
picture, photograph,
painting

fōtōtafē (n.)
camera
lit., picture-take-thing

fōnye (n.)
wind, air

Freetown (n., prop.)
Sierra Leone
also Angili

fuā (n.)
silver

fufu (n.)
made of pounded cassava
root
also suna

fula.....gbe

fula (n.)
skull cap, prayer hat,
male

fuli (n.)
dirt

fulufulu (n.)
doughnut

funatele (n.)
window

funatelelafani (n.)
curtain
lit., window-cloth

fũde (n.)
steam

G.

gba (n.)
kitchen (outside)

gba (adj.)
hot (temperature)

gba (n.)
booth in the market,
stall

gbabamalo (n.)
upland rice

gbalo (n.)
tree, large, good for
firewood, heavy

ka gbasi (v.)
to hit, knock, strike

ka gbasi (v.)
to beat (especially eggs)

ka gbasi (v.)
ka bala gbasi
to play a drum

ka gbasi (v.)
ka mɔlifa gbasi
to shoot a gun

ka gbasi (v.)
a kɔnɔ lagbasini
she miscarried
lit., her-stomach-hit-itself

gbã (n.)
okra

gbãgbã (n.)
bracelet

gbãgbã (n.)
dust

gbe (n.)
field, open area
also gbeloya

ka gbe.....Grebo

- ka gbe (v.)
ka kɔnɔ gbe
to scare birds
- gbei (n.)
rubber
- gbeiji (n.)
latex, rubber sap
lit., rubber-water
- gbeijili (n.)
rubber tree
- gbeka (n.)
desert, open field
(clear area)
- gbeloya (n.)
field, open area
also gbe
- gbeyiamɔɔ (n.)
enemy
- gbɛ (adj.)
white
- ka gbe (v.)
to chase
- gbele (adj.)
different
- gbelɛkulu (n., inal.)
knee
- gbese (n.)
toothbrush
- Gbese (n., prop.)
Kpelle, an ethnic group
in Liberia
- gbi (n.)
owl
- gbili (adj.)
hard, difficult
- gbili (adj.)
a da gbiliyani
it's expensive
- gbili (adj.)
green
- gbiliya (adj.)
soft
- gbono (n.)
secret
also gbũdo
- Gola (n., prop.)
Gola, an ethnic group
in Liberia
- Grebo (n., prop.)
Grebo, an ethnic group
in Liberia

hake to.....jä

H.hake to
excuse mehakili (n.)
intelligenceka hakilito X-lo (v.)
to take care of Xk'i hakilito (v.)
to rememberhalijeni (n.)
heavenhere (n.)
peace**I.**i (pro.)
you (sg.)Islamya (n., prop.)
Muslimi
yes**J.**ka ja (v.)
to dryka ja tili kono (v.)
to dry in the sun.ka boolu ja fani la (v.)
to dry dishes (with a cloth)jabi (n.)
leaf used to make black dye;
used by women on palms and
soles of feet for cosmetic
purposesjabi (n.)
answerjabibi (n.)
pineapplejafoba (prop.)
Mano, Gio, ethnic groups in
Liberiajahanama (n.)
helljala (n.)
lionjamana (n.)
country, nationka jana (v.)
shout, screamjägolo (n.)
sicknessjägoloto (n.)
sick personjawa (n.)
onionjä (adj.)
far, long, tall
also jäya

jāya.....i jō

jāya (adj.)
far, long, tall,
also jā

ka jea (v.)
to show

ka Y jea X ma (v.)
to show Y to X

jese (n.)
thread, cotton

jēe (n.)
fish

jēe jalā (n.)
dried fish

jēeminisāzā (n.)
fish net, made of wire
lit., fish-catch-wire

jēeyako (n.)
fish pond

jele
self

ka jele (v.)
to laugh, smile

ka jele X la (v.)
to climb, go up

jeli
how much, how many

jeli (n.)
blood

ka jema (v.)
to transplant

ka sia jema (v.)
to plow, make a path

jene
who

ji (n.)
water

jiafe (n.)
glass, cup
also kopu

ka jii (v.)
to go down, sink, roll
down

ka so jila (v.)
to water

jili (n.)
tree

jilidē (n.)
fruit,
lit., tree-child

jilifilē (n.)
seedling

jilo (n.)
thirst

jisebō (n.)
church, mission
lit., Jesus-house
also allakabō

jitali (n.)
guitar

jo (n.)
god

ka jo (v.)
to be right

joona (adv.)
soon

joyakeba (n.)
trader, merchant
also jula, joya

i jō
please, I beg you

ka jō jusokolo

ka jō (v.)
to beg

jō (n.)
large net stretched
across river

jōna
first

jōso (n.)
pen, fenced area

ju (n.)
vine

ju (adj.)
bad

ka ju (v.)
to take off, remove

jufa (n.)
pocket

jula (n.)
trader, merchant
also joyakeba, joya

julu (n.)
rope

jumalō (n.)
Friday

jumasilō (n.)
Sunday

jumaya (n., inal.)
buttocks

juso (n., inal.)
heart

jusokolo (n.)
basket

ka.....:i kǎ na bɔ

K

ka
negative, command marker

ka
past tense, positive
marker

ka (pp.)
on top of, on
also kɔ ka

ka (conj.)
and (combines verb
phrases)

-kaba (n., suf.)
battery

kabine (n.)
latrine

kafe (n.)
coffee, tea

kala (n.)
pencil

ka kala (v.)
to sew

kalamɔɔ (n.)
teacher

kalawulē (n.)
boyfriend

ka kalā (v.)
to read, study

ka X kalā Y la (v.)
to teach Y to X

ka kalā kē lakɔli ni (v.)
to study for school

ka kal (v.)
to break

ka kali (v.)
to cut

ka kali (v.)
ka malo kali
to harvest, pick rice

kalo (n.)
month, moon

kamāji (n.)
woman's gown

kamasɔɔ (conj.)
because

kami (n.)
guinea fowl

kanape (n.)
bed
also lafē

kapa (n.)
copper, coin

kapa kele (n.)
one cent, 1¢

kapa lulu (n.)
five cents, 5¢
also fō

ka kasi (v.)
to cry

kawa (n., inal.)
upper arm, shoulder

kawaɔɔya (n., inal.)
underarm

kawk (n., inal.)
shoulder

ka (n., inal.)
neck, throat, voice

i ka ma gi (phr.)
speak slower, softer

i ka na bɔ (phr.)
speak louder

i kā na gba.....ka laso ko

i kā na gba (phr.)
speak faster

ka kā (v.)
must, should,
to have to

kāna fani (n.)
shirt
also fani

keeya (n.)
sickle

kesu (n.)
box
also kesukolō

kewe (n.)
snail

ka ke (v.)
to do, make

ka ke nyōō ka (v.)
to stir, mix together

ka X ke Y ko (v.)
to load, put X in Y

ka baalē ke
to do work, work

ka ke (v.)
ka salātānya ke
to make noise

kene (n.)
light, lightness.

kelē (num.)
one

kenema (n.)
height

keneya (n.)
health

ka keneya (v.)
to get better

ketē
future tense (positive
marker)

kēkaamaye (n.)
woman's turban

kile (n.)
grainery

-kili (n., suf.)
egg

ka kili (v.)
to call

kini
before

kini (v.)
cooked rice

kinifileya (n.)
cook shop, restaurant
lit., rice-sell-place

ko (conj.)
that

ko (n.)
business, matter, affair

ka ko (v.)
to say

i y'a ko di (phr.)
what did you say?
lit., you-it-speak-how

ka ko (v.)
to wash

ka baolu ko (v.)
to wash dishes

ka fani ko (v.)
to wash clothes.

ka laso ko (v.)
to wash the floor

k'i ko.....kɔnɔ

k'i ko (v.)
to wash oneself

koina (n.)
finger-ring

kolã (n.)
light, electric light

kolã (n.)
mortar

komu (adj.)
sour, bitter

Konowari (n., prop.)
Ivory Coast

konyi (n.)
key

koya (n.)
bathing area

kōgosula (n.)
turtle

kōnyi (n.)
key
lit. door-teeth

kɔ (n., inal.)
back

kɔ (n.)
river

kɔ (n.)
rice bird, one that eats
ripe rice

kɔ (n.)
bolt, used to lock a door

ka kɔ (v.)
to want, need

kɔ_ka (pp.)
on top of, on
lit., back-on
also ka

kɔba (n.)
lake, big river

kɔbɔ (n.)
insect

kɔdala (n.)
coast

kɔdɔku (n.)
duck, found in big rivers

kɔkɔnɔ (n.)
water bird, general term

kɔlɔ (pp.)
under, underneath

kɔlɔ (n.)
bone

kɔlɔ (adj.)
old

kɔlɔce (n., inal.)
older brother

kɔlɔkulu (n.)
kidney

kɔlɔmulu (n.)
cutlass

kɔlɔmuso (n., inal.)
older sister

kɔlɔtūba (n.)
bonesetter, one who
sets bones

kɔlɔ (n.)
well

kɔma (pp.)
behind, in back of
lit., back-to

kɔnɔ (num.)
nine

kɔnɔ.....ka kũ

kɔnɔ (n.)
bird

kɔnɔ (n., inal.)
stomach

kɔnɔ (pp.)
in, inside of

ka kɔnɔma (v.)
to be pregnant

kɔnɔnafē (n.)
net

kɔɔ (n.)
salt

kɔɔ jɛɛ (n.)
smoked fish

kɔɔji (n.)
Atlantic Ocean
lit., salt-water

kɔpu (n.)
cup, tin measure for grains

kɔsɔ (n.)
wild pig

kɔtuni (adv.)
again

kɔwulini (n.)
waterfall

ka kɔde (v.)
to count

kɔgo (n.)
hunger

ka kɔgɔ (v.)
to knock (at a door)
also kɔ gbasi

kubē (adv.)
well, too, very much
(in a positive sense)
also bē

kuisi (n.)
pants

kuju (adv.)
too (in a negative sense)
also kuyu

kula (adj.)
new

kulaleni (adv.)
now, right now
also butu

kulu (n.)
spoon

-kulu (n., suf.)
seed

kulū (n.)
canoe, any ship or boat

kulūwala (n.)
raccoon

ka kuma (v.)
to talk

kunasini (n.)
day before yesterday

kunato (n.)
leper, one who has leprosy

kunu (n.)
yesterday

kuu (n.)
work crew or cooperative

kuyu (adv.)
too (in a negative sense)
also kuju

kū (n., inal.)
head

ka kũ (v.)
to talk, cry out

kūcama.....ka lakanya

kūcama (n., inal.)
head, top of
also kūcamaya

kūkɔlɔ (n., inal.)
scalp

kūsi (n., inal.)
hair (on the head)
lit., head-hair

kūtii (n.)
boss, leader

L.

la (pp.)
at, to, from
also lɔ

ka X la (v.)
to put/lay X down

ka Y la X ka (v.)
to add Y to X

k'i la (v.)
to lie down

k'i la ka nōni kɛ (v.)
to lie down and rest

labā
last

Labiya (n., prop.)
Liberia

ka ladā (v.)
to repair, fix

ka lafē ladā (v.)
to make a bed

ka X ladē (v.)
to collect X, gather

ka nyōō ladē (v.)
to meet, gather for a meet-
ing, come together

lafē (n.)
bed
also kanape

ka X lafili (v.)
to throw or shoot
(a weapon)

Lagini (n., prop.)
Guinea

ka X lajɛlɛ (v.)
to climb, build, form

ka lakanya (v.)
to be flat, level

lakili.....lo
lakili (n.) chalk	ka latee (v.) to pick, harvest
k'i da lako (v.) to brush one's teeth	lāsala (n.) afternoon prayer, 4 p.m.
lakoli (n.) school	le (adj.) emphasis marker
lakolidē (n.) student <u>lit.</u> , school-child	Y le X le (phr.) Y is <u>an</u> X. <u>also</u> X ye Y le le
lakolikalamoo (n.) school teacher	a le le o (phr.) that's it, okay, it's settled
ka lakulu (v.) to make round	X ye Y le le (phr.) X is a Y <u>also</u> Y le X le
lalilō (n.) Sunday (rare usage) <u>also</u> jumasilo	X le ni (phr.) this is an X
ka lamēnē (v.) to light (a fire)	lele (n.) hour
laminala (n.) compound, a group of houses belonging to related individuals and/or families	lembulu (n.) orange
ka X lano (v.) to make X stop	lembuluji (n.) orange juice
lasili (n.) bunch, pile	letelebō (n.) post office <u>lit.</u> , letter-house
laso (n.) floor	ka bōbōsili (v.) to shave
ka sise laso (v.) to raise chickens	ka lowāse (v.) to rent
ka X lata (v.) ka seelā lata to give a shot/injection <u>also</u> ka seelā di	lō (n.) day
ka lataa X ma (v.) to send to X	ka lō (v.) to know
	lo (pp.) at, to, from <u>also</u> la

k'i lɔ.....luulu

k'i lɔ (v.)
to stand up

lulu (n.)
stars

k'i lɔ (v.)
to stop oneself

luma (n.)
yard, compound

ka gbe lɔce (v.)
to clear the field

lumu (n.)
room (rare usage)

ka X lɔci (v.)
to break open X, crack X

luulu (num.)
five

lɔɔ (n.)
market
also lɔɔfe

lɔɔ (n.)
firewood

lɔɔfe (n.)
market
also lɔɔ

ka lɔsama (v.)
to straighten, stretch

ka lɔsi (v.)
to hoe, cultivate, break
up the soil

ka lɔsia (v.)
to accompany, go with
L.E.: to carry

ka lɔtala (v.)
to divide

lɔte (n.)
week

lɔba (n.)
feast
lit., day-big

lu (n.)
yard

-lu (suf.)
plural suffix,
more than two

ma mifē

M.

ma (aux.)
past tense, neg. marker

ma (pp.)
at, to

mali (n.)
hippopotamus

malito (n.)
hammer

malo (n.)
rice, uncooked

mamani (n., inaf.)
grandchild

Mano (n., prop.)
Mano, an ethnic group in
Liberia

manyene (n.)
measles

ka X mapolo (v.)
to miss (not hit) X

ka masili (v.)
to get dressed

k'i masili kubē (v.)
to dress well

ka matee (v.)
to clean

ka duu matee (v.)
to clean (clear) the yard

māgolo (n.)
mango, jama plum

Māniya (n., prop.)
Mandingo, an ethnic group
in Liberia
also Mēniya

mānyi (n.)
paw paw

mātiie (n.)
lemon

-mātolo (n., suf.)
clock

mbē (n.)
horn

ka mē (v.)
to understand, hear

Mēniya (n., prop.)
Mandingo, an ethnic group
in Liberia
also Māniya

mēnye (n.)
driver ant

mina (n.)
deer

ka X mina (v.)
to go on/by X,
to catch, hold

misili (n.)
mosque

mī (adj.)
this

ka mī
ka basi mī
to take medicine (liquid)

ka sigalete mī (v.)
to smoke a cigarette

k'i mī (v.)
to drink

mīde
what

mīdele
why

mifē (n.)
drink, liquid
lit., drink-thing

m̃ni.....mwaya

- m̃ni (q.w.)
where
- X m̃ni (t.e.)
this X
- mōbili (n.)
car, any vehicle
- mōbiliboliba (n.)
driver, chauffeur
also sofele
- mō (pro.)
we, our
- ka mō (v.)
to get done, ripen;
to be ready, ripe
- ka mō (v.)
to be angry,
L.E.: vexed
- mōlifa (n.)
rifle, gun
- mōni (n.)
dish made of rice
and sugar
- mō (n.)
person
- mō su m̃de (n.)
ethnic group, kind
of person
- mō kolo (n.)
ancestor, old people
(usually deceased)
- mōsi o (phr.)
goodbye
- mulu (n.)
knife
- muso (n., inal.)
wife, woman
- musokolonu (n.)
old woman (term of respect)
- mūā (num.)
twenty
- mwa (n., inal.)
grandmother
- mwaya (adj.)
thick

n.....Ngapa

N.

n (pro.) I, me	nɛlɛkɔlɔsi (n.) hepatitis
na (n.) sauce, soup	nɛnɛ (n.) cold, coldness
ka na (v.) to come	nɛnɛ (n.) malaria
ka na X_lɛ (v.) to bring	ni if, when
ka na X_lɛ Y_nye (v.) to bring X for Y, to come with X for Y	ni cɛ (phr.) thank you
naani (num.) four	nisi (n.) cow
namasa (n.) banana	nisiboo (n.) manure
namasajã (n.) plantain	nisifuruni (n.) towel lit., cow-intestine: (inside of one looks like towel surface)
ka X nasa (v.) to turn off (a light)	nisisoo (n.) beef
ka bō natɛɛ (v.) to clean a house, sweep a house	nisitula (n.) bull also tula
X nato (t.e.) next X, the coming X	ka no X_la (v.) to stop at X
ka X natunu (v.) to lose X	nō (adj.) dirty
nee (n., inal.) tongue	nōkula (n., inal.) elbow
neĩ (n.) ten cents, 10¢	nɔno (n.) milk
nee (n.) metal, iron	nũ (n., inal.) nose
nesso (n.) bicycle lit., iron-horse	Ngapa (n., prop.) Ganta

noo.....salā

noo (n., inal.)
intestines

ka nōni ke (v.)
to rest

nūgbolo (n.)
snot

nya
after

nya (n., inal.)
eye

nya (n., inal.)
a nya wulēni
her/his eye is red

ka X nya (v.)
to look at X

nyagbolo (n., inal.)
eyelid

nyaloya (n., inal.)
face
lit., eye-place

nyama (n.)
garbage

nyama (pp.)
in front of
lit., eye-to

nyasi (n., inal.)
eyelash

ka X nyaye (v.)
to understand X

nyene (n.)
urine

nyēneleukuluku (n.)
cockroach

nyi (adj.)
good

nyi (n., inal.)
teeth

ka nyili (v.)
to burn

nyina (n.)
rat

ka nyina (v.)
to forget

ka sene nyini (v.)
to burn the farm

ka nyinika (v.)
to ask

ka X ma nyinika (v.)
to ask X (X = a person)

ka nyini (v.)
to look for

nyo (n.)
corn

nyokoma (n.)
cat

nyalā (n.)
mat

nyalā (n.)
street urchin

o.....re

O.

o (adj.)
that
also wo, we

ō-ō

no

P.

ka X pese (v.)
to weigh X

pipo (n.)
man's prayer gown

pitiki (n.)
store, shop

pōdi (n.)
nail (for building)

R.

re (n.)
hook (for fishing)

sa.....sāfelēkā

S.

sa (n.) snake	samala (n.) shoe, slipper
ka X sa (v.) to scratch X	samani (n.) ivory
ka X sa (v.) to hollow out	samaya (n.) ceiling <u>lit.</u> , up-place
saa (n.) sheep	ka X samā (v.) to pull
safine (n.) soap	sani (n.) bottle
safo (n.) night prayer, 8 p.m.	sani (n.) gold
ka sala (v.) to pay	sani before
ka X sala Y fs (v.) to pay X for X	sasa (n.) cold, L.E.: fresh cold
salātānya (n.) noise	sawa (num.) three
salo (n.) molar (tooth)	sawa (n.) happiness
sama (n.) message	sā (n.) cloud
sama (n.) elephant	sā (n.) year <u>also</u> sāye
ka sama (v.) to bring a gift	ka sā (v.) to buy
samabuli (n.) turkey	sāfelē (n.) lightning, thunder <u>lit.</u> , rain-with-break
samaji (n.) rainy season	sāfelēkā (n.) thunder <u>lit.</u> , rain-with-break-voice
samakulū (n.) airplane <u>lit.</u> , up-canoe	

sāji.....sēne lo

sāji (n.)
rain
lit., cloud-water

sānye (n.)
weather
also dīnye

sāye (n.)
year
also sā

ka se (v.)
to arrive,
be able, can

sei (num.)
eight

selā (n.)
broom

seelā (n.)
needle

senu (n.)
rice bird, one that eats
young rice, has a white
belly and a black body

sē (n., inal.)
leg/foot

sē (n.)
bridge

ka sē (v.)
to dig

sēkōni, (n., inal.)
toe

sēsōni (n., inal.)
toe nail

ka se (v.)
to fight

ka se ka tunī na
to wrestle, 'play fight'
lit., fight-play

ka se (v.)
ka dala se
to fight (verbally)

sēbe (n.)
book paper
also buku

ka sēbeli ke (v.)
to write

sēli (n.)
prayer

ka sēli (v.)
to pray

sēlifana (n.)
woman's prayer clothes

sēne (adj.)
clean

sēne (n.)
farm
also sēnekeya

ka sēne (v.)
to plant

sēnebasi (n.)
fertilizer

sēnefē (n.)
crop, harvest, vegetable

sēnekeba (n.)
farmer

sēnekewaati (n.)
planting time

sēnekeya (n.)
farm, garden
also sēne

sēne lo (n.)
village

sani.....sisi'

sani (n.) necklace	k'i sii X fe (v.) to live with X (X is responsible for individual speaking)
sētulu (n.) belt	k'i sii (v.) to sit down
si intense negative marker	k'i sii möboli lo (v.) to ride in a car
si (n.) saw, tool	siifē (n.) chair, porch
si (n.) fly	šiiya (n.; inal.) seat lit., sit-place
si (n., inal.) hair, esp. body hair	ka X sili (v.) to put on (a belt or lappa) lit., to tie on
-si (n., suf.) seed, to be planted, must be connected to food name vs. -kulu (being planted)	simbili (n.) girlfriend
ka si (v.) to sleep, spend the night	sini (n.) tomorrow
ka si X ma (v.) to go (reach) to X	sinikene (n.) day after tomorrow
sia (n.) path, road	sise (n.) chicken
siaki (n.) blacksmith, jeweler	sisekili (n.) chicken egg
siamā (adj.) many	sisekili tibini (n.) boiled egg
sibili (n.) Saturday	sisesobo (n.) chicken meat
sibõ (n.) bedroom	sisi (n., inal.) chest, female or male
sigalate (n.) cigarette	sisi (n.) smoke.
ka X sii (v.) to put, place	

ka sita..... ka X suma

ka sita (v.)
to boil

ka sidi X ma (v.)
to give birth to X

so (n.)
horse, general term
also riding, racing horse

so (n.)
town, large village

ka so (v.)
to hit, jerk

sobo (n.)
city

-sobo (n., suf.)
meat
also -soo (

sobo jani (n.)
dried meat

sola (n.)
monkey

solitana (n.)
evil spirit

ka soo (v.)
to pierce one's ears

ka X soo (v.)
to lock
... konyi ne 'with a key'
... k_o li 'with a bolt'

soso (n.)
mosquito

sō (n.)
thief

sōō (n.)
price
also da

so (n.)
trap, snare

sɔfɛle (n.)
driver, chauffer
also mōbiliboliba

ka sɔlɔ (v.)
to be born

ka sɔlɔ (v.)
ka wali sɔlɔ
to earn money

sɔɔma (n.)
morning

sɔɔmādala (n.)
early morning, this morning

sɔpu (n.)
shovel

sɔsɔ (n.)
cough

sɔsɔ (n.)
bean

sō (n., inal.)
liver

su (adj.)
kind, type

su (n.)
late evening, night

su lo (phr.)
in the evening

Suakokodu (n., prop.)
Suakoko, a city in Bong Co.

sukalo (n.)
sugar

suma (n.)
small circular net, held in
hand to use

ka X suma (v.)
to measure

sumaya.....ka taa X fo

sumaya (adj.)
cold (not used for people
or the weather).

sumu (n.)
twenty cents, 20¢

sumu fila ani neĩ (n.)
fifty cents, 50¢

sumu kɛlɛ̃ ani fõ (n.)
twenty-five cents, 25¢

suna (n.)
fufu, made of pounded
cassava root
also fufu

sunɔɔ (n.)
sleepiness, tiredness

surūya (adj.)
short

sū (n., inal.)
breast, woman's

-sū (n., suf.)
tree

T.

ta
possessive pronoun marker,
used in combination with
pronoun, eg. n ta 'mine',
i ta 'yours (sg.)', etc.

ta (n.)
fire

ka X ta (v.)
to take X, pick up X

ka X ta (v.)
ka bási ta
to take medicine (solid)

ka X ta (v.)
ka ce/muso ta
to get married
lit., to take a husband/
wife

ka X ta (v.)
ka seelā ta
to take/get an injection/
shot

tā (num.)
ten

ka taa (v.)
to go

ka taa (v.)
ka taa i nya tilēma
to go straight ahead

ka taa X balo (v.)
to visit X, to talk to X

ka taa bɔ X fe (v.)
to go visit

ka taa ce (v.)
to go get, collect

ka taa X fo (v.)
to go visit X,
go talk to X

ka taa i sě ma tē

ka taa i'sě ma (v.)
to go by foot

ka taa (v.)
ka taa jěeminaya
to go fishing
also ka taa refiliya

ka taa (v.)
ka taa ji lo
to swim

ka taa X ka (v.)
to go on/by X
also ka taa X kə ka

ka taa X kə ka (v.)
to go on/by X
also ka taa X ka

ka taa lafě ma (v.)
to go to bed

ka taa X le (v.)
to take X, go with X,
carry X

ka taa X lě Y nye (v.)
to carry X for Y

ka taa (v.)
ka taa soofoaya
to go hunting

ka mōbili taa (v.)
to go by car

taafe (n.)
lappa, cloth measure

takəbə (n.)
lightning bug

ka taama (v.)
to walk

ka taama (v.)
ka taama ka taa X la
to walk to X

tabali (n.)
table

tabalilamātolo (n.)
clock, table top

tabulo (n.)
blackboard

takala (n.)
match

takisi (n.)
taxi

tala (n.)
light, general term

tala (n.)
heat, hot, sweat

talalō (n.)
Tuesday

talě (n.)
spider

tama (n., inal.)
jaw

tama (n.)
spear

tamati (n.)
tomato

tana
bad

tayele (n.)
tailor
also fanikalaba

tepu (n.)
tape recorder

té (n., inal.)
forehead

tee.....ka timi X ka

tee (aux.)
past tense, positive marker;
used with states of being,
including adjectives

ka tee (v.)
to cut

ka X tee (v.)
to block (a road),
cross (a river)

ka jili tee (v.)
to cut down a tree

teelā (n.)
ax

telē (n.)
train

tena (aux.)
future tense,
negative marker

tene (n., in 1.)
aunt

tenelō (n.)
Monday

ka tēde (v.)
to fan, chaff rice

X to ya(no) (phr.)
X is here

tia (n.)
peanut, groundnut

tibilikafē (n.)
stove

ka tibili ke (v.)
to cook

ka tilē (v.)
to turn

ka tilē (v.)
ka tilē i bolo be_{le} la
to turn to the right
also, ka tilē i bolo
kini ma

ka tilē (v.)
ka tilē i bolo kini ma
to turn to the right
also, ka tilē i bolo
be_{le} la

ka tilē (v.)
ka tilē i bolo nyumā na
to turn to the left

k'i bolo tilē (X la) (v.)
to point (at X)

tili (n.)
day, midday, sun, noon

tilibi (n.)
west
lit., sun-fall

tilibo (n.)
east
lit., sun-come-from

tilima (n.)
dry season

timba (n.)
old farm

timi
how to (do something)

ka timi (v.)
to pass, pass by

ka timi (v.)
to cross, pass thru,
surpass, go beyond

ka timi X ka (v.)
to cross on, over

Xtimini.....tu

- X timini (t.e.)
last X, the past X
- tini (n.)
hill, mountain
also tiniba
- tino (adv.)
only
- ka timi X_{la} (v.)
to cross, cross over
- titee (aux.)
past tense, negative marker
- titi (n.)
motor road, esp. a
coal tar
- tĩĩ (n.)
palm nut
- ka tĩĩ (v.)
to be spoiled
- tĩĩtulu (n.)
palm oil
- to (n.)
Mandingo dish made of
cassava, mashed and boiled
- to (suf.)
future tense, positive
(limited usage)
- ka to (v.)
to stay
- ka to (v.)
ka to k_o
to stay behind, be late
- t_oda (n.)
village
- t_olo (n., inal.)
ear
- t_ololafě (n.)
earring
- t_olosi (n.)
flashlight
- t_olosikaba (n.)
flashlight battery
- t_ol_ot_ol_o (n.)
bat
- tow
other
- t_o (n.)
termite mound
- t_o (n., inal.)
head, back of
- t_od_ol_o (n.)
worm, parasitic
- t_ol_o (n.)
spring frog
- T_oma (n.)
Loma, an ethnic group in Liberia
- t_o (n., inal.)
name
- t_o (n., inal.)
a t_o le X. (phr.)
its name is X,
it's called X
- t_ofe (pp.)
near, next to, beside
also dafe
- t_o (n.)
grasshopper, cricket
- tu (n.)
high forest
- tu (n.)
the bush, woods
(lots of undergrowth)
also tuloya, wa

wa.....wula_la

W.

wa (n.)
the bush, woods
(lots of undergrowth).
also tuloya, tu

wa (conj.)
but

wa (num.)
a thousand,
wa kɛlɛ 'one thousand'

waati (n.)
time

waati jeli (q.w.)
how long, how much time

waati mĩde (q.w.)
when, what time

wakɔlɔsobo (n.)
wild animal

wala (adj.)
great, plenty

wala (n.)
leopard

ka wala (v.)
to be plenty

wale (n.)
umbrella

wali (n.)
money

walibõ (n.)
bank

wali misẽ (n.)
change
lit., money-small

wãso (n.)
crab

wãsosa (n.)
scorpion
lit., crab-snake

wẽzani (n.)
tree squirrel

wia (n.)
lie

ka X wini (v.)
to spin (thread)

wo (adj.)
that
also o, we

wolo (n.)
kola nut

wolo (n., inal.)
thigh

woo (n.)
hole

ka woo kɛ (v.)
to operate, to have an
operator

wɔlɔ (num.)
six

wɔlõwula (num.)
seven

wɔsũ (n.)
tree, lightweight,
used to make boats,
doesn't burn well

wɔtolo (n.)
wheelbarrow

wula (n.)
afternoon, evening

wula_la (phr.)
in the afternoon

k'i b_olo tu (X₁la).....tūnye?

k'i b_olo tu (X₁la) (v.)
to touch (X)

ka tu (v.)
to pound (especially
cassava or rice)

tuabu (n.)
foreigner
also tubabu

tubabu (n.)
foreigner
also tuabu

tuk_ol_osobo (n.)
wild animal

tula (n.)
bull
also nisitula

tuli (n.)
land frog

ka tuli (v.)
to rot

tuloya (n.)
the bush, woods
(lots of undergrowth)
also tu, wa

tulu (n.)
cooking oil, grease,
butter

ka tulū (v.)
to be lost
also tunū

tuma (n.)
time

ka tunī (v.)
to play, have fun

ka tunu X₁ma (v.)
to get away from X,
to lose X

ka turū (v.)
to be lost
also tulū

tuu (n.)
muscle

ka k_ol_o tū (v.)
to set a bone

tūnye?
really?, for true?

wula.....Zorzorwu

wula (n.)
forest

wulě (adj.)
red

wulĩ (n.)
chimpanzee

k'i wulĩ (v.)
to wake up, get up

wulini (n.)
dog

ka X wulɔ (v.)
to spread X out

wuse (n.)
potato

wusegbe (n.)
sweet potato with
white skin

wusewulě (n.)
sweet potato with
red skin

ka wuli (v.)
to finish, to boil

Y.

ya
here
also yano

yano
here
also ya

ye (pp.)
with, to

ye
there
also yeno

yeno
there
also ye

ka X ye (v.)
to see X

yɔlɔ (n.)
place

Z.

zanu (n.)
rabbit

Zorzorwu (n. prop.)
Zorzor

DICTIONARY (ENGLISH - MANDINGO).....able....arrow

A

able, to be
ka se (v.)

to accompany
ka losia (v.)
L.E.: to carry

to add Y to X
ka Y bila X ka (v.)
also ka Y la X ka

affair
ko (n.)

after
nya

afternoon
wula (n.)

afternoon, in the
wula_la (phr.)

again
kotuni (adv.)

to agree to X
ka dīnye X_ma (v.)

air
fōnye (n.)

airplane
samakulū (n.)
lit., up-canoe

alive, to be
ka duniya bine (v.)
also ka duniya

all
be (adj.)

all X
X be (t.e.)
also X X, X o X

Allah
Alla (n., prop.)

also
fana (adv.)

America
Falagbejamana (n.)
lit., whites' country

ancestor
mookolo (n.)
(usually deceased)

and
ani (conj.)

and
ka (conj.)
(combines verb phrases)

angry, to be
ka mo (v.)
L.E.: vexed

animal, domestic
bilafē (n.)

animal, wild
tukalosobo (n.)
also wakalosobo

another
di gbele (adj.)
lit., some-different

answer
jabi (n.)

arm
bolo (n., inal.)

to arrive
ka se (v.)

arrow
bīnye (n.)

ask.....beat

to ask
ka nyinika (v.)

to ask X (X = a person)
ka X ma nyinika (v.)

to assist
ka deme (v.)

at
la (pp.)
also lo'

at
ma (pp.)

Atlantic Ocean
Kɔɔji (n.)
lit., salt-water

aunt
tene (n., inal.)

away from
dila (pp.)

ax
teelã (n.)

B

back
ko (n., inal.)

bad
ju (adj.)
also tana

bag
boɔɔ (n.)

banana
namasa (n.)

bank
walibõ (n.)

bar
doobõ (n.)
also dolobõ
lit., beer-house

basket
jusokɔɔɔ (n.)

bat
tolõtolo (n.)

bathing area
koya (n.)

battery
-kaba (n., suf.)

Y to be an X
Y le X le (phr.)
also X ye Y le le

bean
sɔsɔ (n.)

beard
bõbõsi (n., inal.)
lit., chin-hair

beard
dakɔɔsi (n., inal.)

to beat (especially eggs)
ka gbasi (v.)

because.....bone

because
kamasolo (conj.)

bed
kanape (n.)
also lafē

bed, straw
bubolo (n.)

bedroom
sibō (n.)

beef
nisisoo (n.)

before
kini
also sani

to beg
ka jō (v.)

I beg you
i jō (phr.)

behind
koma (pp.)
lit., back-to

behind, to be (L.E.)
ka boli X_ko (v.)

bellows
fā (n.)

belt
sētulu (n.)

bench
bā (n.)

beside
dafa (pp.)
also tōafe

better, to get
ka keneya (v.)

between
cama (pp.)
also ce

bicycle
neeso (n.)
lit., iron-horse

big
bōya (adj.)

bird
kōno (n.)

bitter
komu (adj.)

black
fī (adj.)
also fīni

blackboard
tābulo (n.)

black cobra
bilafi (n.)

blacksmith
siaki (n.)

to block (a road)
ka X tee (v.)

blood
jēli (n.)

body
faliso (n.)

to boil
ka sita (v.)
also ka wuli

bolt, used to lock a door
ko (n.)

bone
kolo (n.)

bonesetter.....	bunch
bonesetter (one who sets bones) kɔlɔtuba (n.)	breast, woman's sū (n., inal.)
book buku (n.) also sebe	to breastfeed a child ka sū di dēni ma (v.)
booth (in the market) gba (n.)	bridge sē (n.)
border dā (n.)	to bring ka na X le (v.)
born, to be ka sɔlɔ (v.)	to bring X ka bɔ X le (v.)
boss kūtii (n.)	to bring X for Y ka na X le Y nye (v.)
bottle sani (n.)	to bring a gift ka sama (v.)
bowl bɔɔ (n.)	broom selā (n.)
box kesu (n.)	brother, older kɔlɔce (n., inal.)
boyfriend kalawulē (n.)	brother, younger dɔɔce (n., inal.)
bracelet gbāgbā (n.)	to brush one's teeth k'i da lako (v.)
bread bulu (n.)	to build ka X lajele (v.)
breakfast dabɔ (n.)	bull nisitula (n.) also tula
to break ka kali (v.)	bullfrog bomba (n.)
to break open X ka X lɔci (v.)	bump (in the road) dūgulū (n.)
to break up the soil ka lɔsi (v.)	bunch lasili (n.)

burden.....cent

burden
dunu (n.)

to burn
ka nyini (v.)

to burn the farm
ka sene nyini (v.)

the bush. (lots of undergrowth)
tu (n.)
also tuloya, wa

business
ko (n.)

but
wa (conj.)

butter
tulu (n.)

butterfly
flefle (n.)

buttocks
jumaya (n., inal.)

to buy
ka sā (v.)

C

cabbage
filabdu (n.)

calabash
fe (n.)

to call
ka kili (v.)

camera
fɔtɔtafē (n.)
lit., picture-take-thing

can
ka se (v.)

canoe (any ship or boat)
kulū (n.)

car (any vehicle)
mōbili (n.)

to carry X
ka bɔ X_lɛ (v.)
also ka taa X_lɛ

to carry X for Y
ka taa X_lɛ Y_nye (v.)

to carve an X (requires that the
object being carved be named)
ka X bɔ (v.)

cassava
bānaku (n.)

cat
nyokoma (n.)

to catch
ka X mina (v.)

ceiling
samaya (n.)
lit., up-place

one cent, 1¢
kapa kēlē (n.)

center.....close

center, in the center of
cama (pp.)

to chaff rice
ka tēde

chair
siifē (n.)

chalk
lakili (n.)

change
wali misē (n.)
lit., money-small

to chase
ka boli X_{ko} (v.)
also ka gbe

to chat
ka balo (v.)

chauffeur
mōbiliboliba (n.)
also sobele

cheek
dabulu (n., inal.)

cheek (used in abusive language,
'fat face')
dolo (n.)

chest, female or male
sisi (n., inal.)

chicken
sise (n.)

child
dē (n., inal.)

chimpanzee
wulī (n.)

chin
bōbō (n., inal.)

to chop
ka besi (v.)

church
allakabō (n.)
lit., God-house
also jisebō

cigarette
sigalete (n.)

city
soba (n.)

clay
bōo (n.)

clay, white (used for white wash)
dagbe

clean
sene (adj.)

to clean
ka X_{ma} tee (v.)

to clear the field
ka gbe_{lo} tee (v.)

to climb
ka jele X_{la} (v.)
also ka X_{la} jele (v.)

clinic
dolo_{to}lobō (n.)

clock
-mātolo (n., suf.)

clock, table top
tabalilamātolo (n.)

to clean (clear) the yard
ka duuma tee (v.)

to clean a house
ka bō_{na} tee (v.)

to close X
ka X_{dalatū} (v.)

cloth.....	country medicine
cloth fani (n.)	to come with X for Y ka na X_lε Y_nye (v.)
cloud sā (n.)	the coming X X nato (t.e.)
coast kɔdala (n.)	compound luma (n.)
cobra, black bilafi (n.)	compound, a group of houses belonging to related individuals and/or families laminala (n.)
cockroach nyēneleukuluku (n.)	to cook ka tibili ke (v.)
coffee kafe (n.)	cook shop kinifileya (n.) lit., rice-sell-place
coin kapa (n.)	cooking oil tulu (n.)
cold (not used for people or the weather) sumaya (adj.)	copper dayā (n.) also kapa
cold, coldness nene (n.)	corn nyo (n.)
cold sasa (n.) L.E.: fresh cold	cotton jese (n.)
to collect ka taa ce (v.)	cough sɔsɔ (n.)
to collect X ka X ladē (v.)	to count ka kōde (v.)
to comb one's hair (male) k'i kũ bɔ (v.)	country lamana (n.)
to come ka na (v.)	country band bulubala (n.)
to come from/out of X ka bɔ (X_la) (v.)	country medicine falifibasi (n.)
to come together ka nyɔɔ ladē (v.)	

cousin.....cutlass

cousin
bēni (n. inal.)

to cultivate
ka lōsi (v.)

cover
-daatū (n. suf.)

cup
jīafe (n.)
also kōpu

cow
nisi (n.)

cup, tin measure for grains
kōpu (n.)

coworker
baalekenyāā (n.)

curtain
funatelelafani (n.)
lit., window-cloth

crab
wāsō (n.)

to cut
ka kali (v.)
also ka tee

to crack X
ka X lōci (v.)

to cut down a tree
ka jīli tee (v.)

cricket
tō (n.)

cutlass
kōlōmulu (n.)

crocodile
bama (n.)

crop
sēnefē (n.)

to cross
ka timi (v.)

to cross
ka timi X_la (v.)

to cross (a river)
ka X tee (v.)

to cross on X
ka timi X_ka (v.)

to cross over X
ka timi X_ka (v.)
also ka timi X_la

to cry
ka kasi (v.)

to cry out
ka kū (v.)

dark.....	dress
D	
dark fīni (adj.)	dirty nō (adj.)
daughter dēmuso (n., inal.)	dish bɔɔ (n.)
day lō (n.) also tili	dish, made of cassava, mashed and boiled to (n.)
day after tomorrow sinikene (n.)	dish, made of pounded cassava root fufu (n.) also suna
day before yesterday kunasini (n.)	dish, made of rice and sugar mɔni (n.)
day broke kene bɔni (phr.)	to divide ka lɔtala (v.)
to decorate cloth ka fani bɔ (v.)	to do ka ke (v.)
deer mina (n.)	to do work ka baale ke (v.)
desert, open field (clear area) gbeka (n.)	doctor dɔlɔtɔlɔ (n.)
desk bā (n.)	dog wulini (n.)
to have diarrhea (runny belly) kɔnɔ ka boli (phr.)	dollar dala (n.)
to die ka foa (v.)	one dollar, \$1 dala kelē (n.) also sumu juulu
difficult gbili (adj.)	done, to be ka bā (v.)
to dig ka sē (v.)	door da (n.)
to dig potatoes ka wuse bɔ (v.)	doughnut fulufulu (n.)
dirt fuli (n.)	to dress well k'i masili kubē (v.)

drink.....England

drink
 mīfē (n.)
 lit., drink-thing

to drink
 k'i.mī (v.)

to drive a car
 ka mōbili boli

driver
 mōbiliboliba (n.)
 also sɔfɛlɛ

driver ant
 mēnye (n.)

drum
 bala (n.)

to dry
 ka ja

to dry dishes (with a cloth)
 ka bɔɔlu ja fani_la (v.)

to dry in the sun
 ka ja tili_kɔnɔ (v.)

dry season
 tilima (n.)

duck (found in big rivers)
 kɔɔku (n.)

dust
 gbāgbā (n.)

E

ear
 tolo (n., inal.)

to earn money
 ka wali sɔɔ (v.)

earring
 tololafē (n.)

east
 tilibɔ (n.)
 lit., sun-come from

to eat
 ka dɔ (v.)

egg
 -kili (n., suf.)

egg, boiled
 sisekili tibini (n.)

egg, chicken
 sisekili (n.)

eight
 seī (num.)

eight
 biseī (num.)

elbow
 nōkula (n., inal.)

elephant
 sama (n.)

emphasis marker
 lɛ (adj.)

to end
 ka'bā (v.)

enemy
 gbeyiamɔɔ (n.)

England
 Falagbejamana (n.)
 lit., whites' country

enter.....fever

to enter into X
ka X dō (v.)

ethnic group. (kind of person)
mɔɔ su mīde (phr.)

evening
wula (n.)

evening (about 7 p.m.)
fitili (n.)

evening, in the
su_lɔ (phr.)

evening, late
su (n.)

evening prayer
fitili (n.)

every X
X be (t.e.)
also XX, X o X

excuse me
hake to (phr.)

it's expensive
a da gbiliyani (phr.)

eye
nya (n., inal.)

her/his eye is red
a nya wulēni (phr.)

eyeglasses
basalō (n.)

eyelash
nyasi (n., inal.)

eyelid
nyagbolo (n., inal.)

F

face
nyaloya (n., inal.)

to fall
ka bī (v.)

family, extended
balamɔɔ (n.)

family, immediate
dēbaya (n.)

to fan
ka tēde (v.)

far
jā (adj.)
also jāya

farm, old
timba (n.)

farm
sene (n.)
also senekeya

farmer
senekeba (n.)

fat
böya (adj.)

father
fa (n., inal.)

feast
lōba (n.)
lit., day-big

feces
boo (n.)

fenced area
joso (n.)

fertilizer
senebasi (n.)

fever, to have a
fali gbani (phr.)

field.....for true?

field (open area)	fish pond
gbe (n.)	jɛɛyakɔ (n.)
<u>also</u> gbeloya	
fifteen cents, 15¢	five
etĩ (n.)	luulu (num.)
fifty	five cents, 5¢
biluulu (num.)	fõ (n.)
	<u>also</u> kapa luulu
fifty cents, 50¢	to fix
fiti (n.)	ka ladã (v.)
<u>also</u> sumu fila ani neĩ (n.)	flashlight
to fight	tolosi (n.)
ka se (v.)	flashlight battery
to fight (verbally)	tolosikaba (n.)
ka dala se	flat, to be
finger	ka lakanya (v.)
bolokɔni (n., inal.)	floor
finger-ring	laso (n.)
koina (n.)	flute
to finish	bulubala (n.)
ka wuli (v.)	fly
<u>also</u> ka bã	si (n.)
fire	to follow X
ta (n.)	ka bila X kɔ
firewood	(X = a person)
lɔɔ (n.)	to follow X (X = a thing)
first	ka bila X kɔ ka (v.)
jɔɔna	lit., to put (yourself) on
fish	X's back
jɛɛ (n.)	food
to fish	dɔnifẽ (n.)
ka taa jɛɛminaya (v.)	<u>also</u> dɔnikɛfe
fish, dried	foot
jɛɛ jalã (n.)	sẽ (n., inal.)
fish, smoked	for true?
kɔɔ jɛɛ (n.)	tunye? (phr.)

force.....future

to force X
ka X fɔlɔsɛ (v.)

forehead
tɛ (n., inal.)

foreigner
falagbɛ (n.)
also tubabu, tuabu

forest
wula (n.)

forest, high
tu (n.)

to forget
ka nyina (v.)

to form
ka X lajɛlɛ (v.)

forty
binaani (num.)

four
naani (num.)

France
Falagbejamana (n.)
lit., whites' country

Friday
jumaɔ (n.)

friend
duunyɔɔ (n., inal.)

from
la (pp.)
also lɔ

from X to Y
ka bɔ X ka taa Y
also ka damina X ka sii Y

front, in front of
nyama (pp.)

fruit
jilidɛ (n.)
lit., tree-child

fufu, made of pounded cassava root
suna (n.)
aTso fufu

fun, to have
ka tuni (v.)

future tense, negative marker
tena (aux.)

future tense, positive marker
kete (aux.)

future tense, positive (limited
usage)
-to (suf.)

Ganta.....go

G

Ganta	to give birth to X
Ngapa (n., prop.)	ka sīdi X_ma (v.)
garbage	glass
nyama (n.)	jiafe (n.)
	<u>also</u> kɔpu
garden	to go
sɛnekeya (n.)	ka taa (v.)
to gather X	to go beyond
ka X ladē (v.)	ka timi (v.)
to gather for a meeting	to go by car
ka nyɔɔ ladē (v.)	ka mōbili taa (v.)
Gbande, an ethnic group in Liberia	to go by foot
Bādi (n., prop.)	ka taa i sē_ma (v.)
to get an injection/shot	to go down
ka seelā ta (v.)	ka jii (v.)
to get away from X	to go fishing
ka tunu X_ma (v.)	ka taa jɛeminaya (v.)
to get better	<u>also</u> ka taa refiliya
ka keneya (v.)	to go get
to get done	ka taa ce (v.)
ka mɔ (v.)	to go hunting
to get dressed	ka taa sɔfoaya (v.)
ka māsili (v.)	to go on X
to get up	ka bɔ X_lɛ (v.)
k'i wuli (v.)	to go on/by X
Gio, an ethnic group in Liberia	ka X mina (v.)
Jafóba (n.)	<u>also</u> k'a taa X kɔ_ka,
	ka taa X_ka
girlfriend	to go straight ahead
simbili (n.)	ka taa i_nya_tilēma (v.)
to give X to Y	to go talk to X
ka X di Y_ma (v.)	ka taa X fo (v.)
to give a shot/injection	to go (reach) to X
ka seelā lata (v.)	ka si X_ma (v.)
<u>also</u> ka seelā di	

go to bed.....	gun
to go to bed ka taa lafē _{ma} (v.)	grandchild mamani (n., inal.)
to go up ka jε _ε X _{la} (v.)	grandfather bεmεCε (n., inal.)
to go visit ka taa b _ε X _{fε} (v.)	grandmother mwa (n., inal.)
to go visit X ka taa X fo (v.)	grass bī (n.)
to go with X ka X l _ε sia (v.) <u>also</u> ka taa X _{le}	grasshopper t _ε (n.)
goat ba (n.)	grass snake bījεnε (n.)
god jo (n.)	gravel bεlε (n.)
God Alla (n., prop.)	grease, cooking tulu (n.)
Gola, an ethnic group in Liberia Gola (n., prop.)	great wala (adj.)
gold sani (n.)	Grebo, an ethnic group in Liberia Grebo (n., prop.)
good bē (adv.) <u>also</u> kubē	green gbili (adj.)
good diya (adj.) <u>also</u> nyi	greens filabulu
goodbye m _ε si o (phr.)	ground duu (n.)
good-looking cēya (adj.)	groundnut tia (n.)
gown, woman's kamāji (n.)	Guinea Lagini (n., prop.)
grainery kile (n.)	guinea fowl kami (n.)
	guitar jitali (n.)
	gun m _ε lifa (n.)

hair.....here

H

hair (on the head)	he
kūsi (n., inal.)	a (pro.)
lit., head-hair	
hair (esp. body hair)	head
si (n., inal.)	kū (n., inal.)
hammer	head, back of
malito (n.)	tō (n., inal.)
hand	head, top of
bolo (n., inal.)	kūcama (n., inal.)
	also kūcamaya
to hang up	health
ka dē (v.)	keneya (n.)
happiness	to hear
sawa (n.)	ka mē (v.)
hard	heart
gbili (adj.)	juso (n., inal.)
harvest	heat
senefē (n.)	tala (n.)
to harvest rice	heaven
ka malo kali (v.)	alijeni (n.)
to harvest X	also halijeni (n.)
ka X_la tee (v.)	height
to have X (X = name of possessor, a common noun or pronoun)	kenema (n.)
ka X_bolo (v.)	hell
to have a fever	jahanama (n.)
fali gbani (phr.)	to help
to have an operation	ka deme (v.)
ka woo ke (v.)	hepatitis
to have fun	nelekolosi (n.)
ka tuni (v.)	her
to have to	a (pro.)
ka kā ka (v.)	X is here
hawk	X ti ya(no) (phr.)
bibi (n.?)	here
	ya (adv.)
	also yano

hide.....husband

to hide in X
ka domāda X_lɔ (v.)

hill
tini (n.)
also tiniba

him
a (pro.)

hippopotamus
mali (n.)

to hit
ka gbasi (v.)
also ka so

hoe
dawa (n.)

to hoe
ka lɔsi (v.)

to hold X
ka X mina (v.)

hole
woo (n.)

to hollow out X
ka X sa (v.)

hometown
fasola (n.)

hook (for fishing)
re (n.)

horn
mbē

horse, general term
also riding, racing horse
so (n.)

hospital
dɔlɔtɔlɔbɔ (n.)
lit., doctor-house
also dɔlɔtɔlɔ

hot
tala (n.)

hot (temperature)
gba (adj.)

hot pepper
fɔlɔto (n.)

hour
lɛlɛ (n.)

house
bō (n.)

houses belonging to a related
group of individuals and/or
families
laminala (n.)

houseboy
bōnadēni (n.)

how?
di? (q.w.)

how long
waati jeli (q.w.)

how many
jeli (q.w.)

how much
jeli (q.w.)

how much time
waati jeli (q.w.)

how to (do something)
timi

one hundred
ceme (num.)

hunger
kōgo (n.)

hurt
ka dimi (v.)

husband
ce (n., inal.)

I.....jeweler

II
n (pro.)if
nito improve
ka keneya (v.)in
kɔnɔ (pp.)in back of
kɔma (pp.)
lit., back-toin front of
nyama (pp.)
lit., eye-toin the center of
cama (pp.)in the middle of
cama (pp.)insect
kɔbɔ (n.)inside of
kɔnɔ (pp.)intelligence
hakilɪ (n.)intestines
noo (n., inal.)iron
nee (n.)it
a (pro.)ivory
samani (n.)Ivory Coast
Konowari (n., prop.)**J**jama plum (L.F.)
māgolo (n.)jaw
tama (n., inal.)to jerk
ka so (v.)jeweler
siaki (n.)

key.....leaf

K

key

kōnyi (n.)
lit., door-teeth

kidney

kɔɔkulu (n., inal.)

to kill

ka foa (v.)

kind

su (adj.)

kitchen (outside)

gba (n.)

knee

gbelēkulu (n., inal.)

knife

mulu (n.)

to knock

ka gbasi (v.)

to knock (at a door)

ka kōgō (v.)
also ka gbasi

to know

ka lō (v.)

kola nut

wolo (n.)

Kpelle, an ethnic group in Liberia

Gbese (n., prop.)

L

lake

kɔba (n.)

land

duu* (n.)

land frog

tuli (n.)

language

-kã (n., suf.)

lappa (cloth measure)

taafe (n.)

last

labã

last X

X timini (t.e.)

late, to be

ka to_kɔ (v.)

latex

gbeiji (n.)
lit., rubber-water

latrine

kãbine (n.)

to laugh

ka jɛɛ (v.)

to lay X down

ka X la (v.)

leader

kütii (n.)

leaf (edible)

-bulu (n., suf.)

leaf, used to make black dye;
(used by women on palms and
soles of feet for cosmetic
purposes)

jabi (n.)

leg.....look

leg

sē (n., inal.)

lemon

mātilie (n.)

leopard

wala (n.)

leper, one who has leprosy

kunato (n.)

level, to be

ka lakanya (v.)

Liberia

Labiya (n., prop.)

lid

-daatū (n., suf.)

lie

wia (n.)

to lie to X (X = a person)

ka wia fo X_nye (v.)

to lie down

k'i la (v.)

to lie down and rest

k'i la ka nōni ke (v.)

light (electric)

koiā (n.)

light (general term)

tala (n.)

light (lightness)

kene (n.)

to light (a fire)

ka lamēnē (v.)

lightning

sāfelē (n.)

lit., rain-with break

lightning bug

takobo (n.)

lion

jala (n.)

lip

dagbolo (n., inal.)

liquid

mifē (n.)

a little

diini (adj.)

also dōni, bale

to live with X (X is

responsible for individual speaking)

k'i sii X_fe (v.)

liver

sō (n., inal.)

lizard

basa (n.)

load

duū (n.)

to load

ka X ke Y_kōno (v.)

to lock

ka X soo (v.)

...koyi ne 'with a key'

...kō_li 'with a bolt'

Loma

Tōma (n.)

long

jā (adj.)

also jāya

to look at X

ka X nya (v.)

to look for

ka nyini (v.)

look.....market

to look like X
ka bɔ̄ X_la (v.)

to lose X
ka tunū X ma (v.)
also ka X_na tunū

lost, to be
ka tulū (v.)
also tunū

to lower the price of X
ka X bɔ̄ (v.)

lung
fɔɔfɔɔ (n., inal.)

M

to make
ka ke (v.)

to make a bed
ka lafē ladā (v.)

to make a path
-ka sia jɛma (v.)

to make X do something
ka fɔlɔse (v.)

to make X stop
ka X lano (v.)

to make noise
ka salātānya ke (v.)

malaria
nɛnɛ (n.)

man
ce (n., inal.)

man, old
cɔmɔnu (n.)

man, old (term of respect)
cɛmɔba (n.)

mango
māgolo (n.)

Mandingo, an ethnic group in Liberia
Māniya (n., prop.)
also Mēniya

Mano, an ethnic group in Liberia
Mano (n., prop.)
also Jafoba

manure
nisiboo (n.)

many
siana (adj.)

market
lɔɔfɛ (n.)
also lɔɔ

married.....	moon
married, to get ka cε/muso ta (phr.)	message sama (n.)
married, are you cε/muso k'i_bolo? (phr.) lit., do you have a husband/wife?	metal nεε (n.)
mat nalā (n.)	midday tili (n.)
match takala (n.)	middle, in the middle of cama (pp.)
matter ko (n.)	milk nɔnɔ (n.)
mattress bubolo (n.)	mirror dualē (n.)
me n (pro.)	she miscarried a kɔnɔ laqbasin (phr.) lit., her-stomach-hit-itself
measles manyene (n.)	to miss (not hit) X ka X mapolo (v.)
to measure ka X suma (v.)	mission allakabō (n.) also jisebō
meat -sobo (n., suf.) also -soo	to mix together ka ke nyōō_ka (v.)
meat, chicken sisesobo (n.)	molar salo (n.)
meat, dried sobo jani (n.)	Monday tenelō (n.)
medicine basi (n.)	money wali (n.)
to meet ka nyōō ladē (v.)	monkey solā (n.)
to meet X ka X bē (v.)	Monrovia Dukor (n., prop.) also Monlovia
to meet one another ka nyōō bē (v.)	month kalo (n.)
merchant joyakeba (n.) also joya, julā	moon kalo (n.)

morning.....net

morning

sɔɔma (n.)

morning, early

sɔɔmāda_la (phr.)

morning, this

sɔɔmāda_la (phr.)

morning prayer (at 6 a.m.)

fajili (n.)

mortar

kolā (n.)

mosquito

soso (n.)

mosque

misili (n.)

mother

ba (n., inal.)

motor road, esp. coal tar

titi (n.)

mountain

tini (n.)

also tiniba

mouth

da (n., inal.)

muscle

tuu (n.)

Muslim

Islama (n., prop.)

must

ka kã (v.)

N

nail (for building)

pōdi (n.)

name

tɔɔ (n, inal.)

name

its name is X,

it is called X

a tɔɔ lɛ X (phr.)

nation

jamana (n.)

naval

bala (n., inal.)

near

dafɛ (pp.)

also tɔɔfɛ

neck

kã (n., inal.)

necklace

sɛni (n.)

to need

ka kɔ (v.)

needle

seelã (n.)

negative marker, intense

si (adj.)

negative, command marker

ka (aux.)

net

kɔɔɔnafɛ (n.)

fish net, made of wire

jeeminasãzã (n.)

lit., fish-catch-wire

net, large (stretched across a river)

jo (n.)

net.....out

net, small circular
(held in hand to use)
suma (n.)

new
kula (adj.)

newborn baby
dēnyene kula (n.)

next X
X nato (t.e.)

next to
dafε (pp.)
also tɔɔfε

night
su (n.)

night prayer (at 8 p.m.)
safo (n.)

nine
kɔnɔ (num.)

ninety
bikɔnɔ (num.)

no
ɔ-ɔ

noise
salātānya (n.)

noon
tili (n.)

nose
nū (n., inal.)

now
butu (adv.)
also kulaleni

nurse
dɔlɔtɔlɔ (n.)

O

okay
a lε lε o (phr.)

okra
gbā (n.)

old
kɔlɔ (adj.)

on
ka (pp.)
also kɔ ka
lit., back-on

on the ground
duuma (pp.)

on top of
ka (pp.)
also kɔ ka

one
kεl̄ε (num.)

onion
jawa (n.)

only
tino (adv.)

to open X
ka X dalaka (v.)

to operate
ka wɔp kε (v.)

orange
lɛmbulu (n.)

orange juice
lɛmbuluji (n.)

other
tow

our
mɔ (pro.)

out of
dila (pp.)

outsidepast tense

outside
banama (pp.)

owl
gbi (n.)

P

painting
foto (n.)

palm oil
titulu (n.)

palm nut
ti (n.)

pants
kuisi (n.)

paper
sebe (n.)
aiso buku

particular one
di (adj.)

to pass
ka timi (v.)

to pass by
ka timi (v.)

to pass through
ka timi (v.)

the past X
X timini (t.e.)

past tense, negative marker;
used with narrative and
simple past tenses
ma (aux.)

past tense, negative marker;
used with states of being,
including adjectives
tite (aux.)

past tense, positive marker;
used with simple and narrative
past tenses
ka (aux.)

past tense, positive marker;
used with states of being,
including adjectives
tee (aux.)

path.....play

path
sia (n.)

paw paw
mānyi (n.)

to pay
ka sala (v.)

to pay X for Y
ka X sala Y_fε (v.)

peace
here (n.)

Peace Corps Volunteer
falagbe (n.)

peanut
tia (n.)

to peel
ka falabu (v.)

pen
joso (n.)

pencil
kala (n.)

people, old (usually deceased)
mɔ̀kɔ̀lɔ̀ (n.)

person
mɔ̀ (n.)

pflegm
daagbolo (n.)

photography
foto (n.)

to pick X
ka X_la tee (v.)

to pick pineapple
ka jabibi bɔ̀ (v.)

to pick rice
ka malo kali (v.)

to pick X up
ka X'ta (v.)

picture
foto (n.)

to pierce one's ears
ka soo (v.)

pig
buyō (n.)

pig, wild
kɔ̀sɔ̀ (n.)

pigeon
bilini (n.)

pile
lasili (n.)

pill
basikɔ̀lɔ̀ (n.)

pineapple
jabibi (n.)

place
yɔ̀lɔ̀ (n.)

to place
ka X sii (v.)

to plait one's hair (female)
k'j kũ dā (v.)

to plant
ka sene (v.)

plantain
namasajā (n.)

planting time
senekewaati (n.)

plate
bɔ̀ (n.)

to play
ka tuni (v.)

to play a drum
ka bala gbasi (v.)

play.....put

to 'play fight'

ka še ka tuni na (v.)
lit., fight-play

please

i jō

pleasing

diya (adj.)

plenty

wala (adj.)

plenty, to be

ka wala (v.)

to plow

ka sia jema (v.)

plural suffix, more than two

-lu (suf.)

pocket

jufa (n.)

to point (at X)

k'i bolo tilē (X_la) (v.)

porch

siifē (n.)

possessive pronoun marker; used in
combination with pronoun, e.g.,

n ta 'mine', i ta 'yours (sg.)', etc.
ta

post office

letelebō (n.)

lit., letter-house

pot

daa (n.)

potato

wuse (n.)

to pound (esp. cassava or rice)

ka tu (v.)

to pray

ka seli (v.)

prayer

seli (n.)

prayer, afternoon (at 4 p.m.)

lasala (n.)

prayer, night (at 8 p.m.)

safo (n.)

prayer clothes, female

selifana (n.)

prayer gown, male

pipo (n.)

prayer hat, male

fula (n.)

pregnant, to be

ka kōnoma (v.)

price

da (n., inal.)

also sōō (n., al.)

to pull

ka X samā (v.)

pus, clear

daaji (n.)

pus, yellowish

daagbolo (n.)

to push X

ka X di (v.)

to put

ka X sii (v.)

to put down

ka X bila (v.)

also ka X la

to put X in Y

ka X ke Y kōno (v.)

to put on X

ka X bila a kā ka (v.)

also ka X bila a kā na

to put X on Y

ka Y bila X ka (v.)

put.....rent

to put on (a belt or a lappa)
ka X sili (v.)
lit., to tie on

Q

question marker (not commonly
used)
a?

quickly
bake (adv.)

R

rabbit
zanu (n.)

raccoon
kuluwala (n.)

radio
aladio (n.)

radio battery
aladiokaba (n.)

rain
saji (n.)
lit., cloud-water

rainy season
samaji (n.)

to raise chickens
ka sise laso (v.)

rat
nyina (n.)

to read
ka kala (v.)

ready, to be
ka ba (v.)
also ka mo, ka moya

really?
tunye? (q.w.)

red
wule (adj.)

relative
balamo (n.)

to remember
k'i hakilito (v.)

to remove
ka ju (v.)

to rent
ka lowase (v.)

repair.....rubber sap

- to repair
ka laḁā (v.)
- to repeat it
k'a fo i_ko (v.)
- to resemble X
ka bō X_la (v.)
- to rest
ka nōni ke (v.)
- restaurant
kinifileya (n.)
lit., rice-sell-place
- rice, cooked
kini (n.)
- rice, swamp
bōmalo (n.)
- rice, uncooked
malo (n.)
- rice, upland
gbabamalo (n.)
- rice bird, one that eats
ripe rice
ko (n.)
- rice bird, one that eats young
rice, has a white belly and a
black body
senu (n.)
- rice dust
amu (n.)
- to ride in a car
k'i sii mōboli_lo (v.)
- rifle
mōlifa (n.)
- right, to be
ka jo (v.)
- right now
butu (adv.)
also kulaleni
- ringword
falimatōdolo (n.)
- ripe, to be
ka mō (v.)
also ka mōoya
- ripe, to get
ka mō (v.)
- to rise, the sun rose
kene bōni (phr.)
- river
ko (n.)
- river, big
kōba (n.)
- road
sia (n.)
- to roll down
ka jii (v.)
- room (rare usage)
lumu (n.)
- rooster
dunu (n.)
- rope
julu (n.)
- to rot
ka tuli (v.)
- round, to make
ka lakulu (v.)
- rubber
gbei (n.)
- rubber sap
gbeiji (n.)
lit., rubber-water

rubber tree.....scare

rubber tree
 gbeijilij_ (n.)
 to run
 ka boli ka taa (v.)
 to have a runny nose
 nūji ka boli (phr.)

S

saloon
 doobō (n.)
 also dolobō
 lit., beer-house

salt
 kɔɔ (n.)

Saturday
 sibili (n.)

sauce
 na (n.)

saw (tool)
 si (n.)

to say
 ka fo (v.)
 also ka ko (v.)

to say it
 k'a fo (v.)

to say X to Y
 ka X fo Y_ye (v.)

to say (it) to X
 k'a fo X_ye (v.)

to say it again
 k'a fo i_kɔ
 lit., to say it behind you

to say that X (X = a sentence)
 k'a fo ko X

what did you say?
 i y'a ko di? (phr.)
 lit., you-it-speak-how

scab
 daafolo (n.)

scalp
 kükɔɔ (n., inal.)

to scare birds
 ka kɔnɔ gbe (v.)

school.....should

school
lakoli (n.)

school teacher
lakolikalamoo (n.)

scorpion
wāsōsa (n.)
lit., crab-snake

to scratch X
ka X sa (v.)

to scream
ka jana (v.)

seat
siiya (n., inal.)
lit., sit-place

secret
gbono (n.)
also gbūdo

to see X
ka X yē (v.)

seed
-kulu (n., suf.)

seed, to be planted, must be
connected to food name vs.
-kolo (being planted)
-si (n., suf.)

seedling
jilifilē (n.)

self
jele (n.)

to sell X
ka X file (v.)

to send to X
ka lataa X_{ma} (v.)

to set a bone
ka kolo tū (v.)

to set down
ka bila (v.)

it's settled
a le le o (phr.)

seven
wɔɔlɔwula (num.)

seventy
biwɔɔlɔwula (num.)

to sew
ka kala (v.)

to sharpen
ka dade (v.)

to shave
ka bōbōsi li (v.)

she
a (pro.)

sheep
saa (n.)

shirt
fani (n.)
also kānafani

shoe
samala (n.)

to shoot a gun
ka mɔlifa gbasi (v.)

to shoot X (X = a weapon)
ka X lafili (v.)

shop
pitiki (n.)

short
surūya (adj.)

should
ka kā ka (v.)

shoulder.....snail

shoulder
kawa (n., inal.)
also kawakū

shout
ka jana (v.)

shovel
sɔpu (n.)

to show
ka jea (v.)

to show Y to X
ka Y jea X_{ma} (v.)

sick person
jāgoloto (n.)

sickle
keeya (n.)

sickness
jāgolo (n.)

Sierra Leone
Angili (n., prop.)
also Freetown

silver
fuā (n.)

since
fo (conj.)

to sing
ka dōñila (v.)

to sink
ka jii (v.)

sister, older
kɔlomuso (n., inal.)

sister, younger
dɔomuso (n., inal.)

to sit down
k'i sii (v.)

six
wɔɔlo (num.)

sixty
biwɔɔlo (num.)

skull cap (male)
fula (n.)

sky
dīnye (n.)
also sānye

to sleep
ka si (v.)

sleepiness
sunɔɔ (n.)

to slice
ka besi (v.)

slipper
samala (n.)

slowly
diini diini (adv.)
also dɔɔni dɔɔni

small
diini (adj.)
also dɔɔni

small
dɔɔya (adj.)

small amount
bele (adj.)

to smile
ka jele (v.)

smoke
sisi (n.)

to smoke a cigarette
ka sigalete mī (v.)

snail
kewe (n.)

snake.....stars

snake	sa (n.)	speak slower	i k̄a ma gi (phr.)
snare	sɔ̄ (n.)	speak softer	i k̄a ma gi (phr.)
snot	nūgbolo (n., inal.)	spear	tama (n.)
soap	safine (n.)	to spend the night	ka si (v.)
soft	gbiliya (adj.)	spider	talē (n.)
soil	bɔ̄ɔ̄ (n.)	to spill	ka bɔ̄ (v.)
soil, black	duufī (n.)	to spin (thread)	ka X wini (v.)
soil, red	duuwulē (n.)	spirit, evil	solitana (n.)
some	dī (adj.)	spoiled, to be	ka tīī (v.)
son	dēce (n., inal.)	spoon	kulu (n.)
soon	joona (adv.)	to spread X out	ka X wulɔ̄ (v.)
sore	daa (n.)	spring frog	tɔ̄lɔ̄ (n.)
soup	na (n.)	to sprout	ka filē (v.)
sour	komu (adj.)	stall (in the market)	gba (n.)
speak faster	i k̄a na gba (phr.)	to stand up	k'i lɔ̄ (v.)
speak louder	i k̄a na bɔ̄ (phr.)	stars	lulu (n.)

stay.....	Swim
to stay ka to (v.)	to strike ka gbasi (v.)
to stay behind ka to_ka (v.)	student lakolidē (n.) <u>lit.</u> , school-child
steam fude (n.)	to study ka kalā (v.)
still folo (adv.) (rare usage)	to study for school ka kalā ke lakoli_ni (v.)
to stir ka ke nyōō_ka (v.)	Suakoko, a city in Bong Co. Suakokodu (n., prop.)
stomach kōno (n., inal.)	sun tili (n.)
stool, feces boo (n.)	Sunday jumasilō (n.) <u>also</u> lalilō (rare usage)
to stop at X ka no X_la (v.)	to surpass ka timi (v.)
to stop oneself k'i lo (v.)	swamp bōō (n.)
to make X-stop ka X lano (v.)	swamp rice bōōmalo (n.)
store pitiki (n.)	sweat tala (n.)
stove tibilikafē (n.)	to sweep a house ka bō_na tēē (v.)
to straighten ka losama (v.)	sweet diya (adj.)
street urchin nalā (n.)	sweet potato with red skin wusewulē (n.)
strength fāga (n.)	sweet potato with white skin wusegbe (n.)
to stretch ka losama (v.)	to swim ka taa ji_lo (v.)

table.....that

T

table	tabali (n.)	tea	<u>kafe</u> (n.)
tailor	<u>fanikalāba</u> (n.) also <u>tayeɛ</u>	to teach Y to X	ka X <u>kaḷā</u> Y_la (v.)
to take X	ka X ta (v.) also <u>ka taa X_ɛ</u>	teacher	<u>kalamɔɔ</u> (n.)
to take an injection/shot	ka seelā ta (v.)	to tear	ka fala (v.)
to take medicine (liquid)	ka basi mĩ (v.)	teeth	<u>nyi</u> (n., inal.)
to take medicine (solid)	ka basi ta (v.)	to tell	ka <u>fo</u> (v.)
to take care of X	ka hakilito X_lo (v.)	to tell Y X	ka X <u>fo</u> Y_ye (v.)
to take off	ka ju (v.)	to tell a lie to X	ka wia <u>fo</u> X_nye (v.)
to take some off X	ka X <u>bɔ</u> (v.)	to tell a secret	ka gbũdo <u>fo</u> (v.)
to talk	ka <u>kuma</u> (v.) also <u>ka kũ</u>	ten	tā (num.)
to talk to X	ka, taa X balo (v.)	ten cents, 10¢	<u>neĩ</u> (n.)
talking place (often an open round building set apart from the house)	balokeya (n.)	termite	baabaa (n.)
tall	<u>jā</u> (adj.) also <u>jāya</u>	termite mound	tō (n.)
tape recorder	tepu (n.)	thank you	nĩ ce (phr.)
taxi	takisi (n.)	that	ko (conj.)
		that	mĩ (adj.)
		that	<u>o</u> (adj.) also <u>wo</u>

that's it.....too
that's it a lɛ lɛ <u>o</u> (phr.)	to throw X (X = weapon) ka X lafili (v.)
them <u>ai</u> (pro.)	to throw X ka X fili (v.)
there ye <u>also</u> yeno	thunder sāfɛlɛkǎ (n.) <u>lit.</u> , rain-with-break-voice
they <u>ai</u> (pro.)	Thursday alamisalɔ̄ (n.)
thick mwaya (adj.)	time tuma (n.) <u>also</u> waati
thief sō (n.)	tiredness sunɔɔ (n.)
thigh <u>wolo</u> (n., inal.)	to la (pp.) <u>also</u> lo, ma, ye
thin dɔɔya (adj.)	today bi (n.)
thirst <u>jilo</u> (n.)	toe sɛkɔni (n., inal.)
thirty bisawa (num.)	toe nail sɛsɔni (n., inal.)
this X X mĩni (t.e.)	tomato tamati (n.)
this is an X X lɛ ni (phr.)	tomorrow sini (n.)
one thousand wa kɛlɛ̄ (num.)	tongue <u>nee</u> (n., inal.)
thread jese (n.)	too fana (adv.)
three sawa (num.)	too (in a negative sense) kuju (adv.) <u>also</u> kuyu
throat <u>kā</u> (n., inal.)	

too.....type

too (in a positive sense)

kubē (adv.)
also bē, bale

toothbrush

gbese (n.)

top (on top of)

ka (pp.)
also kō_ka

to touch (X)

k'i bōlo tu (X_la) (v.)

towel

nisifuruni (n.)
lit., cow-intestine: inside
of one looks like towel sur-
face

town

so (n.)

to transplant

kā_jema (v.)

trader

joyakeba (n.)
also jula, joya

train

telē (n.)

trap

so (n.)

tree

jili (n.)

tree

-sū (n., suf.)

tree (a large heavy one,
good for firewood)

gbalo (n.)

tree (lightweight, used to make
boats, doesn't burn well)

wōsū (n.)

tree squirrel

wēzani (n.)

woman's turban

kēkaamaye (n.)

Tuesday

talalō (n.)

turkey

samabuli (n.)

to turn

ka tilē (v.)

to turn off (a light)

ka X nasa (v.)

to turn to the left

ka tilē i bōlo nyumā_na (phr.)

to turn to the right

ka tilē i bōlo be_e_la (phr.)
also ka tilē i bōlo kini_ma

turtle

kōgosula (n.)

twenty

mūā (num.)

twenty cents, 20¢

sumu (n.)

twenty-five cents, 25¢

sumu kēlē ani fō (n.)

two

fila (num.)

type

sū (adj.)

ugly.....voice

U

ugly
coya (adj.)

umbilical cord
balajili (n.)

umbrella
wale (n.)

uncle
bēke (n., inal.)

under
kɔɔ (pp.)

underarm
kawakɔɔya (n., inal.)

underneath¹
kɔɔ (pp.)

to understand
ka mē (v.)

to understand X
ka X nyaye (v.)

upper arm
kawa (n., inal.)

urine
nyene (n.)

utensil
dōnikafē (n.)
lit., eat-thing

V

vegetable
sēnefē (n.)

very (in a positive sense)
bale (adv.)

very much (in a positive sense)
kubē (adv.)
also bē

vein
fasaa (n.)

village
sēnelɔ (n.)
also toda

vine
ju (n.)

to visit X
ka taa X balo (v.)

voice
kā (n., inal.)

waist.....wheelbarrow

W

waist	camaya (n., inal.)	we	mɔ (pro.)
to wake up	k'i wuli (v.)	to wear X	ka X bila (v.)
to walk	ka taama (v.)	weather	sānye (n.) also dīnye
to walk to X	ka taama ka taa X_la (v.)	to weave	ka X dā (v.)
wall	dāna (n.)	Wednesday	alabalō (n.)
to want (used in complex sentences)	ka fε (v.)	to weed (a garden)	ka X bɔ (v.) also ka sɛnɛ bɔ
to want	ka kɔ (v.)	week	lɔtɛ (n.)
to wash	ka kɔ (v.)	to weigh X	ka X pese (v.)
to wash oneself	k'i kɔ (v.)	well	kɔlɔ (n.)
to wash clothes	ka fani kɔ (v.)	well (in a positive sense)	kubē (adv.) also bē
to wash dishes	ka bɔɔlu kɔ (v.)	west	tilibī (n.) lit., sun-fall
to wash the floor	ka laso kɔ (v.)	what	mīdɛ (q.w.)
water	ji (n.)	what about X?	X do? (q.w.)
to water	ka so jila (v.)	what time?	waati mīdɛ? (q.w.)
waterbird (general term)	kɔkɔnɔ (n.)	wheelbarrow	wɔtolo (n.)
waterfall	kɔwulini (n.)		

when.....write

when
waati mĩde (q.w.)

when
ni

where
mĩni (q.w.)

white
gbe (adj.)

who
jene (q.w.)

why
mĩdelo (q.w.)

wife
muso (n., inal.)

will (future tense,
positive)
kete (aux.)

will not (future tense,
negative)
tena (aux.)

wind
fõnye (n.)

window
funatele (n.)

with
fe (pp.)
also ye

woman
muso (n., inal.)

woman, old (term of respect)
musokolonu (n.)

woods (lots of undergrowth)
tuloya (n.)
also tu, wa

work
baale (n.)

to work
ka baale ke (v.)

work crew or cooperative
kuu (n.)

world
duniya (n.)

worm, parasitic
tõdolo (n.)

to wrestle
ka se ka tuni na
lit., fight-play

wrist
bolokanaya (n., inal.)

wrist watch
bololamatolo (n.)

to write
ka sebeli ke (v.)

yard.....Zorzor

Y

yard
lu (n.)

yard, in the
luma (pp.)

year
sā (n.)
also sāye

yes
ĩ

yesterday
kunu (n.)

yet
ba (adv.)
(used in neg. sentences)

you (sg.)
i (pro.)

you (pl.)
ai (pro.)

young
dɔɔya (adj.)

Z

Zorzor
Zorzorwu (n., prop.)

CHAPTER VI

LEARNING THE SOUND SYSTEM OF MANDE LANGUAGES

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter is designed to provide a deeper basis for the understanding of the sound systems of the Mande languages of Liberia. Although every attempt has been made to reduce the amount of technical language used to convey the information in this chapter, it has not been eliminated altogether, for what is used is felt to be necessary for the presentation.

Nevertheless, what follows can be followed by an enthusiastic reader with no previous training in linguistics or language learning. For those seeking only further practice in the recognition of the phonetic distinctions found in Mande it is possible to skip directly to section F where there are listening exercises which may be carried out with the accompanying cassette tape. Then, if there is some confusion about the nature of the sound contrast being studied, the learner may then refer back to the section which discusses the nature of this contrast.

B. THE SYSTEM OF SOUNDS

A language consists of three major subsystems. It has an inventory of words known as a lexicon. It has a set of rules by which these words are arranged into sentences, known as syntax. Finally it has a sound system which consists of a set of discrete contrastive sounds, known as phonemes. Phonemes, or rather strings of phonemes are used to render words as sound images so that they may be spoken and understood. This chapter is about how those sounds are organized and understood.

While phonemes are written using Roman alphabetic characters, they should not be confused with the letters used to write English. These are non-phonemic, because they violate the principle that a phoneme

stands for only one contrastive sound. The following examples illustrate that the English alphabet violates this condition.

<u>Letter</u>	<u>Sound</u>	<u>Word</u>
s	s	<u>see</u>
	z	rai <u>se</u>
	ʒ	mea <u>sure</u>
c	s	<u>city</u>
	k	<u>cow</u>
o	a	po <u>d</u>
	ɔ	lo <u>g</u>
	i	wome <u>n</u>
	ow	smo <u>ke</u>

Because of these discrepancies, English is not perfectly phonemic which means that it is not always possible to determine how a word is going to be pronounced (given its spelling) or written (given its sound). Because of these indeterminacies in the writing system of English and many other written languages, linguists have found it useful to develop a phonemic writing system to use when analyzing a language. This writing system is also of value to learners of a language because it eliminates the guesswork in reading and writing in the language.

When you first hear a new language, you will first note that it is made up of a series of syllables. The syllable is a good place to begin breaking down the sounds of language because all three major phonetic elements: consonants, vowels and suprasegmental features are associated with the syllable.

At the heart of the syllable is a syllabic unit which is generally, though not always (as is pointed out later) a vowel. Vowels are sounds that receive their distinctive acoustical properties through the resonant properties of the mouth (oral cavity) and the throat (pharyngeal cavity) through adjustments of the tongue, tongue root, lips and jaw. The various resonances produced by these different oral shapes can be explained by the same principle as the resonant sound produced by blowing on a beer bottle, though the resonances produced by the more complex shapes of the vocal tract are of course more complex.

C. VOWELS

1. Classification

Linguists find it useful to classify vowels by:

a) the location of the tongue:

1. Is it toward the front of the mouth or
2. is it toward the back of the mouth?

b) the location of the jaw:

1. Is the jaw closed so that the tongue is high in the mouth or
2. is the jaw open so that the tongue is low in the mouth?

c) the shape of the lips:

1. Are the lips rounded or
2. are the lips unrounded?

The reason for this classification is that linguists have found that vowels that share common properties, (i.e. high vowels, front vowels or rounded vowels tend to function alike as we will show later). The classification of the vowels used in the Mande languages in Liberia is given in the following chart.

	Front	Back	Back & Rounded
High	i	ɨ	u
High Mid	e	ɛ̃	o
Low Mid	ɛ	ʌ	ɔ
Low	(æ)	a	

None of these sounds exactly like those of English therefore the following equivalents should only be taken provisionally, to help you learn to recognize the sounds associated with the symbols. Drills are given in section F to familiarize you with the use of this system in transcribing Mande sounds.

2. Description of Individual Vowels

2.1 The front, unrounded vowels:

/i/ bee, neat, tidy, me

The English vowel differs from the Mande /i/*, by being glided, that is, followed by y a semivowel (see below). Thus the word bee when transcribed phonetically is /biy/. If you say this word slowly, you may sense the /y/ at the end of the vowel.

Due to historical change, English words spelled with an i (e.g. bite) are no longer pronounced with an i (ee sound) but rather an eye sound. In making the transition to the phonemic writing system you may confuse the orthographic i (eye) and the phonemic /i/ (ee).

/e/ ("closed e") day, take, say

The English vowel differs from the Mande e in that it is glided, like the high vowel, it is followed by a y semivowel (see below). Thus the English word day, when transcribed phonetically, is /dey/ or perhaps /dey/. You can detect this y glide by saying the word day very slowly. You will note that while you start on the vowel /e/, you end with the vowel /i/. In learning to say this vowel say it slowly and cut off the y "offglide". For many speakers, the first part of the vowel is lower (closer to a phonetic /ɛ/) than a phonetic /e/. You can approximate the higher and tenser /e/ by tightening your lips, as in a smile.

*The use of the slashes here is to distinguish phonemic transcriptions from orthographic.

Lorma and Kpelle have a definite suffix -i which when added to a word ending in a front vowel produces something like the glided vowels discussed above. This gives an opportunity to hear the glided and nonglided as contrastive forms.

<u>Lorma</u>	<u>indefinite</u>	<u>definite</u>
porcupine	píví	pívíí
road	pélé	péléí
house	pélé	péléí

/ɛ/ ("open e") bed, lead, red, better

The English sound is virtually identical to the corresponding Mande sound.

/æ/ ("diagraph") bath, laugh

This sound does not occur in the Mande languages, but has been included in the list, because of the potential confusion between the written (orthographic) a of English and the phonemic /a/ (see 3 below).

2.2 The back, rounded vowels:

/u/ school, pool, tube, coo

This vowel, like the English iy is glided, but this time with the semivowel /w/ rather than /y/. Thus the above words are rendered phonetically as /skuwl/, puwl, tuwb, kuw/.

/o/ ("closed o") go, row, tone, toe

Like the vowel /ey/ this vowel is heavily glided. Again if you say these words slowly, you will note the presence of a w semi-vowel following the vowel nucleus (e.g., /gow, row, town and tow/.

/ɔ/ ("open o") caught, law, frog, log

This vowel is quite similar in sound and production to the underlined English vowels to the left. The only problem being that the ɔ sound does not exist in some dialects of American English. If,

for example, when you say the words caught and cot the same way, or cannot hear any appreciable difference between them you are going to have to learn to hear and produce this contrast. Secondly, speakers from different regions do not agree on which English words have this open o sound. For some, words such as frog, log, hog, and so forth are pronounced with an a vowel, while for others they are pronounced with an open o.

2.3 The back (or central) unrounded vowels:

/ɨ/ ("barred i") just (see comments)

This is not a contrastive sound in English but occurs as a variant of the general unstressed vowel known as schwa, /ə/. Therefore it is roughly the equivalent of the second vowel in muffin or in the word just when unstressed.

/ɨ/ appears as a variant of the corresponding front vowel /i/ in Kpelle and southwestern dialects or Lorma, particularly following velar consonants (see below) which because they are articulated with the tongue back tend to draw the front vowel back.

Kpelle (ŋɨlɨŋ/ = [ŋɨlɨŋ] 'bugabug'. (Square brackets are used to mark variant pronunciations). The Lorma u, particularly the word su 'in' is sometimes pronounced with this variant, e.g. sɨ.

/ë/ none

/ë/ is the higher mid equivalent of barred i. It appears as a variant of /e/ in Kpelle and Lorma, particularly following velar consonants. (k, g, ɣ, ŋ). For a definition of "Velar" see section D2.1. Kpelle: /Kele/ = [Këlə]

/ʌ/ ("carrat") but, cut, put, hut

This vowel is found in some but not all English words written with a short u, (note the pronunciation of put, which has an oo sound rendered phonetically as a lax u written but not described here.

Like the two back unrounded vowels ʌ is also a variant of the corresponding front vowel ɛ in Kpelle and Lorma, particularly following velars. Kpelle: /kɛlɛ/ = [kʌlʌ]

/a/ hot, lot, hopper

This is the only low vowel in Mande, and should cause little difficulty to the speaker of English other than the tendency to confuse it with the written (orthographic) a which as we pointed out earlier is pronounced as /æ/.

3. Diphthongs

Diphthongs are sequences of a vowel and a semivowel which tend to act as a single unit. We have already mentioned the diphthongs /iy, ey, uw and ow/ above. In addition, English has the diphthongs /ay/ as in sky, tie and light, /aw/ as in cow and now, /oy/ as in boy, toy and noise. These sounds do not occur in the Mande languages. However, the sequences /ii, ei, ɛi and we now add /ai/ are found in some of the Mande languages but because i acts as a full vowel and not a nonsyllabic semivowel, these are generally not considered diphthongs.

4. Orthographic Conventions

As mentioned earlier the phonemic writing system is not in wide use for the writing of Liberian languages. For example personal names and locations have been rendered in standard English orthography. Because of the inadequacies of the English orthography to render certain Africa sounds, a number of conventions have been developed. These are given as follows:

Convention	Phonimic Value	Comments/Examples
ie	/i/	Bodegie = /Bodegi/
ue	/u/	Bague = /Bagu/
eh	/ɛ/	Zleh Town = /Zlɛ taŋ/
ea*	/ɛ/	Salayea = /Salayɛ/
or	/ɔ/	Zorzor = /Zɔzɔ/ Lorma /Lɔɔma/

*This seems to be a Lorma/Kpelle convention only.

5. Nasalized Vowels

A nasalized vowel is a vowel in which some sound is allowed to escape through the nose (nasal cavity) as well as the mouth (oral cavity). While nasal vowels exist in English they are noncontrastive variants of oral vowels usually derived from the nasalization of an adjacent nasal consonant spilling onto the vowel, as such words as moon, [mūwn]; soon [sūwn]; and can't [kæ̃t] illustrate. Nasalization is marked by placing a tilde /~/ over the vowel. In the Mande languages, nasalization is contrastive...especially in Kpelle.

6. Vowel Length

Mande languages have contrastive vowel length. That is some syllables may be longer in duration than others. This difference can signal a difference in meaning as in the following Lorma examples:

káííí hoe

kááííí snake

másáǵìì chief

máásáǵìì corn

D. LEARNING MANDE CONSONANTS

1. Classification

In addition to the vowels, which form the nucleus of most syllables, are the consonants. They are so called because they "sound with" the vowel and are accordingly found on either side of the vowel. While it is common to find consonants on either end of the English syllable, s t r e n g t h, consonants in Mande tend to appear before rather than after the vowels. In other words, Mande syllables tend to be "open" (an open syllable is one in which no consonants follow the vowel, e.g., pɛ, lɛ, kpɔ). The one exception to this is the velar nasal /ŋ/ in Kpelle. Some open syllables cause trouble for English speakers, because the sound ɛ does not occur in English open syllables. (This is the reason for the development of ea and eh as a way of writing /ɛ/: see section C.)

Furthermore, Mande allows very few consonant clusters in a syllable initial position (before the vowel). These clusters only involve /l/, (as in /Flomo/ 'personal name' and as in /kwele/ 'big.')

The consonants of the Mande languages are given in tabular form below:

	Labial	Dental	Palatal	Velar	Labio Velar
STOPS:					
Voiceless	p	t	č	k	kp
Voiced	b	d	ǰ	g	
IMPLOSIVES:	ɓ	ɗ			ɡɓ
FRICATIVES:					
Voiceless	f	s	š		
Voiced	β	z	ž	ɣ	
NASALS:	m	n	ɲ	ŋ	ŋm
LIQUIDS:		l,r			
SEMI VOWELS:			y		w

These sounds have been arranged in such a way that the rows and columns

contain similar classes of sounds. For example, it was pointed out in the preceding section that the front vowels (/i, e and ε/) were often backed (converted to ɨ, ɛ̃ and ɛ̃ respectively) or that vowels tended to be nasalized following a nasal consonant. These terms, of course do not have to be learned, though they may be useful in helping you understand the pronunciation of these sounds.

2. Points of Articulation

Part of the production of a consonant involves either the complete or partial obstruction of the flow of air in the oral cavity. This is accomplished through bringing an articulator, lower lip, or the front, mid or back of the tongue into proximity with a point of articulation associated with the upper part of the mouth. These points of articulation are discussed below. Individual sounds will be discussed later.

2.1 Labial:

The term labial means "pertaining to the lips." There are two types of possible labial articulation: bilabial (both lips) /p, b, and β/ and labial dental (lower lip and upper teeth) /f, and v/.

2.2 Dental:

Dental articulations involve moving the front part of the tongue behind the upper teeth as in /t, d, s, z, n, r and l/.

2.3 Palatal:

While these sounds are rare in Mande languages they do occur. They are produced by bringing the mid part of the tongue in the hard palate region as in /č, ĵ, đ, ž, ñ and y/.

2.4 Velar:

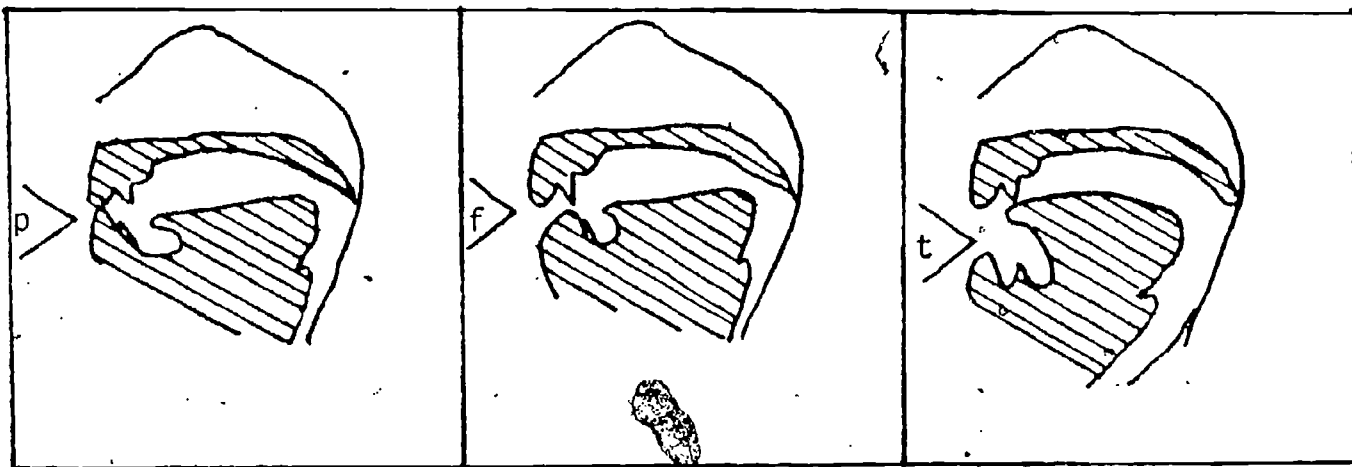
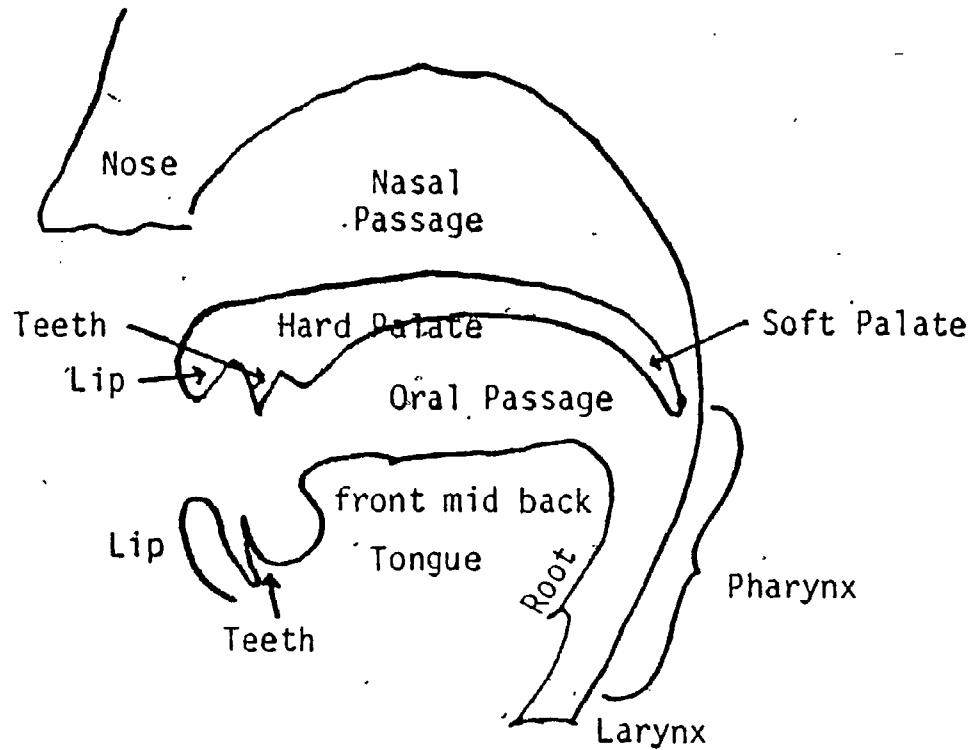
This sound is produced by raising the back of the tongue to the region of the soft palate as in /k, g, γ, ŋ/.

2.5 Labio-Velar:

This sound is the most difficult sound for speakers of English to master. First it involves the simultaneous articulation of a labial and a velar. It is as though you were trying to say cookpot or lugbolt but with open syllables (e.g. coo-kpot and lu-gbolt). Secondly, these sounds are often pronounced with ingressive air (the air moves into the mouth during the first moments of articulation before it is followed by egressive air from the lungs (the normal mode). This implosion is more typical of gb than kp.

3. Picturing the Points of Articulation.

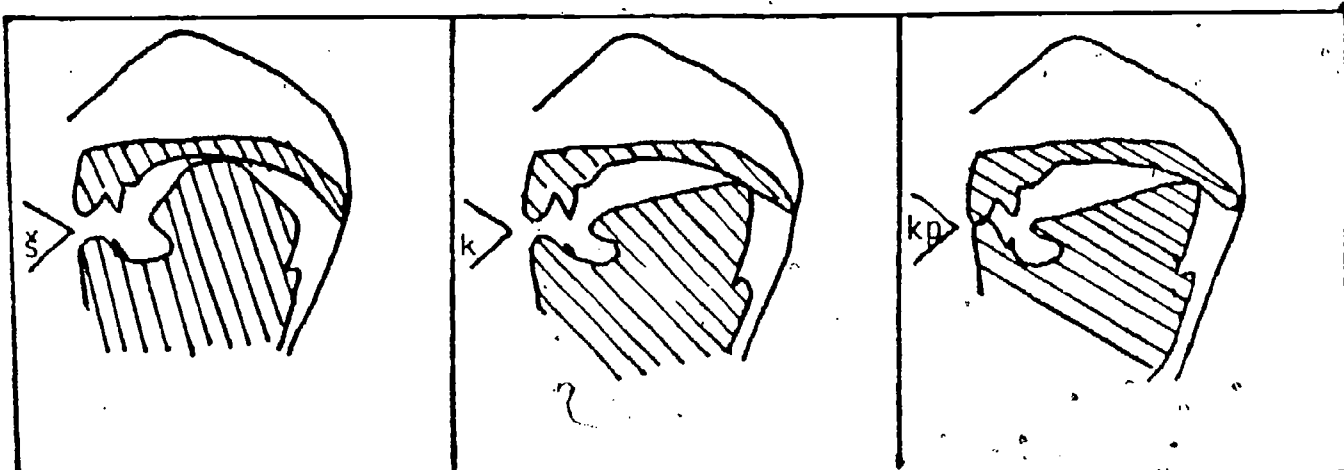
The following cross sections of the human vocal apparatus may prove useful in understanding how the various points of articulation are located.



Bilabial Stop

Labial-Dental

Dental



Palatal

Velar

Labio-Velar

4. Manner of Articulation

Sounds can also be classified by how they are produced at the point of articulation. This is called the manner of articulation.

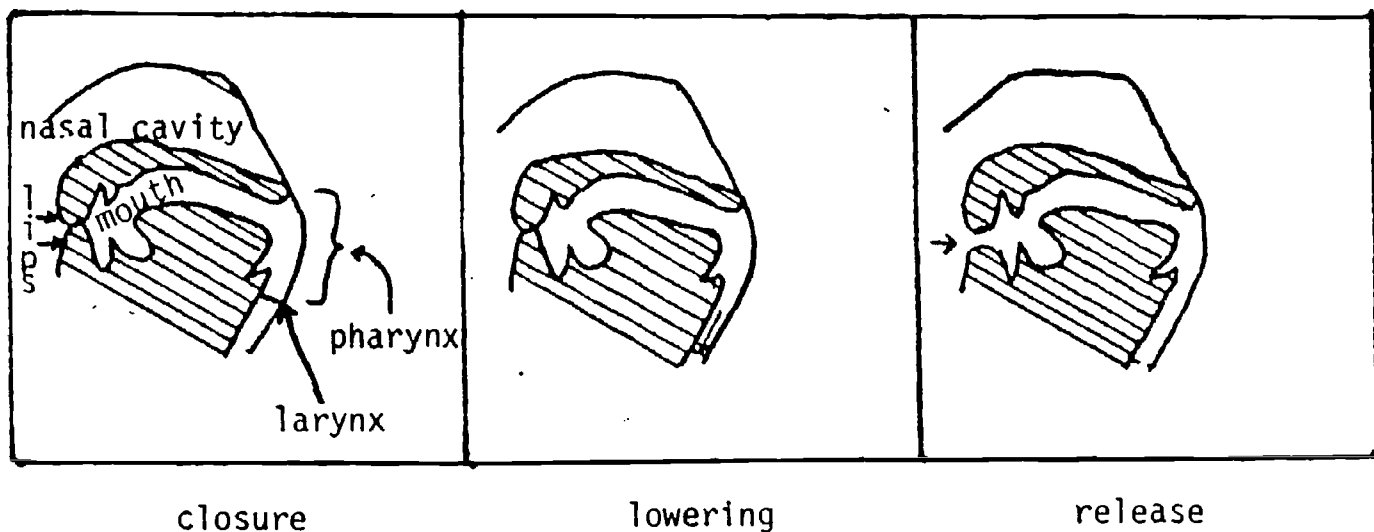
4.1 Obstruents:

Obstruents are sounds which involve a radical obstruction of the air stream, either complete blockage as in stops or partial blockage as in fricatives. Obstruents may be either voiced or voiceless which means that the vocal cords are either vibrating or not respectively. You can detect the difference between voicing and nonvoicing either by putting your fingers on your larynx (Adam's apple) or in your ears while you are saying these sounds. You will no doubt notice that in English, the fricatives /f/ and /z/ are more heavily voiced than the stops /b, d and g/. This is because in English, the voiceless stops /p, t, and k/ are heavily aspirated. This means that they are followed by a puff of air (capable of blowing out a candle) which devoices the beginning of the following vowel. Because the aspiration also serves to distinguish English voiceless vowels, the voicing distinction is not crucial. Fortunately for English speakers, the voiceless obstruents of Mandé are also aspirated, though not as heavily. The two sounds /č/ and /ǰ/ listed as palatal stops in the previous illustration are actually affricates. This means that phonetically they consist of a stop followed by a fricative [tš] and [dž] respectively. However because they function as a unit, they are given the unitary symbols /č/ and /ǰ/.

4.2 Implosives:

The normal manner of articulation involves the use of (egressive) air coming from the lungs. In the articulation of implosives, air is drawn into the mouth by creating a partial vacuum in the pharynx by first closing it off at either end by making a velar, dental or labial stop at one end and a glottal stop (closing the larynx) at the other end. Then the pharynx is stretched by lowering the larynx and in so doing creating a partial vacuum in the pharynx. Thus when the

stop is articulated, for a brief moment, air will rush into the mouth briefly giving it its distinctive sound before the egressive air from the lung resumes.



The remaining set of consonants, the nasals, semi-consonants and semivowels are all voiced. Nasals can best be defined as voiced stops with the added feature of the opening up of the nasal passage.

The semi-consonants and the semivowels are like the nasals are resonant which means that there is less obstruction of the air stream than in the case of the stops and fricatives (known collectively as obstruents). The lack of obstruction allows the vocal tract to resonate giving the nasals, semi-consonants and semivowels their distinctive acoustical character.

Unlike the nasals where the resonance is produced in the nasal cavity, the resonance of the semi-segments is produced in the oral cavity. Semi-consonants are distinguished from semivowels in that semi-consonants are considered less obstructed or weakened consonants while the semivowels are considered more obstructed than true vowels.

4.3 Sonorants:

The remaining sets of consonants are called sonorant because in addition to having an oral obstruction of some sort they also have

resonance. For example in the nasals, the way is opened for sound to move into the nasal cavity which is a resonant chamber. In the case of the liquid l, the air is permitted to escape around the sides of the tongue producing resonance. And finally, in the case of the semivowels /y/ and /w/ which are nonsyllabic vowels, (i and u respectively) the resonance is merely dampened. Sonorants, which also include all the vowels are generally voiced. All sonorants have the capacity to be syllabic. As pointed out above the syllabic equivalents of /y/ and /w/ are /i/ and /u/ respectively. Other syllabic sonorants can be marked by placing an apostrophe directly under the segment. In the Mande languages nasals are often syllabic as in Kpelle: ḿbúlú, Bande: ñ̀dàmbángí. Lorma once had these sounds but they have since been lost.

4.4 Concluding Remarks

Much of what was presented here was quite technical and beyond what you really need to know to learn a Mande language. Yet it was presented for a number of reasons:

- (1) it may help you to better understand how the consonant system of a language is structured
- (2) that Mande languages are an interesting and fruitful area of scientific inquiry
- (3) and because we thought you'd like to know.

E. MANDE SUPRASEGMENTALS

1. Classifications

In addition to consonants and vowels, a syllable may also possess a number of characteristic features called suprasegmentals. They are so called because their distinctiveness may transcend a single segment.

Features often considered to be suprasegmental are stress or syllable prominence, tone, vowel length and nasalization. Vowel length and nasalization have been presented in the section on vowels.

2. Stress

While stress is generally non-contrastive in Mande it is generally distinctive. In Kpelle, it falls on the first high-toned syllable in the word, or if the word has no high tones, it falls on the first syllable. Stress is acoustically marked by an increase in the loudness of the syllable and is often accompanied by a slight increase in the length of the syllable.

3. Tone

Tone in Mande is characterized by relative pitch. That is a high tone is relatively higher in pitch than a low tone and vice versa. No Mande language has more than three distinctive pitch levels. Kpelle and Mano have three: high, mid and low, while Lorma and Manya have two. The following contrasts are from Kpelle:

high	pélé	'house'
mid	pēlē	'road'
low	bèlè	'trousers'

The remaining Mande languages have only two level tones, high and low. The above contrasts appear in Mende as follows:

high	pélé	'house'
low high	pèlé	'road'
low	bèlè	'trousers'

In Lorma due to some historical change, the tones of the above words are high, though the different words to exert an influence on the following word as the following examples show.

pélé	'house'	péléniinè	'new house'
pélé	'road'	péléniiné	'new road'
bélé	'trousers'	béléniiné	'new trousers'

3.1 Contour Tones

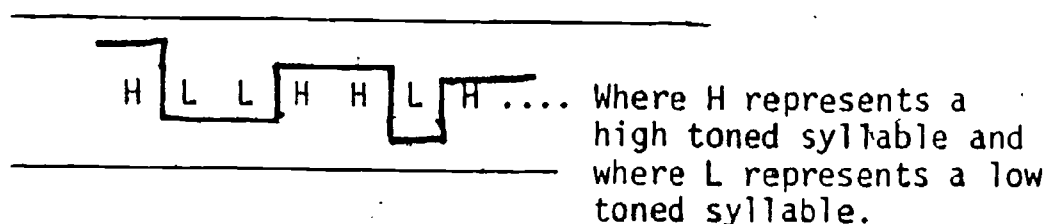
Contour tones are tones that actually rise or fall, rather than remain at the same pitch throughout the syllable. When these tones appear on a single syllable, they are written as follows:

falling	Ŷ	Kpelle: ɓɔ	'owl'	Mende: mbû	'owl'
rising	Ÿ	Kpelle: mɔlɔŋà	'rice'	Mende: mbă	'rice'

Rising tones and falling tones are heard in Lorma as sentence level intonations. A comma or a question mark following a low tone will produce a rising tone. A period following a high tone will produce a falling tone. Since this is not a property of the word, and since the tonal influence is really marked by the punctuations, these rising and falling tones are not otherwise marked.

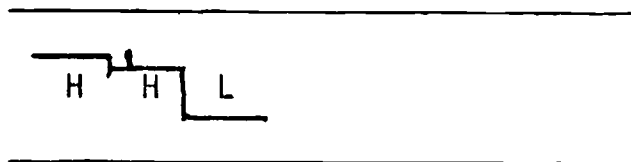
3.2 Down-Drift and Down-Step

In most Mande languages there is some downdrift and downstep. Downdrift is a general condition where a high tone following a string of one or more low tones is not as high in absolute pitch as the high tone preceding the low tone. Graphically this condition can be shown as follows:



3.3 Downstep

Downstep is very much like downdrift except here the lowered high follows a high tone directly. It is as though the intervening low tones were lost. Downstepped high tones are marked with an apostrophe before the high-toned syllable as in the following graphic example:



Downstep is not found in Lorma and has only a limited distribution in Kpelle where it occurs only at the end of sentences.

4. Word Types

Although not strictly speaking suprasegmental, it is worth mentioning that Mande words have definite phonological shapes. As mentioned earlier Mande syllables tend to be open and preceded by a single consonant. Such a syllable structure can be represented as CV where consonants are represented by the symbol C and vowels by V.

Pronouns, postpositions and verbal particles tend to be monosyllabic while nouns and verbs tend to be bisyllabic; words containing more than two syllables are either borrowings or morphologically complex (composed of more than one word). Given these facts, the learner can say a lot about the nature of the word simply on the basis of its phonological shape.

F. LISTENING AND TRANSCRIPTION EXERCISES

The following exercises have been recorded on tape. They are constructed in such a way that you may either do them orally, by covering up the answer with a card, or you may practice writing down the answers either in the space provided, or preferably on a sheet of scratch paper. Please note, that while these exercises will give you a general ability to recognize and transcribe these sounds you will find that additional work will be necessary with your target language before you can hear them clearly.

The Vowels

1. e vrs ey (If the vowel is glided write /ey/ while if it is not, write /e/.)

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1. _____ ey | 11. <u>s m</u> sem |
| 2. _____ e | 12. <u>s m</u> seym |
| 3. _____ e | 13. <u>l</u> le |
| 4. _____ ey | 14. <u>l</u> ley |
| 5. <u>b t</u> bet | 15. <u>s s</u> sesey |
| 6. <u>b t</u> beyt | 16. <u>t l</u> teyle |
| 7. <u>f l</u> feyl | 17. <u>m m</u> meme |
| 8. <u>f l</u> fel | 18. <u>k t</u> kete |
| 9. <u>p n</u> peyn | 19. <u>s</u> sey |
| 10. <u>p n</u> pen | 20. <u>s</u> se |

2. i vrs e

1.	_____	i
2.	_____	e
3.	_____	e
4.	_____	i
5.	<u>s</u>	si
6.	<u>s</u>	se
7.	<u>t</u>	te
8.	<u>t</u>	te
9.	<u>t</u>	ti
10.	<u>l</u>	le

11.	<u>l</u>	li
12.	<u>p l</u>	pele
13.	<u>p l</u>	pili
14.	<u>p z</u>	pize
15.	<u>p z</u>	pizi
16.	<u>f l</u>	fili
17.	<u>f l</u>	feli
18.	<u>f l</u>	file
19.	<u>l p</u>	lepe
20.	<u>l l</u>	lili

3. e vrs e vrs i

1.	_____	e
2.	_____	e
3.	_____	e
4.	_____	e
5.	_____	i
6.	_____	e
7.	_____	e
8.	<u>s</u>	se
9.	<u>s</u>	se
10.	<u>s</u>	si

11.	<u>p l</u>	pele
12.	<u>p l</u>	pele
13.	<u>p l</u>	pili
14.	<u>p l</u>	pile
15.	<u>p l</u>	pele
16.	<u>p l</u>	pele
17.	<u>s l</u>	selei
18.	<u>t l</u>	telei
19.	<u>t l</u>	tile
20.	<u>p l</u>	pele

4. o vrs ow

1. _____ o
2. _____ ow
3. _____ ow
4. _____ o
5. g _____ go
6. g _____ gow
7. s _____ sow
8. s _____ so
9. t _____ tow
10. t _____ to

11. t n _____ town
12. t _____ to
13. f l _____ folo
14. f l _____ follow
15. k l _____ kolo
16. k l _____ kolei
17. k _____ koo
18. k _____ kow
19. m l _____ molo
20. b n _____ bono

5. o vrs u

1. _____ o
2. _____ u
3. _____ o
4. _____ o
5. _____ u
6. g _____ go
7. l _____ lo
8. l _____ lu
9. t l _____ tolo
10. p l _____ pulu

11. f l m _____ folomo
12. g l _____ gulu
13. g l _____ gulo
14. k l _____ kolo
15. k l _____ kolu
16. m l _____ mulu
17. m l _____ molu
18. n w _____ nowo
19. n w _____ nowu
20. t _____ too

6. o vrs o vrs

1. _____ o
2. _____ o
3. _____ o
4. _____ o
5. _____ o
6. _____ o
7. t to
8. t to
9. g go
10. g go

11. g l golo
12. k l kolo
13. k l kolo
14. g l gulu
15. g l golo
16. t l tolo
17. t l tolo
18. t l tolu
19. p l polu
20. p l polu

7. a vrs o

1. _____ a
2. _____ o
3. _____ a
4. _____ o
5. p pa
6. p po
7. p l polo
8. p l pala
9. t l tola
10. t l tola

11. t l talai
12. p l polai
13. p l polu
14. p l palu
15. p l palo
16. p l pola
17. p l pola
18. p l pala
19. k p kopo
20. k p kapa

8. Λ vrs a vrs ë

1. _____ a
2. _____ Λ
3. _____ a
4. _____ a
5. b ba
6. b bΛ
7. b l bala
8. b l bΛlΛ
9. p l pala
10. p l pAlu

11. t l tala
12. t l tΛle
13. t l tëlë
14. g l gΛlΛ
15. g l gëlë
16. g l gala
17. p pa
18. p pë
19. p pΛ
20. p pë

9. Λ vrs ë vrs ï

1. _____ bΛ
2. _____ bë
3. _____ bï
4. _____ gï
5. _____ gë
6. _____ gë
7. _____ sΛ
8. _____ së
9. _____ së
10. _____ sï

11. _____ kï
12. _____ kΛ
13. _____ kï
14. _____ kë
15. _____ fë
16. _____ fï
17. _____ fΛ
18. _____ fa
19. _____ fë
20. _____ tï

10. Λ vrs ë vrs ï vrs e vrs ε

- | | | | |
|-----------|------|-----------|----|
| 1. _____ | tele | 11. _____ | ma |
| 2. _____ | tΛlΛ | 12. _____ | me |
| 3. _____ | gele | 13. _____ | mi |
| 4. _____ | gële | 14. _____ | mï |
| 5. _____ | kili | 15. _____ | bë |
| 6. _____ | kïlï | 16. _____ | ti |
| 7. _____ | kele | 17. _____ | sΛ |
| 8. _____ | këlë | 18. _____ | fï |
| 9. _____ | kΛlΛ | 19. _____ | fε |
| 10. _____ | kele | 20. _____ | gë |

Mande Consonants

The following consonants should give you little difficulty and for that reason no drills are given: p, t, k, b, d, g, f, v, s, z, m, n, l, y and w.

11. kp vrs p vrs k

- | | | | |
|-----------|-----|-----------|--------|
| 1. _____ | ka | 11. _____ | kpaka |
| 2. _____ | pa | 12. _____ | pakpa |
| 3. _____ | kpa | 13. _____ | kapa |
| 4. _____ | kpa | 14. _____ | kpapa |
| 5. _____ | ka | 15. _____ | kpiki |
| 6. _____ | pa | 16. _____ | pike |
| 7. _____ | kpe | 17. _____ | kpolo |
| 8. _____ | ke | 18. _____ | kulu |
| 9. _____ | pe | 19. _____ | pu lu |
| 10. _____ | kpe | 20. _____ | kpekpe |

12. gb vrs g vrs b vrs kp

1.	_____	ba	11.	_____	gbu
2.	_____	ga	12.	_____	bulu
3.	_____	gba	13.	_____	gulu
4.	_____	gba	14.	_____	gbulu
5.	_____	gbε	15.	_____	saba
6.	_____	bε	16.	_____	sagba
7.	_____	bε	17.	_____	saga
8.	_____	gε	18.	_____	taba
9.	_____	gu	19.	_____	tokpo
10.	_____	bu	20.	_____	tokpo

13. gb vrs b vrs b vrs g vrs kp

1.	_____	ga	11.	_____	bo
2.	_____	gba	12.	_____	gbo
3.	_____	ba	13.	_____	kpoli
4.	_____	gba	14.	_____	boli
5.	_____	ba	15.	_____	buli
6.	_____	ba	16.	_____	gbuli
7.	_____	bε	17.	_____	buli
8.	_____	bε	18.	_____	kpuli
9.	_____	bε	19.	_____	puli
10.	_____	bε	20.	_____	baba

14. d vrs d (Kpelle only)

- | | | |
|-----|-------|------|
| 1. | _____ | di |
| 2. | _____ | di |
| 3. | _____ | do |
| 4. | _____ | du |
| 5. | _____ | du |
| 6. | _____ | dolo |
| 7. | _____ | dolo |
| 8. | _____ | tolo |
| 9. | _____ | dili |
| 10. | _____ | dili |

15. mb, nd, nj, ng, ngb

- | | | | | | |
|-----|-------|------|-----|-------|-------|
| 1. | _____ | ba | 11. | _____ | mbi |
| 2. | _____ | mba | 12. | _____ | ndi |
| 3. | _____ | de | 13. | _____ | ngi |
| 4. | _____ | nde | 14. | _____ | ngbu |
| 5. | _____ | ye | 15. | _____ | nji |
| 6. | _____ | nje | 16. | _____ | banja |
| 7. | _____ | gu | 17. | _____ | tanda |
| 8. | _____ | ngu | 18. | _____ | sungo |
| 9. | _____ | gba | 19. | _____ | wundo |
| 10. | _____ | ngbu | 20. | _____ | samba |

16. p vrs β vrs v, vrs f

1. _____ pa
 2. _____ fa
 3. _____ va
 4. _____ fa
 5. _____ va
 6. _____ βa
 7. _____ fa
 8. _____ va
 9. _____ va
 10. _____ βa

11. _____ βi
 12. _____ vi
 13. _____ vili
 14. _____ βili
 15. _____ fili
 16. _____ βulu
 17. _____ vulu
 18. _____ folo
 19. _____ βolo
 20. _____ volo

17. š vrs ž vrs č vrs j

1. _____ sa
 2. _____ ča
 3. _____ sa
 4. _____ či
 5. _____ ji
 6. _____ je
 7. _____ že
 8. _____ še
 9. _____ se
 10. _____ še

11. _____ zowo
 12. _____ žowo
 13. _____ sii
 14. _____ šii
 15. _____ čii
 16. _____ kpaza
 17. _____ masa
 18. _____ tiča
 19. _____ baži
 20. _____ žošo

18. y vrs g

1. _____ ga
 2. _____ ga
 3. _____ ya
 4. _____ ya
 5. _____ yi
 6. _____ yu
 7. _____ gu
 8. _____ yu
 9. _____ ye
 10. _____ yo

11. _____ saya
 12. _____ gaya
 13. _____ yili
 14. _____ gili
 15. _____ yale
 16. _____ yale
 17. _____ paya
 18. _____ paga
 19. _____ payo
 20. _____ pago

Suprasegmental Drills19. Long vrs Short Vowels

1. _____ babaa
 2. _____ baaba
 3. _____ sasasaa
 4. _____ saasasa
 5. _____ sasaasaa
 6. _____ soola
 7. _____ teveea
 8. _____ masagii
 9. _____ fiibee
 10. _____ saago

11. _____ tilaa
 12. _____ tiilaa
 13. _____ tasaata
 14. _____ kpaasagii
 15. _____ mukulu
 16. _____ maaneeve
 17. _____ niinei
 18. _____ bovelaale
 19. _____ kooligii
 20. _____ pago

20. Nasalized vrs Oral Vowels

1.	_____	ba	11.	_____	kālā
2.	_____	bā	12.	_____	kala
3.	_____	babā	13.	_____	pōō
4.	_____	bāba	14.	_____	pēēsoe
5.	_____	lamāā	15.	_____	mādigo
6.	_____	lamaa	16.	_____	sōōti
7.	_____	lāmaa	17.	_____	wīīgii
8.	_____	lamaa	18.	_____	pokopa
9.	_____	tɔlīlī	19.	_____	pivugii
10.	_____	tutita	20.	_____	mūlūba

21. High Tone vrs Low Tone

1.	_____	bábá	11.	_____	tátátá
2.	_____	bábà	12.	_____	tátátà
3.	_____	bàbá	13.	_____	tàtátá
4.	_____	bàbà	14.	_____	tàtátà
5.	_____	bábà	15.	_____	tàtàtá
6.	_____	títí	16.	_____	kákátá
7.	_____	títì	17.	_____	tákákà
8.	_____	kúlú	18.	_____	màmámá
9.	_____	kúlù	19.	_____	màmámà
10.	_____	kúlú	20.	_____	kúlùkú

22. High Tone, Low Tone and Downstep

1.	_____	bá á	11.	_____	tà t à t à
2.	_____	bà à	12.	_____	tà t à t à
3.	_____	bà á	13.	_____	tà t à t à
4.	_____	bà á bà á	14.	_____	tà t à t à
5.	_____	bà á bà á	15.	_____	tà t à t à
6.	_____	kò k ò k ò	16.	_____	kà k à t à
7.	_____	kò k ò k ò	17.	_____	tà k à t à
8.	_____	kù l ù l ù	18.	_____	mà l à l à
9.	_____	fù l ù f ù	19.	_____	gà l ì g à
10.	_____	pù l ì g i	20.	_____	pù l ù l ù l ù

23. High, Low, Rising, Falling

1.	_____	bà à	11.	_____	tà t à t à
2.	_____	bà â	12.	_____	tà t à t à
3.	_____	bà á	13.	_____	tà t à t à
4.	_____	bà á	14.	_____	tà t à t à
5.	_____	bà ă	15.	_____	tà t à t à
6.	_____	bà â	16.	_____	tà t à á
7.	_____	bà à	17.	_____	tà t à á
8.	_____	bà à	18.	_____	tà t à á
9.	_____	bà ă	19.	_____	tà t à à
10.	_____	bà ă	20.	_____	tà t à à