

Zialo: the Newly-Discovered Mande Language of Guinea

Kirill Babaev



0. Introduction

a. Subject and purpose

The present paper summarises the results of the author's field trip to the Zialo country in the Guinée Forestière region of south-eastern Guinea conducted in January – February 2010¹. During the expedition, a collection of audio files and written notes were gathered on the language of Zialo, a member of the South-Western group of the Mande family of languages previously undescribed and unclassified. The amount of materials is definitely far too scarce to produce an all-embracing language description, but it is worth presenting the first, even though rather incomplete, grammar sketch of this newly-discovered language of West Africa.

The present paper is also an attempt to fill the lack of quality grammar descriptions in the linguistic studies of the South-Western Mande (SWM) languages. Much of reference literature published to date on the languages of the group is much outdated in light of the present requirements to a language description (it is enough to mention that the majority of the papers do not mark tones at all), and more recent papers mostly cover specific language areas only. The demand for a contemporary grammar description of a SWM language is another incentive for me to publish this paper for the consideration of the African scholarship.

The current objective of the present paper, thus, will be to analyse the available data from the synchronic point of view and to present a reference paper on Zialo as a foundation to the subsequent research in this beautiful language and an additional tool for all those working in the vast field of African linguistics. I seriously hope that the book will be greatly improved in the coming years, based on the more in-depth analysis of the structure of the language. Another ambitious project regarding Zialo is to present a full-fledged comparative research of the language within the context of the SWM group of languages, both to define more precisely the place of Zialo in the current classification of SWM and to recover the ways of development the SWM languages have undergone ever since their common proto-language. This work is yet to be done, and, hopefully, the Zialo data will make it even more exciting.

b. Structure

Structurally, the work will be arranged in the chapter and section sequence more or less traditional for contemporary language descriptions. A focus is made on the syntax of the language, though phonology and morphology are also well presented. The paper starts from a brief survey of the SWM language group, its composition, geographical location, and existing classifications as well as the current state of the art in the linguistic studies (Chapter 1). A short geographical and sociolinguistic observation of the Zialo land, its people and culture (Chapter 2) will then be followed by the general information on the linguistic status of Zialo, its dialectal diversity, neighbours and language contact (Chapter 3). The description of the Zialo system of phonology (Chapter 4) will include a survey on segmental phonemes and level tones, followed by the elements of morphonology (Chapter 5). The system of morphosyntax covers the nominals and NP (Chapter 6), the pronouns

¹ This study was carried out within the framework of the project “Integral description of the South Mande languages: dictionaries, grammars, closed corpora of texts” supported by the Russian Foundation for the Humanities (project 08-04-00144a).

(Chapter 7), and the verb phrase (Chapter 8). Notes on sentence-level syntax are presented in Chapter 9.

Three glossed texts in Zialo, the 100-item Swadesh list and a Zialo to English and French vocabulary are supplemented as Appendices to the present paper.

c. Transcriptional conventions

No script was ever introduced specifically for Zialo. The people of the Zialo country sometimes use the Looma script for transcribing their language, since the phonetics of the two is much alike. For sounds unfamiliar for Looma, a Zialo speaker will use a “similar” sound sign with a following *h*: e.g., for [w̃], *wh* will be usually written.

In the present paper, I will use the International Phonetic Alphabet adapted for African languages for transcribing the data. Phonetic values of consonant symbols are indicated in 4.4 below. Long vowels are marked by doubling the respective sign (*aa*) according to the tradition of describing the languages of West Africa. Tones are marked by commonly used diacritics: the acute sign for the high tone (*á*) and the gravis sign for the low tone (*à*). The absence of tone mark only acknowledges that the tone is unclear. The nasality of vowel and consonant segments is marked by a tilde above the respective sign (*ã*, *ỹ*). Reduced vowels are given in ascending stroke, as in *p^hlí(g)* ‘throw’.

Both in the text section and across the body of the paper, all phrasal examples are glossed according to the Leipzig Rules².

d. Acknowledgements

I would like to use this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude and respect to my friends and collaborators in the Zialo country: Mr. Dalasu Guilavogui, Mr. Davide Douo Guilavogui, Mr. Tumbui Bala Guilavogui, Mr. Gbonda Guilavogui, Mr. Masa Zoumanigui, Mr. Saki Zoumanigui, and all the villagers of Gavi Koylazu who provided shelter, food for me and generously helped me to discover the beautiful land, culture and language of Zialo.

I would also like to thank my colleagues Maria Khachaturyan, Darya Mishchenko and Mikhail Zhivlov who generously helped me to polish the paper and gave me valuable advice.

But the very first thanks goes to Prof. Valentin Vydrin, the head of the Russian Linguistic Expedition to West Africa. Without him, the discovery of Zialo would not be possible.

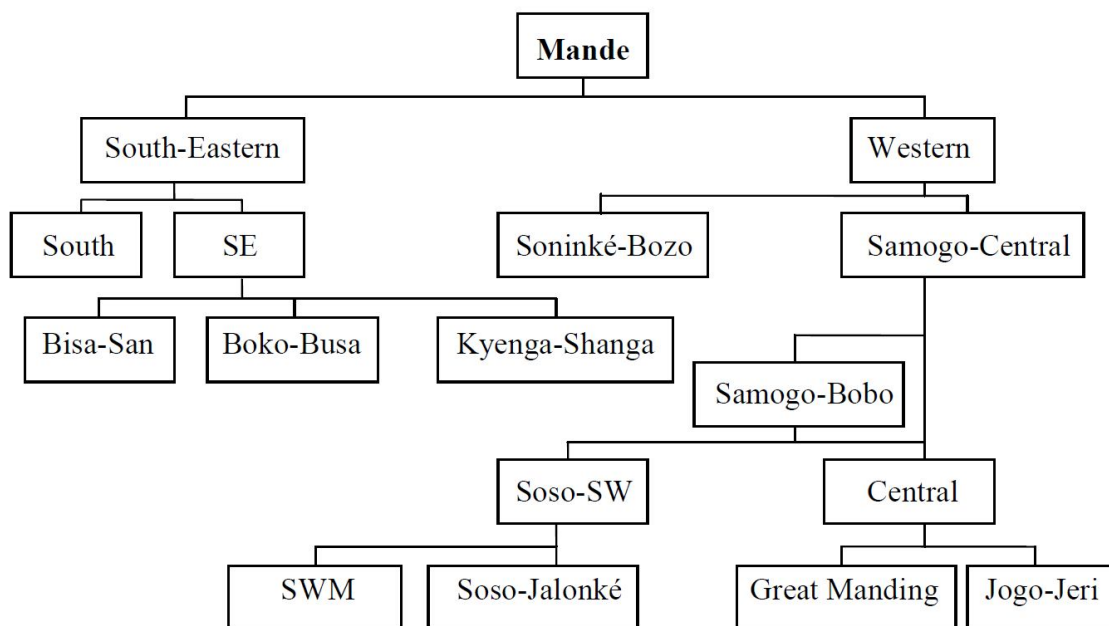
² <http://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/resources/glossing-rules.php>

1. The South-West Mande languages

The Mande family of languages consists of over 70 tongues³ spoken by millions of people across West Africa. It is classified as a branch of the Niger-Congo (Niger-Kordofanian) macrofamily following Greenberg [1963], whose hypothesis is now almost universally supported. According to one of the latest classifications of Niger-Congo [Segeer 2008], Mande is seen as a considerably early offspring from the common proto-language tree, and Vydrin [2009a: 114] dates the dissolution of Proto-Mande back to the second half of the 4th millennium BC.

The structural and lexical similarities between Mande languages (especially those of its Manden branch) were evident for researchers as early as in the middle of the 19th century. However, though attempts to classify Mande have been made ever since Sigismund Koelle first grouped the family [1854], the upper-level inner classification of the Mande family is still disputed. There are at least four approaches proposed respectively by Pozdniakov [1978], Grégoire & de Halleux [1994], Kastenholz [1996], and Vydrin [2009a] of which the latest seems to us the most accurate from the comparative method standpoint. It places the SWM group as a part of a larger Western Mande branch.

Diagram 1. The Mande languages



The internal composition of SWM is a general consensus among the scholars. Before the discovery of Zialo, the group was understood as encompassing five languages spoken in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia, namely Mende, Loko, Bandi, Kpelle, and Looma. These five are tightly knit together by both lexicostatistics (from 80 to 96% of common lexemes in the 100-item Swadesh list [Vydrin 2009a]) and broad similarities in phonology and morphosyntax. One of the latter is the peculiar system of initial consonant alternations (sometimes called lenitions [Manessy 1964b]) which is found in all languages of the group. The closest relatives of SWM languages within the Mande family are the groups of Soso-Jalonké, Vai-Kono and Manden [Vydrin 2009a].

³ Based on the estimations of Ethnologue (<http://www.ethnologue.org>).

1.1. Mende

Mende (earlier called also Boumpe, Hulo, or Kossa) is used in Sierra Leone with a small exclave in northern Liberia, and spoken by the largest number of people among the SWM languages with nearly 1,5 million native speakers (2006)⁴. This is also the largest language community in Sierra Leone. Four basic dialects of Mende (Kpa, Ko, Wanjama, and Sewawa) share about 95-98% of lexical proximity, and are mutually well intelligible. Mende is taught in primary and secondary schools in Sierra Leone utilising a Latin-based script. There is a lot of literature created in Mende, mostly of religious sort, in both the Latin script and the indigenous Mende writing which is gradually coming out of use.

Mende has enjoyed considerable attention of scholars because of its significance as the *lingua franca* of the region, and due to its coastal location. The first dictionaries were produced as early as the late 19th century, e.g., [Schön 1884], as well as the first grammars, e.g., [Schön & Reichardt 1882]. This was followed in the early 20th century by a few more grammar sketches, [Migeod 1908, Sumner 1917, Michell 1927], though they were mostly referential manuals for missionary volunteers struggling to survive in the harsh climate of Sierra Leone. Later reference papers included [Clarke 1941, Crosby 1939, 1944, Spears 1967a, Hunter & Sengova 1979, Musa & Pemagbi 1987]. An academic grammar description was produced by Ethel Aginsky [1935]. The grammars of Brown [1958] and especially [Innes 1962, 1971], though written a few decades ago, remain main reference sources on the overall system of the language. Early wordlists, such as [Thomas 1916], are scarce, but the dictionary by Innes [1969] is a reliable reference if compared with two earlier dictionaries [Migeod 1913; Eaton 1890(?)], because of the tone marking, although still not sufficient at times. A research in phonetics and tonology was conducted by Conteh & al. [1983; 1986], and consonant alternations were analysed recently in [Tateishi 1990]. Dwyer [1971, 1978a, 1978b, 1985] extensively analysed the tonal system of Mende, and this was also the subject of a paper by Spears [1967b]. Some aspects of morphosyntax are discussed in [Innes 1963, 1966; 1967; 1980], [Cowper & Rice 1987], and [Sengova 1981]. Bangali [2002] presented a small survey of phonetic correspondences between the four major dialectal groups of Mende.

1.2. Loko

Loko is spoken in northern Sierra Leone, with approximately 140 thousand of native speakers (2006). The Loko area lies purely inland, though the Loko-speaking community of Freetown, the national capital, is growing steadily. Two major dialectal groups, Logo (northern) and Landogo (southern), may be further divided into small communities, though they are mutually quite comprehensible. Logo has still not been properly recorded, while Landogo enjoys a Latin script, some translated Biblical texts and considerable attention of both missionaries and NGOs, of which the most significant is the Loko Literacy and Literature Development Committee. The majority of Loko still retain their traditional beliefs.

The Landogo dialect of Loko is described in two grammars, [Innes 1964a] and [Kimball 1983]; some more data is contained in the unpublished field notes by Meeussen [1963]. A small paper on consonant mutations in Loko was published by Innes [1964b], and notes on phonology can be found in the unpublished [Kimball 1984]. However, these materials are scarce, and with no dictionary available, this language remains among the least studied in the SWM group.

⁴ Figures for language communities hereinafter are given according to [Lewis 2009].

1.3. Bandi

Bandi (earlier often called Gbandi or Gbande) is mostly located in the Lofa county of northern Liberia with over 100 thousand speakers (2001). Many of these fled to Guinea in recent decades chased by political instability and continue to get back slowly after the situation stabilised in Liberia. In the mid-90's, the number of Bandi migrants in Guinea was estimated at 50 thousand people. There are six dialects of Bandi, quite close to each other, of which Tahamba is the basis for the literacy activities. The Yawiazu dialect seems a bit distant from the main body of the language judging by its phonetic peculiarities making it closer to Zialo and Looma. There is a Latin script used for the translation of the New Testament and other literature into Bandi.

A useful referential Bandi grammar was written by Heydorn [1940/41], where a comparison is given with the other SWM languages. A short grammar survey was made in an unpublished manuscript by [Sindlinger & Thompson 1975], and there was another missionary paper of a bit earlier date [Purves & Parcell 1966]. The latest reliable source is [Grossmann 1992], a M.A. thesis with a description of the grammatical system of Bandi, which was preceded by a dictionary still unpublished [Grossmann & al. 1991] and a volume of field notes yet to be analysed. Kovac [1978, 1984a, 1984b; Kovac & Kovac 1985] described phonology, topicalisation, and verbal constructions in Bandi, but none of these working papers reached the printing press. The aspects of phonetics and tonology were examined in detail by Michael Rodewald and his colleagues [Rodewald 1983a, 1983b, 1985; Rodewald & Kawala 1984; Parker & Rodewald 1988; Mugele & Rodewald 1991]. There is also an anonymous missionary grammar of Bandi which will be referred to as [Bandi, ms.] in this paper.

1.4. Kpelle

Kpelle is spoken by about 800 thousand people as was calculated back in 1991, of which over a half reside in Liberia where the language is also called Kpese or Gbese. Some 90,000 people in Guinea speak Kono, a distinct dialect of Kpelle sometimes classified as a separate language. The Guinean Kpelle, known also as Guerzé, is divided into smaller dialect communities: Gbali, Central, and Hege [Konoshenko 2009]. Kpelle is taught in schools both in Liberia and Guinea, and uses a Latin script for translated literature.

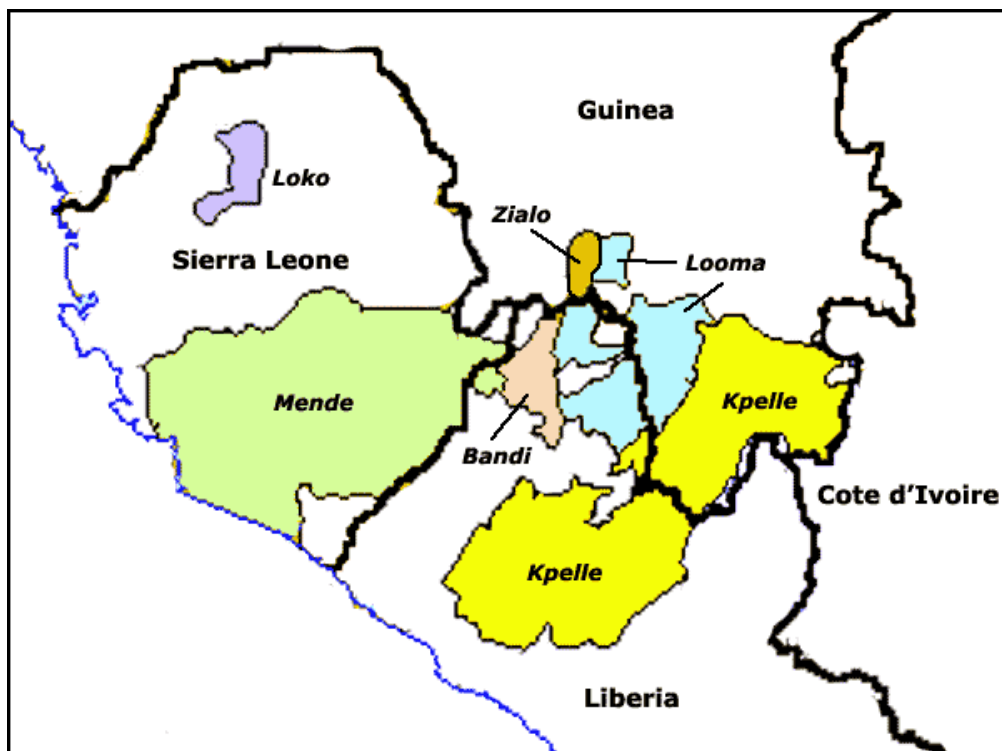
It was Diedrich Westermann who launched systematic studies of the Kpelle language [1921, 1923/24, 1924; Westermann & Melzian 1930]. A large bulk of descriptive work was conducted in the second half of the previous century, with the Liberian dialects recorded and analysed in multiple papers in more than two decades by William Welmers [1948, 1950, 1959, 1961, 1962, 1964, 1969, 1971a, 1971b]. The Guinean Kpelle dialects were mainly examined by Catholic missionaries, whose papers still serve as reference materials, among them the volume of [Lassort 1952] and [Casthelain 1952]. Practical manuals for Liberian Kpelle were produced by Sinclair & al. [1968] and more recently also in [Thach & al. 1981] and [Thach & Dwyer 1981]. The latter contains a tone-marked dictionary, and the other one was published in [Leger 1975], which is a big and extensively rich piece, even though it does not fix tones. Two tone-marked dictionaries for Liberian Kpelle are [Leidenfrost & McKay 1973-1975] and [Winkler 1997]. Manessy [1964c] studied the verbal system of the Guinean dialects. [Leidenfrost & McKay 2005] is a result of several decades of fieldwork with Liberian Kpelle, containing a dictionary and a brief grammar sketch. In Guinea, some work has been performed by our colleague Maria Konoshenko who is dealing with various aspects of the Guinean Kpelle dialects [Konoshenko 2008a, 2008b, 2009].

1.5. Looma

Somewhat over 300 thousand people (1991), more or less equally distributed between Guinea and Liberia, use Looma (also called Loma, Lorma, Loghoma or, in Guinea, Toma) as their first language. It used to be one of the official tongues of Guinea and is taught at schools. Dialects vary considerably between Liberia and Guinea, but are mostly intelligible inside the two countries. There is considerable literature written in Looma with a Latin-based script.

The Looma language was extensively studied through the latest decades. The Liberian dialect of Gizima was described by Sadler [1949/2006, 1951], and the Lulama of Guinée Forestière (more precisely, its Mazama variety) was described in a grammar by Prost [1967], with a small vocabulary. There is a grammar sketch of Liberian Looma by Heydorn [1971], small but with a good comparative analysis. Another grammar survey followed by a multi-dialectal dictionary was published in Russian by Vydrin [1987], with little tone marking (tones are missing in Heydorn's and Prost's works as well). This shortcoming was soon corrected by the same author in [Vydrin 1989]. David Dwyer and his colleagues presumably based their studies on the Gbunde dialect of Liberia, issuing an article [Dwyer 1981] and two manuals [Dwyer & al. 1981a, 1981b]. Particular language subsystems were analysed mostly in the last several decades. The system of phonetics of Guinean Looma was briefly described by Koly [1970]. Ergativity issues were studied by [Rude 1983], while the nominal system was synchronically described in [Guilavogui 1976]. Most recently, Laura Wilhoit [1999] presented her M.A. thesis on the grammar of the Koimei dialect of Guinean Looma, while Guilavogui [1975] described elements of morphosyntax of Woi-Balagha, another variety of Guinean Looma. Since 2009, the same dialect is being studied by our colleague Daria Mishchenko [Mishchenko 2009a, 2009b, 2010].

Map 1. The South-Western Mande languages



1.6. Comparative research

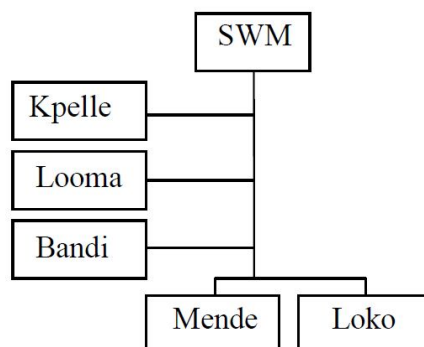
The comparative studies of SWM languages have not yet led to a similar amount of paperwork published. Still, a number of highly appreciated papers are available. David Dwyer has done a lot for the research of both phonology and tonology of SWM. His dissertation [Dwyer 1973] is a reliable comparison on the diachronic development of the nominal tonology of SWM, followed by an article on the historical development of consonants [1974]. DeZeeuw [1979] resumed and deepened the research in comparative tonology, to include all Western Mande. Spears [1971] wrote a paper on tonal correspondences between neighbouring Loko and Mende, and Rodewald [1989] later compared Mende and Bandi in this regard. The phonology and nominal morphology of the Mande languages was researched recently in [Vydrin 2006a], with a thorough reconstruction of the proto-language's phonological and morphosyntactic elements, including the system of initial consonant phonemes and plurality markers in Proto-SWM. The latter were a subject of an earlier paper by Manessy [1964a]. Dwyer [1986] analysed the historical development of definite (determinative) articles in SWM.

The peculiar system of initial consonant alternations has long been the issue which deserved most comparatist attention. Eberl-Elber [1937] compared Bandi, Mende and Looma, and his research was later followed, with a variable depth of insight, by [Hintze 1948], [Welmers 1950], [Manessy 1964b], [Meeussen 1965], [Bird 1971] and [Dwyer 1978]. An article on consonant alternations in Mande compared to the Atlantic language family was published by Pozdniakov [1987].

Kastenholz [1996] carried out a step-by-step reconstruction of the Proto-West Mande phonology which is by far one of the few attempts to reach the upper level of comparative research within the Mande family. No complex comparative grammar for the SWM has been published to date.

Scholars agree that Kpelle was probably the first language to have moved apart the main Proto-SWM body. However, further classification is complicated by the fact that a great number of (mostly typological) features shared by SWM tongues may have resulted from their close neighbourhood and extensive contact in prehistory. Two hypotheses on the internal classification of the SWM languages were both proposed in the second half of the 20th century: the first one was supported by Dwyer [1973: 4] and suggests a closer relationship between Looma and Bandi, as opposed to the Mende-Loko subgroup, and Kpelle. The later Dwyer [1986: 152; 1989: 50; 2005: 32] accepted a different approach, namely that of Bimson [1978]. In accordance with that, Bandi, Loko and Mende are put into one subbranch, while Kpelle and Looma look as earlier offshoots from Proto-SWM. This view is supported by the lexicostatistical analysis conducted by Vydrin [2009a: Insert 2]. The dendrogram below is adapted from [Dwyer 2005: 32].

Diagram 2. The South-Western Mande languages



The precise internal genetic classification of SWM remains an issue, and the discovery of Zialo may appear another important tool to handle it in the nearest future.

2. The Zialo people

2.1. Location and population

The Zialo people call themselves *Ziolo* (singular *ziyòlò* / *ziòlò*, plural *ziyòlòyti*). As the *Zialo* they are known to the neighbouring Looma and Kissi people. The name *Shialu* mentioned by Wilhoit [1999] results from an interpretation of the initial voiced palatal fricative sound by a Looma speaker. The origins of the very name are unclear. The Zialo call their language *ziyólò-woy*.

The Zialo language is spoken, according to our rough estimations, by approximately 25 thousand people, of which nearly 15 thousand reside in about 45 villages across the Zialo land, and the rest reside in larger towns, mostly in neighbouring Macenta, but also Gekedou, Kissidougou, N'Zérékoré and Conakry.

The land of Zialo, or the “Zialo country” (*le pays zialo* as its speakers name it in French), is a narrow strip of hilly forested terrain stretching for about 50 kilometers northwards from the Makona river which serves a border between Guinea and Liberia. The northernmost point of the area is the Guyela village, the southern edge is near the village of Gilawotazu. The whole area does not exceed 25-30 kilometers in width, narrowing to the north. The whole area lies between latitude 10° 02' and 10° 08' West, between longitude 8° 40' and 9° North.

The Zialo are very well aware of their native territory, the boundaries of which are marked on numerous footpaths by special signs, more often natural (such as the large tree or a gorge) than artificial (e.g., a short fence).

The “Zialo country” is rather a sociolinguistic rather than a purely linguistic term, and the borders people attribute to it do not reflect correctly the contemporary linguistic boundaries. However, it is of interest from the historical point of view, because the term “Zialo country” with no doubt represents lands where Zialo was in use earlier. Locals insist that Zialo was previously spoken in a number of villages (Kõdeba, Luyasu, Tabuyela, etc.) to the south of the Conakry – N'Zérékoré national road where it is no longer spoken today.

2.2. Culture

The land of Zialo is a hilly and forested terrain, with villages mostly situated on the hills deep in the bush. In the recent decades, the reasons of security which made the villagers to build hilltop settlements are of less importance, and a modern trend has emerged to relocate villages to lower places, closer to the trade routes. An important factor is the presence of a source of fresh water. The name of the village of Pājazu (Panziadou), for example, can be translated as ‘good water village’, and a local legend describes a miraculous discovery of a fresh spring here, which is still shown to newcomers by the elderly people. The Zialo do not usually practice well-digging, and open springs are often the only sources of water for the village.

The main activities of the Zialo do not differ much for those of the neighbouring ethnic groups of the rainforest zone. They include the production of the palm oil which is extracted from the oil-palm nut cut from high up the trees by young men using a special belt (*bàlè*). The production of oil is then conducted by women on all stages, and only youngsters and old men can help them. Cultivating coffee on the bush plantations, and growing rice on the slash-and-burn slots of the rainforest is the men’s job. Each plantation (*kpèlè*) has a family owner. Rice (*bà*, meaning also ‘food’ in general) is the prime meal for

Map 2. The Zialo language



villagers, most often spiced by pepper (*kizè*) or potash (*tòbò*). Cassava, taro and yams are grown in lesser quantities and are usually purchased on weekly markets in a roadside village. Villagers hold poultry, goats, sheep, but meat is rarely consumed and is considered a delicacy. A chicken is a valuable gift made to respectable newcomers or on special occasions (the author of this paper was honoured twice). In addition to herding and

agriculture, the Zialo men hunt small game in the bush, and women fish in the nearby streams. Seafood includes small river shrimps caught by grown-up women with special nets (*bũbũ*) which should be repaired by men exclusively.

Villages of the Zialo are rarely structured in a systematic way. Square (in the south), round (in the north) or hexagonal living huts scattered across the village are predominantly made of mud bricks, though during the latest decades many of them were covered by sheet metal. The family property unit is a yard (*kòvì*) which may include up to four buildings including the main living hut (*pèlè*) which comprises from one to four separate rooms. Grown-up men usually live separately from their wives and children in a nearby *kòvì*, but the family is getting together for evening meals. In the middle of a village, a communal gathering house is built with the effort of all the community. The communal property is decreasing: families often buy necessary machinery (e.g., a rice refinery) for themselves and lease it to their fellow villagers. A commonly owned blacksmith shop is usually situated on the edge of the village, with a few men working there producing machetes, knives and repairing various house metalwork.

Each village is governed by a chief (*kũdìyì*) assisted by his “secretary” or deputy (*gézéykpélà*, literally ‘sitting nearby’) and a body of notables. The Zialo admit that a woman can be a chief too, but I have not witnessed real cases of the kind while travelling across the country.

The culture of the Zialo people has been much influenced by Looma and Kissi, and by the urban civilization from the nearby busy hub of Macenta. The religion of a large part of Zialo is Christianity (Catholicism or Protestantism), there are big Muslim communities in large villages as well. In the sous-préfecture center of Pājazu, there is a mosque and two churches. The number of adherents of traditional beliefs is steadily decreasing, and the traditional festivities are no longer performed in the villages I have investigated, although people still show sacred forests where worshipping was performed only a generation ago, and old masks are carefully stored in the houses of the elderly people.

The mythology of Zialo contains numerous legends about the genesis of the people and the major clans, stories about totem animals and the way they became sacred for the family or clan, and about the foundation of villages. A few heroic legends were also heard from the Zialo elders, including the story of the great king of the Zialo, *Màsà Kabolò*, who is said to have lived and ruled in the large village of Zēbezu hundreds of years ago. These legends are carefully preserved by the elders, as well as various fairy tales about the people and the animals, which are well known not only by senior villagers but even by the youngsters.

Mixed families are not a rare case, as the Zialo marry Looma or (rarer) Kissi wives, especially when living in towns. Some of them have wives taken from Liberia, mostly of Bandi origin. This is the reason why the English language is more or less known in the south of the Zialo country, where villagers may listen to the Liberian radio and to the people who visited there. Many Zialo go to Monrovia for business. In general, the Zialo are open to the modern civilisation and eager to work or study in big cities or even abroad. As well as elsewhere in Guinea, they are very suspicious about the French, love President Obama and strongly respect Russia (usually still calling it “the Soviet Union”) and China. The Soviet Union helped Guinea a lot in the 60s, and elderly people still remember a Soviet tractor which worked for some time in the sous-préfecture village of Pājazu. Another living memory of the Guinean-Soviet friendship is a rich guy from Pājazu called *Kòlì Moscou*, who studied in a Moscow university and made a successful career in Conakry afterwards.

The aspects of the Zialo material culture, their ethnic customs, traditions, mythology and everyday life deserve much deeper research and a more detailed description which hopefully will be the subject of a different and much larger paper in the nearest future.

2.3. Self-identification and prehistoric migrations

Linguistically and culturally, the Zialo consider themselves as closest to the Bandi people of Liberia and, further to the west, the Mende of Sierra Leone. The people agree that the Looma language and culture is also close to theirs, but keep themselves distinct from the former from both the cultural and linguistic standpoint.

The shape of the Zialo-speaking area results from the historical background of its people. Zialo oral traditions witness that their origins lie in the south, beyond the Liberian border, and the migration was directed from southern lowlands to the northern hills, as suggested by Zialo words for ‘east’ and ‘west’, literally meaning ‘right country’ and ‘left country’ respectively, while ‘south’ is translated as ‘low country’. Most Zialo villages trace their roots from some other village to the south (e.g. the people of Gavi Koylazu declare their origins from Bowogizesu, a tiny village near Gilawotazu) and folk legends suggest that the people came to the present location somewhere in the 18th century.

These facts must reflect some latest migratory processes rather than a prehistory. It is universally recognized among the scholars that the speakers of SWM languages should have rather come to the forest zone from the north, migrating in the southwestern direction from the forest savanna region of Guinea around the town of Musadu. The area presently occupied by the speakers of Loko in Sierra Leone is considered the final destination of this process which took place around 300 years ago [Dwyer 2005: 41]. The northward migration of Zialo must have been, therefore, one of the chronologically late moves of the SWM people.

2.4. Neighbours and contacts

The spread of the Zialo to the territory of the present Republic of Guinea was followed by later migratory processes which have apparently reshaped the original picture. The Looma people (speaking the dialects of Lulama⁵) have gradually advanced from the east and southeast. Looma (of the dialectal group of Woi-Balagha) is also spoken in Macenta, the largest town in the area, and is considered a *lingua franca* in most market villages on the road. This makes Looma a prestigious language among the Zialo, so a lot of youngsters in villages and almost 100% of the Zialo people in towns use Looma in their everyday public communication. Earlier, the social position of Looma was strengthened by the state policy of Secou Touré’s regime (1958-1984), when it was declared one of the eight “national languages” of the country and for some time was imposed in schools all over the province. That was exactly the time when Zialo was officially treated as a dialect of Looma. Among the Looma, the Zialo language has been given an inferior status, and a Looma citizen would not bother him- or herself to learn Zialo, often considering it a “hard-to-comprehend” dialect of his own speech.

⁵ The dialectology of Looma has still not been sufficiently described. Some of the Northern dialects indicated in the literature, such as Ninibu or Mazama, are in fact minor varieties of the same dialect group of Lulama, and the “Koluma dialect” which is cited in various publications is the result of a misprint: Prost [1967] wrote his manual using data from “*le dialecte de la région de Kolouma*” but Koluma is no more than just the name of the village and a mission he stayed in, and the language spoken in this village is the Mazama variant of the Lulama dialectal group.

Today's older generations of Zialo all speak perfect Looma. Since the two languages have a lot in common (84-85% of basic lexicon, according to our estimates), especially in tonology and morphology, many speakers start mixing elements of the two, introducing numerous Looma loanwords into their everyday speech. It appears that the only two social groups of the Zialo speakers which can be called most reliable from a researcher's standpoint for linguistic data gathering, are the elderly people living in remote Zialo villages (but they speak poor French, if any, and in most cases lack teeth, which complicates the collaboration in a natural way), and the youngsters of the age of 20-25 born in villages and speaking extensive Zialo within their families, without spoiling it so far with Looma borrowings.

Many of the toponyms of the Zialo land are of Looma origin. The same goes for the anthroponyms of Zialo which seem to have been all borrowed from Looma. For instance, the widespread family name *Zoumanigui* (*Zòmènìgì* in Zialo) is cognate to the Looma verb *suma* 'to be attentive', Zialo *sòwà* with a regular correspondence of intervocal *m* – *ṽ*. It seems that the Zialo have fully adopted the clan structure of the Looma, even with the clan mythology and totem lists.

While the Looma continue to press the Zialo from the east and southeast, most recently, the Northern Kissi people, speakers of a South Atlantic (Mel) language, also started to penetrate into the "Zialo country" which caused severe changes in the lingvogeography across the whole area. At present, the population of the majority of Zialo villages, especially lying closer to the national transit road, includes up to 30% of Kissi families, and the Kissi language is widely spoken here in addition to Zialo. A number of villages in the lower southern part of the "Zialo country", between Gozõbu and Gilawotazu, have become predominantly Kissi, and Zialo is no longer spoken there as the first language. The depopulation of a number of small mountainous villages of the area (e.g., Malekoloma in the west) has contributed to further narrowing the Zialo linguistic area. A more scrupulous field work within the Zialo area will show more exactly the contemporary linguistic boundaries between Zialo and Looma in the east and southeast, and Zialo and Kissi in the north and west, but it is evident that these are gradually changing, and not in favour of the smaller language.

3. The Zialo language

3.1. Data sources

In January – February 2010 a field trip was conducted into the area populated by the speakers of Zialo in the Guinean préfecture of Macenta. During the trip, I was mostly based in Gavi Koylazu, a village of 51 huts nested on a picturesque hill some six kilometers to the north of the main road linking Conakry with Guinée Forestière, over 60 kilometers to the west of the nearest town of Macenta. Some other villages were also visited with sociolinguistic purposes, including the sous-préfecture center of Panziazou (*Pãǰázù*). Throughout the trip, fourteen people were interviewed, aged between 24 and 75, and three informants have provided extensive linguistic data during hours of work in Gavi Koylazu, Macenta and beyond. The principal work was done in collaboration with Mr. Davide Douo Guilavogui from Gavi Koylazu, born in 1984 and currently residing in Macenta.

While gathering the data, I tried to get a picture as objective as it could be, by liaisoning with various age groups and social groups of people. Bearing in mind that town dwellers in Macenta undergo severe influence from both Looma and French, a number of texts were recorded from the older generation of villagers who have only superficial acknowledgement of either of the two *lingua franca* of the region. Lexical and morphosyntactic data provided by various informants was crosschecked to ensure its correct comprehension and to identify any possible differences in dialects / idiolects. In case several variants of a grammar form or pronunciation were heard for the same lexical item, I attempted to trace their semantic or dialectal difference which sometimes led to quite interesting results.

This cautiousness, although not letting me be sure in the ultimate accuracy of all the examples provided in the present paper, but nevertheless does substantially raise the level of reliability of the gathered data.

3.2. Earlier mentionings and affiliation hypotheses

The very name of Zialo was not totally unknown to linguists before 2010. It was briefly mentioned in [Wilhoit 1999: 4] as a distant and yet undescribed dialect of the Looma language, and was named in some other manuscripts and field notes as Zialu, Shialu, and Zialö. No descriptive reference to the language has been made in the literature published to date, and this became the primary cause of the attention to Zialo by the Russian Linguistic Expedition to West Africa.

Wilhoit also gives a name “Laawolozu” for the same lect, which is one of the five dialects of Zialo, namely the northernmost (and most distinct) one. The only detail, apparently borrowed by that author from an earlier paper by Guilavogui [1975], suggests that Zialo is “heavily influenced by Bandi”.

Indeed, the similarities between Zialo and Bandi are quite strong. The explanation, however, is not in the language contact or convergence. Divided by the national border, these two languages rarely interact, though some Bandi refugees still reside in Guinea. The similarity is explained by the close genetic kinship between the two languages. Again, the Zialo consider themselves as the closest genetic relatives to the Bandi. Folk oral tradition says that the three language communities - Bandi, Mende and Zialo - used to be a single stock of people. Most of our informants admitted that the language of Bandi is much more comprehensible to Zialo than Looma is, and those of the Zialo who are well acquainted with Bandi confirm that the two languages are close, though not intelligible. This is not the

case with Zialo vs. Looma: our interviews show that the Zialo speakers can understand most of Looma of Lulama and Woi-Balagha dialects (mostly because they speak Looma as their second language) but the opposite is not the case: a Woi-Balagha speaker working and staying with our team of field researchers admitted that he could not understand much of Zialo.

It would neither be true to identify Zialo as the dialect of Bandi. Despite strong similarities in the basic lexicon the grammatical structure of the language, as well as the tonology, are much more alike Looma and seem rather distant from Bandi. The treatment of Zialo by the Joshua Project⁶ as the “Bandi of Guinea” is therefore as incorrect as its identification with Looma. Such a misunderstanding is partly explained by the map of “Guinean Bandi” provided on the website of the Joshua Project with a reference to the Bethany World Prayer Center and dated 1999. This map does not mark the real area populated by Zialo but instead indicates the area temporarily occupied by Bandi migrants and refugees from Liberia who fled the political instability in their country and are now gradually returning to their original homes. The website contains no further details on Zialo.

The Zialo language possesses a number of areal traits characteristic not only for SWM but also for the Mande, Kru and Atlantic languages of the region. Intense language contacts habitual for West Africa have led to convergence which often complicates comparative research, especially in the absence of reliable historical data. I will mark language features typical for areal languages throughout the paper.

3.3. Dialects

Zialo divide their country and, subsequently, their language into five closely knit dialects. The southern part of the area and the tiny Gilawotazu exclave to the south of the national road are referred to as **Keliyigo** (transcribed Kelighigo on the map), which encompasses the villages of Gozōbu, Wulilazu, Gilawotazu, Bobolazu and some others. Gozōbu is the only Zialo village enjoying a newly-paved road laid between Conakry and N’Zérékoré.

Their northwestern neighbours are the **Bayawā**, occupying the sous-préfecture center of Panziazou and the nearby villages of Dulumay, Gavi Koylazu, Sevelazu, Bemelazu, Fasala, Kotulazu, and Boyga. Further to the north, the **Wol-Ziyol** (probably, ‘Bigger Zialo’) inhabit Tewulazu, Lelebega, Zēbezu, Kelekelemay, Zughulakolo, Bobo, and Wūbiya. This ethnic subgroup is considered sometimes as the “eldest” among the Zialo, and Zēbezu is the other of the two largest economic hubs of the area, linked with the national roadwork.

The westernmost variety of Zialo is **Wōyjaŵa** which encompasses Māboma, Fasazu, Javasama, Kilima, Yēpitazu and a group of smaller communities. The name of Wōyjaŵa is genetically related to the name of Woinjama, the town in northern Liberia populated by the Bandi. There is a dialect of Mende with the same name Wanjama [Bangali 2002], and this similarity in ethnonymics is yet another evidence for an earlier migration of the Zialo from the south.

Finally, the northernmost dialect of Zialo, to the north of the Boya river, is **Lawolozu**, whose speakers populate the villages of Botema, Tenevasala, Lābu, Kotuŵa, Bābezu, Bule, and Sebelazu. The northernmost point of the present Zialo-speaking area is the village of Guyela. Lawolozu deserves a separate field trip *per se* in the hunt for linguistic data, for it seems to be the most remote dialect of all of Zialo, with peculiar specifics in both the

⁶ <http://www.joshuaproject.net>

vocabulary and the grammar. Some of the Zialo even concede Lawolozu as a separate language entity.

All dialectal varieties of Zialo are mutually intelligible. I do not possess information about the areal influences of surrounding languages upon any of the particular dialects.

4. Phonetics and phonology

4.1. Metric foot and syllable structure

The basic element of prosody in Zialo is the metric foot which can contain one or two syllables. Within the foot, phonemes are unified by tonological rules and the combinations of allowed phonemes, both consonants and vowels. Most word forms consist of one or, more often, two metric feet. The inventory of medial consonants in a foot is far poorer than the initial consonant phonemes, and this difference is the strongest means of proving the unity of the metric foot.

The vowel harmony typical within the metric food in Mande languages is not that strong in Zialo, as well as the nasality harmony. However, these phenomena are observed occasionally (see 4.3.3 for examples of nasal vowel harmony). Borrowed lexical items tend to adjust their vowels to a harmonic rule:

fěnéťé ‘window’ < French *fenêtre* [fənɛtʁ];

sóťéťé ‘driver’ < French *chauffeur*.

Vowel harmony is never spread to affixed morphemes, nor does it affect composite words.

Some exceptionally rare examples of vowel row harmonisation are witnessed:

dúyé-gì [düyegi] ‘the heat’. This one may be an influence of Looma where it sounds as *diye-gì* [Wilhoit 1999: 20].

Processes of weakening and elision of intervocal consonants in Zialo are not systematic as in neighbouring Looma, Mende or Loko, but this phenomenon is observed sometimes in colloquial speech.

According to these basic rules, Zialo is similar to other languages of the Mande family which use the metric foot as the main item of rhythm, see [Vydrin 2001] for details.

The four basic syllable structures in Zialo are: V, CV, Vy, and CVy. CLV-type syllables (where L is a sonant, predominantly *l*) also occur on a phonetic level, see below.

Vocal syllables can only be posited at the beginning of the word. Lexemes starting with a vowel are rather rare in the Zialo language: these are either borrowed items or auxiliary syntactic elements such as deictic pronouns, conjunctions, or interjections:

àlámízà ‘Thursday’;

ínǎ(g) ‘devil’;

í ‘this’;

èní ‘if’;

éy ‘yes’.

In non-initial syllables, the V shape is extremely rare, e.g. in the reduplicated verb:

ínéíné ‘worry’.

A prothetic glide is augmented to avoid a hiatus between two vowels. The glide is the bilabial *w* after a back vowel and the palatal *y* after a front one:

dì- ‘go’ + *-a* (resultative marker) > *lí-yá* ‘has gone’

sóó- ‘take’ + *-a* > *sóó-wá* ‘has taken it’

CLV-type syllables occur after a short vowel is reduced in certain positions, see 4.3.6 below:

fúfúlégi [fuf^hlegi] ‘dust’.

CLV is a common syllable structure in the Mande languages [Vydrin 2006a: 38], which is sometimes realised as CvLV, with a supershort and easily elided vowel (*v* can be different from *V*). This regular phenomenon in Zialo might be the result of the influence of the areally widespread type of syllables. Speakers still recognise there is a short vowel in such syllables if asked to transcribe the word in writing or to pronounce it distinctly.

Vy / CVy structure mostly appears in nouns followed by the determination marker -y, and in a few interjections:

dà ‘mouth’ – *dá-y* ‘the mouth’, *dá-y-tì* ‘the mouths’;

éy / *yéy* ‘yes’.

The syllable-final glide may be seen in a lesser number of words in a non-final position of the root, with both -y- and its nasal phonetic equivalent -ỹ-:

séy(g) ‘sit’;

bòykò ‘dog’;

péylú ‘spade’;

kóỹgì ‘the bee’.

4.2. Root structure

The indigenous Zialo roots are mostly monosyllabic or disyllabic. In both cases they correspond to one metric foot:

pà ‘come’;

dò ‘son’;

kpáálá ‘field’;

kúlá(g) ‘gather’.

In the 100-item Swadesh list of basic vocabulary, only seven items contain three to four syllables, and five of them are all derivatives from shorter roots: one is a reduplication (*kilyìlì(g)* ‘round’), two are composite nouns (*gũ-dèyà* ‘hair (of head)’, *témú-léyà* ‘star’, *já-bìlì* ‘cloud’), and one is a prefixed noun (*gèwùlò* ‘fat’). The remaining two are loanwords widespread across the region (*dòwòlò* ‘ground’, *sáw̃ǎnú(g)* ‘claw’).

Three or more syllable roots can in most cases be attributed to the three following categories:

(1) old or recent loanwords:

zùlùbù ‘hyena’ < Maninka *suluku*;

mízílí ‘mosque’ < Arabic *masjidi*;

sófělé ‘driver’ < French *chauffeur*.

(2) partly or fully reduplicated roots:

fùfùlè(g) ‘dust’;

ínéíné ‘worry, doubt’.

(3) prefixed roots:

gàkèlè(g) ‘be late, last’ vs. Looma *fèlè kelei* ‘the second’.

A few roots in Zialo may contain up to four or five syllables.

Composite nouns are constructed from earlier noun groups and are hard to divide from the latter:

mànàmànà(g) ‘lightning’;

làkólìlòpò ‘school child’.

Root structures for nouns and verbs are described in the sections of Chapters 6 and 0, respectively.

4.3. Vowels

Zialo vowels are divided into two groups according to the place of pronunciation: oral and nasal. According to their length, vowels are also divided into long and short ones.

The Zialo language possesses the 7-item system of oral vocalism typical for the SWM tongues, with the partly opposition of open and closed vowels:

Chart 1

	oral			nasal		
	front	middle	back	front	middle	back
closed	<i>i ii</i>		<i>u uu</i>	<i>ĩ ãĩ</i>		<i>ũ ãũ</i>
closed-mid	<i>e ee</i>		<i>o oo</i>	<i>ẽ ẽẽ</i>		<i>õ õõ</i>
open-mid	<i>ɛ ɛɛ</i>		<i>ɔ ɔɔ</i>	<i>ẽ ẽẽ</i>		<i>õ õõ</i>
open		<i>a aa</i>			<i>ã ãã</i>	

4.3.1. Short vowels

Open and closed vowels more or less correspond phonetically to their equivalents in those European tongues where they are distinguished, e.g. French. The average F1 pitch value of some of the Zialo vowels is given in the chart below.

Chart 2

vowel	spectrogram value, Hz
<i>i</i>	310-320
<i>e</i>	350-360
<i>ɛ</i>	430-440
<i>a</i>	630-640
<i>ɔ</i>	430-450
<i>o</i>	350-370
<i>u</i>	310-320

As it is seen from the figures, the vocal segments form a perfectly shaped triangle. Two closed mid-high vowels, [e] and [o], are much closer in pronunciation to high vowels [i] and [u], respectively, than to mid-low [ɛ] and [ɔ].

Here are some examples of the short oral vowels:

- pílí* ‘throw it!’;
- pélé* ‘road, way’;
- pèlê* ‘house’;
- pâlâ* ‘bog’;
- pòlù* ‘back’;
- póló* ‘old’;
- púpú* ‘ant’.

A mid vowel ə is a positioned allophonic variant of *e* following *g-*: *gè lii-ní* [gə liini] ‘I went’, *gésá-y* [gəsay] ‘the rope’. The backward shift of *e* > ə happens under the direct influence of the preceding voiced velar obstruent. In SWM, this kind of phonetic shift obviously occurs (and expands further) in Gbali, a Guinean dialect of Kpelle, where ə is a phonetic variant of *e* in certain positions [Konoshenko 2008c]. Both in Kpelle and in Zialo the neutral vowel has no phonological status, and I will mark it as *e* in the examples further on.

4.3.2. Long vowels

Vowel length is a distinctive phonological feature in Zialo. Long and short vowels are identical within the metric foot. Therefore, long vowels possess a clear phonemic status in Zialo: they are long vowel phonemes and not vowel sequences.

There is only one example of variable tone levels within one long vowel: this is the nominal conjunction marker $\delta\delta$ / $y\delta\delta$ which acquires a high tone on the first element of the long vowel when preceded by a low-toned syllable:

- (1) *ɲà* *óò* *tíyá* *òò* *né* *vàà-gò*
 1SG.FOC CONJ 3PL.FOC CONJ 1PL.EXCL come-AOR
 ‘Me and them, we came’.

As will be explained below (4.7.1), this morpheme is one of the rare examples of the falling contour tones in Zialo. No variation of tone within one long phoneme is allowed elsewhere.

Here are the examples of phonematic opposition between long and short vowels in minimal pairs:

- kpàlà* ‘hip’ - *kpáálá* ‘field’;
pà ‘to come’ - *páá* ‘kill, extinguish fire’;
kàli ‘hoe’ - *kààli* ‘snake’;
sò ‘horse’ - *sóó* ‘take, hold’.

Long vowels can be posited in the non-final position of a polysyllabic word form, or in monosyllabic lexemes:

- fǝǝ* ‘well’;
něě ‘be pleasant’;
zèèlà ‘sibling of the opposite sex’;
gɛɛli ‘insult’;
mííli ‘wall’ < French *mur*;
sòòlò(g) ‘sparrow’;
kpòòlò ‘word, speech’;
dùùlà ‘spoil, rot’;
sěgààzù ‘eyeglasses’.

Long vowels often demonstrate allophonic variation with their short equivalents (see 4.3.7).

4.3.3. Nasal vowels

There are seven short nasal vowels in Zialo, corresponding to their oral counterparts:

- fówǎ* ‘clear (weather), daylight’;
kólěbɛle ‘turn’;
tíkpe ‘everybody’;
wĩ-bole ‘taro’;
ɲǝ ‘bad’;
wǝní ‘bird’;
gũ(g) ‘head’.

There are three cases of nasality in Zialo.

- Nasalisation before a voiced velar obstruent

A phonetic nasalisation is found in a number of roots which used to have the final syllabic nasal **-ŋ* reconstructed for the SWM proto-language. Before a voiced velar obstruent of the following morpheme, the final oral vowel of such words is nasalised:

- téné(g)* ‘Monday’ – but *téné gólà-y* ‘the big Monday’;
mè(g) ‘eat’ – *gè mé-yà* ‘I have eaten it’, but *gè mē-gò* ‘I ate it’, *mē-gì* ‘the eating’;
gú(g) ‘hundred’ – *gú fèlè* ‘two hundred’, but *gũ gílá* ‘one hundred’.

It should be noted that this phenomenon is sporadically encountered, and the encouraging factor for it is the nasal or voiced velar consonant starting the final syllable of the word. In case the word does not contain a nasal phoneme, the nasalisation does not seem to occur.

- Nasalisation in nasal environment

In certain lexemes, nasal vowels follow or precede nasal consonants *m*, *n*, *ɰ̃*, *ɲ̃*, *ɲ*, *ŋ* and therefore can be treated as originally non-phonemic nasalised allophones of respective oral vowels:

kéyã ‘uncle’;
tôyã ‘truth’;
sèŋã ‘to dream’;
ɲĩyá ‘woman’s milk’;
lòdôwã(g) ‘Looma’;
sáwôñú(g) ‘nail, claw’.

The comparison of these and other lexical items with their cognates in the other SWM languages indeed reveals some oral correlates:

kéyã ‘uncle’ - Bandi *kèyá* [Grossmann & al. 1991: 39].

Moreover, the nasalisation of vowels in a nasal environment is a typologically widespread feature of all the other SWM languages, some of which (Mende, Loko) do not have practically any other types of nasality and do not possess a class of true nasal vowel phonemes.

In Zialo, however, the rule of consonant nasality spreading to the nearby vowels is not always followed, cf.:

néwẽ ‘a plain’;
páwã ‘monitor lizard’.

Moreover, there are minimal pairs of lexemes with and without nasal vowels in the same surrounding:

nènè ‘yet, so far’ – *nenẽ* ‘greet cordially’;
ɲì ‘bite’ – *ɲĩ* ‘breast’;
và ‘go!’ – *vã* ‘slowly’.

Therefore, we can conclude that the nasal vowels even in nasal surrounding have a clear phonemic status.

- Lexical nasality

Underlying nasal vowels can also be found in a great number of words containing no nasal consonants and with no trace of the prehistoric syllabic nasal:

sùyãká ‘empty’;
tíkpeẽ ‘everybody’;
sôwò ‘price’;
kàyẽ ‘pangolin’;
bütõ ‘button’;
cêcê(g) ‘cicada’.

Some of these words are borrowed lexemes, some are indigenous Zialo words.

Long nasal vowels are seldom encountered. In the vocabulary I have collected, there is only two words with a long nasal vowel, namely adverb *fôõ* ‘well’ and verb *nẽẽ* ‘be pleasant, like’ (the latter is often pronounced with an oral vowel). Phonological lengthening of a root-final *-ã* occurs in case the resultative affix *-a* is attached to the verb:

kpéyã(g) ‘be red’ – *kpéyã-ã lè* ‘it is red’.

4.3.4. Nasal vowels before voiced obstruents

Followed by voiced obstruents *b*, *d*, *g*, phonological nasal vowels are realised on the phonetic level as simple vowels with prenasalised consonants:

dãbà [da^mba] ‘crocodile’;
kpãdà [kpaⁿda] ‘gun’;
síyẽgì [s’yɛⁿgi] ‘the husband’.

The nasal element is homorganic with the following obstruent.

In order to understand how to treat these sounds on the phonemic level, it is worth comparing them with the closely-related language of Bandi. In Bandi, prenasalised consonants do not impose nasality on the preceding vowel:

ndamba(ŋ) ‘crocodile’;

kpanda ‘gun’;

siengí ‘the husband’ [Grossmann & al. 1991].

One can see that in the medial position the consonants are pronounced the same way in both Zialo and Bandi. As for the initial prenasalised phonemes of Bandi, they correspond regularly to simple obstruents of Zialo:

Bandi *ndamba(ŋ)* ‘crocodile’ – Zialo *dābà(g)*;

Bandi *mba* ‘rice’ – Zialo *bà*;

Bandi *ŋgòlí* ‘ear’ – Zialo *gólí*.

Seemingly, it would be natural to establish a direct correspondence between the two languages: the initial prenasalised stops of Bandi correspond to simple stops of Zialo, and the medial phonemes are prenasalised obstruents in both. However, let us now compare the following attributive NPs:

Bandi *ndamba kòlèngí* ‘the white gun’ – Zialo *dābá kòlègì*;

Bandi *sie feleŋgɔ* ‘two husbands’ – Zialo *síyẽ fêlègò*.

These two comparisons demonstrate the following:

(1) the medial *-ŋg-* of Bandi may correspond to *-g-* of Zialo;

(2) the root nasality of Zialo *síyẽ* ‘husband’ stays with it even in case it is followed by a non-nasal consonant.

This proves that nasality in Zialo is not a phonological feature of the consonant, as in Bandi, but that of the vowel.

Additionally, minimal pairs of words with nasal and oral vowels can be shown in the same environment:

gúgì ‘the hundred’ – *gúgì* ‘the head’;

kpógì ‘the mass, crowd’ – *kpǒgì* ‘dirt, be dirty’.

Thus, the Zialo nasal vowels are posited as invariant phonemes, and prenasalised consonants should be treated as their conditioned phonetic variants.

The only example of a true prenasalised consonant is the word *ndè* ‘my mother’ used only in the vocative form. The initial nasal is the frozen 1sg. possessive affix *n-* ‘my’ absorbed elsewhere in Zialo and acting in all other cases as a suprasegmental morpheme: (see 6.10.3 below). Cf. also the non-vocative possessive construction *nè-jè-y* ‘my mother’ based on the suppletive lexeme *jé* ‘mother’.

4.3.5. Vowel sequences

Vowel sequences within one metric foot constitute two distinct syllables and may bear different tones. The cases of vowel sequences are extremely rare in Zialo, as was mentioned in 4.1 above:

m̀d̀è ‘mother-in-law’;

g̀óé ‘gather’.

It seems thus that the two vowels in a sequence must be harmonised in row, i.e. should both be open or closed.

4.3.6. Vowel reduction

The reduction of short vowels is a frequent feature in Zialo, and it is well known across many languages of the region, including all SWM tongues. Closed, mid-closed

vowels (and *a* in a few reduplicated lexemes) can be reduced to zero before *l*, more seldom before *w*, *y* or, exceptionally rare, before obstruents:

pélé [p^ole] ‘the road’;
gíli [g^lli] ‘termite’;
fòlò [f^olo] ‘the day’;
kótí wólé-gì [kɔtⁱ wolegi] ‘the white stone’;
gèwòlày [g^owòlay] ‘the big one’;
síyě-gì [sⁱyɛ^ogi] ‘the man’;
Gávi Kòylázu [gavⁱ koylažu] place name;
nè-dé-y [n^odɛy] ‘my property’;
fáláfálá [f^alaf^ala] ‘quickly’.

This process is leading to the formation of the metric foot of CLV type mentioned above.

A specific case of vowel reduction is the shift of *i* > *y* in a postvocalic position:
é wóló ì-wà [ewòlɔywa] ‘he is fatter than you’.

This feature has led in Zialo to the reduction of the Proto-SWM definite marker **-i* to *-y* after any vowel (see 6.8 below).

4.3.7. Vowel length variation

The allophonic variation between short and long vowels is morphologically conditioned:

- monosyllabic verb roots are lengthened in the aorist and preterite forms:
dì ‘go’ – *gè liì-gò* ‘I went’ (aorist), *gè liì-ní* ‘I went’ (preterite).
 - monosyllabic verb roots are shortened before the resultative suffix:
páá ‘kill’ – *gè pá-à* ‘I killed it’;
 - monosyllabic noun roots are shortened followed by the determinative marker *-y*:
táá ‘village’ – *tá-y* ‘the village’.
 - the resultative suffix is lengthened in the qualitative / passive construction followed by the existential verb *le*:
kpǎdí ‘be hot’ – *kpǎdí-yáá lè* ‘it is hot’.
 - the nominalising suffix *-mà* lengthens the preceding vowel of a monosyllabic verb:
nāgá lè ‘I am mounting’, but *nè-lèè-mày* ‘my mounting’.
- No phonological conditions for a change in the length of vowels were discovered.

4.3.8. Vowel assimilation

Vowels *e*, *i*, *o*, *ɔ*, *u* may be assimilated before the determinative affix *-y*, thus *-oy* / *-uy* / *-ey* / *-ɔy* > *-iy*. This mostly happens with nouns of the high-tone class 2 (over 75% of cases) but may well affect low-tones classes too (see 6.3 for nominal tonal classes):

góbú ‘fire’ – *góbí-y* ‘the fire’;
dúwó ‘ashes’ – *dúwí-y* ‘the ashes’;
gùlù ‘tree’, *gùlùyàgà* ‘dry timber’ – *gúlí-y* ‘the tree’.

Sometimes speakers spread the assimilated forms to nominal compounds:

kólú ‘iron’ – *kólúvé* ‘iron bowl’, but
kólí ‘the iron’ - *kólízó* ‘bicycle’.

The assimilation does not happen with words of the same structure belonging to a different tonal paradigm:

fólò-y ‘the day’ (Class 1);
jílè-y ‘the python’ (Class 1).

A root-final *-a-* is sporadically moved forward preceding the definite article *-y*, i.e. *-ay* > *-ey* / *-ey*. This may happen with nouns of both tone classes 1 and 2:

gìlâ ‘dog’ – *gìlèy* ‘the dog’;

já ‘water’ – *jéy* ‘the water’;

mítá ‘spoon’ > *mítéy* ‘the spoon’.

4.4. Consonants.

The phonemic inventory of consonants used in Zialo is given in Chart 3.

Chart 3

	labial	dental	palatal	velar	labiovelar	glottal
explosive	b p	d t	j ⁷	g k	kp	
implosive	ɓ					
fricative	f v	s	z ⁸ y ⁹	ɣ	w	h
affricate			c			
nasal	m	n	ɲ	ŋ		
approximant	ɥ̃		ỹ			
lateral		l				

There are two phonologically defined positions of consonant phonemes in a metric foot: initial (further referred to as C₁) and medial (marked hereinafter as C₂). There are only two foot-final consonant phonemes, which are given in the C₃ column in Chart 4, summarising the distribution of consonants within the foot.

Phonemes marked by (+) have restricted usage in the given position, often conditioned by the system of initial consonant alternations (see 5.3.1 below). Individual explanations are given in the following sections.

4.4.1. Explosives

The explosive row consists of eight consonants: *b*, *p*, *t*, *d*, *j*, *k*, *g*, and *kp*.

B is a voiced bilabial explosive. It is equally widespread at the beginning of the word and in the medial position:

báálá ‘sheep’;

bòwà ‘knife’;

kpàbà ‘field tent’;

mòbílí ‘car’.

P is an unvoiced bilabial explosive. It is encountered in a great number of words, both at the beginning and in the middle of the word:

pèlè ‘house’;

pà ‘arrival’;

pũdì ‘mosquito’;

dápá ‘bag’;

peype ‘drop’.

D is a voiced dental explosive. Before high vowels, it is palatalised, sounding alveolar, similar to the British English standard pronunciation. It may be posited in both the initial

⁷ IPA symbol [j]

⁸ IPA symbol [z]

⁹ IPA symbol [j]

	C ₁	C ₂	C ₃
b	+	+	-
p	+	+	-
d	+	+	-
t	+	+	-
g	+	(+)	-
j	+	+	-
k	+	+	-
kp	+	+	-
ɓ	+	+	-
v	(+)	+	-
f	+	+	-
s	+	+	-
z	+	+	-
ɣ	(+)	+	-
w	+	+	-
l	+	+	-
m	+	+	-
n	+	+	-
ɲ	+	-	-
y	+	+	+
ŋ	+	(+)	-
ɥ	(+)	+	-
ỹ	(+)	(+)	+

and the medial positions:

díílí ‘a fly’;

dà ‘put’;

pãdà ‘good’;

gàdì ‘sharpen’.

T is an unvoiced dental explosive. It is also palatalised before high vowels. *T* may be placed in both C₁ and C₂ positions:

tòlì ‘call’;

tà ‘some’;

bété ‘bed’;

gàtò ‘understand’.

J is a voiced palatal explosive, pronounced closer to the affricate [dʒ] by some Zialo speakers. Its articulation lies somewhere in between the dental and the palatal focus. It is used both at the beginning of the word and intervocally:

já ‘water’;
jìvà ‘pocket’;
bōjò ‘to bark’.

K is an unvoiced velar explosive generally unrestricted in the word:

kúlá(g) ‘shoot’;
kólú ‘iron’;
níká ‘cow’;
péká ‘other’.

K has an allophonic variation with [x] (see 4.5.2 below).

G is a voiced velar explosive. It is found in quite a number of words initially, but can only be encountered in prefixed words, affixes or in compound nouns in the medial position:

gààzù ‘eye’;
gàlù(g) ‘moon’;
náágòlò ‘soon’ (*ná* ‘now’);
sùgúlá(g) ‘tell’ (*sù-* verbal prefix);
pāgò ‘good’ (*-gò* adverbial affix);
zàzàgùlò ‘viverra’ (compound lexeme).

The root-medial *g* is rare and occurs mostly in borrowed lexemes or auxiliaries:

gěgég(g) ‘a cultivated piece of land’;
māgólò ‘mango’;
jèmīgà ‘sort of banana’;
dègì ‘at (someone’s place)’.

KP is an unvoiced labiovelar explosive, having no voiced counterpart. It is common in the root in both positions:

kpòòlò ‘word’;
kpīdì ‘night’;
kpādà ‘gun’;
dàkpà ‘spear’;
sòkpà ‘nose’;
kpòkpò(g) ‘stool’.

4.4.2. Implosive

The implosive row is represented by the single voiced labial phoneme **B**. In the speech of some of the Zialo I interviewed, this phoneme is bifocused at both labial and velar articulations, sounding at times as a clear labiovelar [gb]. Most speakers pronounce a monofocused implosive sound.

B is found mostly in the initial position of a word form:

běgì ‘yesterday’;
bè ‘who?’;
bùùwì ‘owl’.

It can be encountered in the middle of the root of certain words. Most of such lexical items we have discovered are either loanwords representing cultural and environmental lexicon, or derivatives, i.e. prefixed or composed items:

bùbù ‘pig’;
zàbè ‘rabbit’;
būbù ‘fishing net’;
sábá ‘braid’;
jábíbí ‘pineapple’;
dáábólú ‘to close’ (verbal prefix *dáá-*);

jáǎélà ‘river bank’ (*já* ‘water’ + *kpèlà* ‘near’).

The original Zialo roots with the medial implosive are rather rare:

jàǎbè ‘nephew, cousin’;

séǎbé ‘illness’;

tàǎà ‘be sour’.

4.4.3. Fricatives

The fricative row in Zialo consists of seven phonemes: *f*, *v*, *s*, *z*, *y*, *ɣ*, and *w*.

F is an unvoiced labiodental fricative which is found in both the initial and the medial positions of the root:

fèlè(g) ‘two’;

fòlò ‘day’;

túfá ‘grass’;

nífó ‘to rub’;

fùfùlè(g) ‘dust’.

V is a voiced labiodental fricative. This phoneme is utilised in the “weak” positions conditioned by the system of initial consonant alternations (see 5.3 below) both at the beginning and in the middle of the word:

nè-vèlèy ‘my way’;

làkólìvèlè ‘school building’;

bólávà ‘friendship’ (-*và* nominal suffix).

In the isolated position, it can be encountered in a few lexemes initially:

vè ‘here’;

vã ‘slowly’.

In the middle of the root, **V** is common:

tèvè ‘cut’;

sèvè ‘writing, book’;

sìvìlì ‘Saturday’;

jává ‘onion’.

Some Zialo speakers distinguish [*v*], a bilabial phoneme of unclear articulation (fricative or implosive obstruent?) which is also present in both northern and south-central dialects of Looma [Sadler 1949/2006: 14; Mishchenko 2009, 2010]. It is characterised by a stronger lip articulation than *v* and is found mainly in the “weak” positions as a lenited counterpart of *p* and *b*. According to our informants, this phoneme is distinctly used in the speech of the Woŷjaŷa dialect, while the Keliŷiŷ use [*v*] instead:

Keliŷiŷ *sáválà-gì* ‘the shoe’ – Woŷjaŷa *sáválà-gì*.

In the present paper, [*v*] is always indicated by **V** for the lack of evidence for their phonological differentiation.

S is a voiceless dental fricative. Its usage within the root is unrestricted:

sásá ‘fence’;

sóó ‘take, catch’;

gésá ‘rope’;

fàsà(g) ‘river shrimp’.

Z is a voiced palatal fricative, thus it does not make a voiced pair for *s*.

The unvoiced dental fricative *s* does not have its direct counterpart in Zialo. The fricative phoneme marked throughout this paper as *z* is in fact a palatal [ʒ] as pronounced by those whose speech I have recorded in the Zialo country. I also encountered a plain dental [z] but only with those speakers whose language seemed to have been seriously affected by Looma.

Z is utilised in the language as the lenited counterpart of *S*, but can also be found in the isolated initial position, and in the middle of the word:

sìyē(g) ‘husband’ – *nè-zìyēgì* ‘my husband’;
ŋàzà ‘woman’;
gàazù ‘eye, face’;
zòwò ‘magician’;
zá ‘today’.

In the initial position, *Z* is almost always found in borrowed lexemes or auxiliaries. Among the former are *zúlúbú* ‘hyena’ or *zálá* ‘lion’: the latter must be a loanword from Looma, since the Bandi counterpart *ŋjàlà* presumes a regular correspondence of *j*, hence we should expect **jálá* in Zialo. One of the words with a word-initial *Z* is *zìyòlò*, the self-identification name of Zialo, which might also be a loanword.

Y is a voiced palatal phoneme. On the phonetic level, it is represented as a fricative before a vowel and as an approximant (glide) in the word-final position, where it serves the determinative affix (see 6.8). Different from the other SWM languages, where the final definite article *-i* is preserving its tonal distinction even after a pre-final vowel, in Zialo it becomes a semi-vowel glide and loses its tone:

nãgá pélê-y lò ‘I am building the house’.

Apart from the determinative affix usage, *y* is the only non-vocal phoneme that may be used in the C_3 position in the syllable:

séy(g) ‘sit’;
tókólázéy ‘begin’;
péylú ‘spade’;
dèy(g) ‘be cold’;
kpéyã(g) ‘be red’;
nèy (marker of general interrogation);
éy ‘yes’.

In the initial position, this phoneme can only be found in certain pronouns, interjections, prefixes and other auxiliaries, as well as serving a “weak” variant for *j*- and *ŋ*-:

gè yá wúyá-à ‘I washed hands’ (*yá* ‘hand, palm’ is only preserved in this idiomatic context);

yálà ‘without’;
yè ‘thou’ (PPM of the 2sg., see 8.8.1.1);
yéy ‘yes’;
kpòlòyà ‘Atlantic Ocean, sea’ (lit. ‘salted water’).

The glide appears after high vowels at the morphemic boundary between the root and a number of vocal bound morphemes attached to both the verb and the noun:

dì ‘go’+ *-a* (resultative affix) – *gè lí-yà* ‘I have gone’;
bè(g) ‘be dry’ + *-aa le* (qualitative construction) – *bé-yáá lè* ‘it is dry’.

The velar fricative *Y* can only be used in the “weak” word-initial position within a NP where it may be interchangeable with *y*- (see 5.3 for details). There is only one Zialo root starting with *Y*: the emphatic adverb *yézéyézé* ‘really, true’.

In the medial position, it is met rather often:

tááyá ‘calabash’;
tíyí ‘coal’;
tókóbéyà ‘finger’.

W is a voiced labiovelar fricative in Zialo, pronounced as [ɣw], with an allophone [w] used exclusively before high vowels. This phoneme acts as the “weak” counterpart for four

of the Zialo initial consonants: *b-*, *p-*, *k-*, and *g-*. In isolated lexemes, *W* can be root-initial or root-medial:

wáté ‘time, moment’;
wálí ‘money’;
wò ‘you (pl.)’;
dúwó ‘hole’;
tààwù(g) ‘nine’.

H is an unvoiced glottal fricative, which is only found in one morpheme: conjunction *hã* ‘until’ is an emphatic adverbial used mainly in narrative speech. It is an areally widespread item used in both SWM and SM languages. No other examples of this phoneme were found in Zialo.

4.4.4. Affricate

C is an unvoiced palatal affricate found in only a few loanwords:

cècè(g) ‘dance castanets’;
cèkè ‘atieke’ (a local dish made of cassava);
cēcē(g) ‘cicada’.

No other sibilants or affricates are introduced in the language even from borrowing: e.g., French *chauffeur* has become *sóǎlé* in Zialo.

4.4.5. Nasals

Nasal consonants in Zialo include *m*, *n*, *ɲ*, *ŋ*, *ĩ* and *ỹ*.

M is a voiced bilabial nasal sonant. It is a “strong” participant of the initial consonant alternation and therefore is extensively used in both initial and medial position of isolated roots:

màmà ‘grandmother’;
méní ‘hear’;
mítá ‘spoon’.

N is a voiced dental nasal sonant, its usage in the root is unrestricted:

nónó ‘milk’;
níná ‘new’;
é pélè-y ló-ní ‘he built the house’;
pónón ‘suck’.

ɲ is a voiced velar nasal sonant. It is only found occasionally in Zialo, but can be encountered in both positions in a root:

ɲàzà ‘wife, woman’;
ɲéyé ‘sand’;
sèɲã ‘dream’;
pílíɲání ‘chimpanzee’.

The same goes for *ɲ*, a voiced palatal nasal sonant which is relatively rarely met in the language. In the medial position, it is only found in a few lexemes:

ɲáwá ‘blood’;
ɲífó ‘rub’;
sèyɲòwò ‘neighbour’;
gàɲɔ ‘be greedy’ (*gà-* verbal prefix).

4.4.6. Approximants

W is a voiced bilabial nasal approximant. It is a “weak” counterpart of the initial *m*- and therefore is spotted in the initial position of the word only within a syntagma. In the

isolated position, this phoneme is not used in Zialo. There are examples of its medial usage:

mítá ‘spoon’ – *kólúwítá* ‘iron spoon’;
móóní(g) ‘love’ – *ɲàzàwóóní(g)* ‘women-lover’;
bùlúlévéwòy ‘baker’ (lit. ‘bread-cutter’, *-mó* is an agentive suffix);
bówá ‘hammock’;
néwé ‘a plain’;
ɲáwá ‘blood’;
kòwà(g) ‘cheek’.

Ÿ is a voiced palatal nasal approximant with no independent usage in a “strong” position. It serves as a lenited variant for initial *ɲ-* and *m-* (see 5.3 below). Apart from the initial “weak” position, this nasal consonant is also used in the medial position:

fùyí ‘sponge’;
kéyã ‘uncle’.

This phoneme may also be found in the word-final (C₃) position:

kóy kòlè-gì ‘the white bee’;
kɔy ‘to taste, lap’.

4.4.7. Lateral

L is a lateral liquid with a strong vibrant hue, and can reflect both *L* and *R* in the borrowed words:

fělémé ‘key lock’ < French *fermer* ‘to close’;
lãbò ‘lamp’ < English *lamp*;
làkólì ‘school’ < French *l’école*;
fěnétélé ‘window’ < French *fenêtre*.

There is no distinction between a vibrant *R* and a liquid *L* in Zialo, as well as in many other languages of the region. If one pronounces the word *bùlly* as [buriy] the Zialo addressee will definitely recognise it is ‘bread’. However, it is not easy to identify the distribution of this allophonic variation according to the phonetic environment. It seems at least that [r] *may* be heard in the following phonetic contexts:

- after a front or middle vowel and before *a*: *tá lá* [tara] ‘they do not’, *Guyela* [guyera] (toponym);
- after any vowel and before *i*: *bùlly* [buriy] ‘the bread’, *gólí* [gori] ‘ear’.

However, in both positions the liquid [l] is also quite possible.

In the basic Zialo dictionary, *L* is more often found as a “weak” counterpart of *d-* and *t-*, but can be found in both the initial position (mostly in borrowed words) and in the middle of the root:

támá ‘coin’ – *ì-làmà-y* ‘your coin’;
bòwàlèwè ‘machete’ (lit. ‘knife-cut’);
lòkó ‘sort of banana’;
linà ‘tomorrow’;
gùlù ‘tree’;
kpòòlò ‘speak’.

4.4.8. Consonant clusters

Consonant clusters can only emerge in Zialo in case a short vowel is reduced before sonants *l*, *y* or *w*, or after nasals before obstruents (see 4.3.6 above). Therefore, consonant groups mainly have a CvL form:

pélé-y [p^hley] ‘the road’;
síyẽ-gì [sⁱyẽgi] ‘the man’;

gèwòlày [g^owòlay] ‘a big one’;

nè-dé-y [n^edəy] ‘my property’.

Noun *ndè* ‘my mother’ is probably the only lexeme where the consonant cluster is allowed on the phonological level.

4.5. Consonant assimilations

4.5.1. Nasalisation of the liquid

Zialo has got a few words where *-l-* may eventually turn into *-n-* adjusted by the nasal harmony over the whole root:

mèlèmèlè ‘mirror’ = *wènèwènè*.

Another consonant allophony is seen in the word for ‘chimpanzee, ape’:

pílínání / *pílíyání* / *pílíyání*.

These all are not regular phonological features and should be described as allophonic variations in specific loanwords.

4.5.2. Spirantisation

Intervocal *k*, *g* may be phonetically weakened to [x, ɣ] respectively when followed by a back or middle vowel. This spirantisation is most always witnessed in the “strong” initial position after the elided Proto-SWM **-ŋ*:

bè(g) ‘draught’ – *bé gólà-y* [beɣòlay] ‘the big draught’;

bàlè(g) ‘belt’ – *nè-vàlè gòlà-y* [nevaleyòlay] ‘my big belt’;

màsà(g) ‘king’ – *másá kòlè-gì* [masaxolegi] ‘the white king’.

[x, ɣ] should be regarded as phonetic allophones of *k* and *g*, respectively. However, if the process of spirantisation goes further in the language, the mechanism of initial consonant alternations, described in Chapter 5, will have to be substantially modified.

4.5.3. Intervocal elision

There are just a few lexemes I have encountered in Zialo where the intervocal *-l-* is dropped:

gólí ‘ear’ – *gólíló*, *góyíló* ‘listen’ (cf. Woi-Balagha Looma *gólí tó(g)* listen’);

kólú ‘iron’ – *kóyó* (< *kólízó*) ‘bicycle’ (lit. ‘iron horse’).

Both compound lexemes should be treated as loanwords from Looma, where the process of intervocal drop of *-l-* is normal.

The word *gòzítà(g)* ‘six’ is sometimes pronounced *gòyítà(g)* in fast colloquial speech, but this never happens if it is put into the isolated position. This is the only example I discovered on the alternation of *z* and *y* which is a standard norm in Looma.

4.6. Phonetic correspondences between Zialo, Looma and Bandi

The correspondence chart below is an amendment to the table of phonetic correspondences between initial consonants of the SWM languages proposed by Vydrin [2006a: 135-136]. Adding Zialo to the picture will help to build this language into the picture of the comparative phonology of the SWM language group, and probably understand the diachronic processes having led to the actual consonant phonology of Zialo itself.

In this chart, I am trying to limit the scope of the examples to the indigenous SWM lexicon or at least to the words which almost certainly can be reconstructed for the Proto-SWM language, even though some of them should probably be regarded as old loanwords (such as Zialo *jává* ‘onion’).

The “weak” consonant alternates are given as separate slots in the chart. The Looma data is taken from [Vydrin 1987; Mishchenko, field data]. The Bandi lexemes are borrowed from [Grossmann & al. 1991].

Chart 5

Proto-SWM	Zialo	Looma	Bandi	Examples
*b	b	b	mb	Z <i>bòwà</i> , L <i>bòà</i> , B <i>mbowa</i> ‘knife’
*p	p	p	p	Z <i>pèlè</i> , L <i>pèlè</i> , B <i>pélé</i> ‘house’
*d	d	d	nd	Z <i>dà</i> , L <i>dà</i> , B <i>ndá</i> ‘mouth’;
*ḍ	d	z	nd	Z <i>dí</i> , L <i>zì / zì</i> , B <i>ndì</i> ‘heart’
*t	t	t	t	Z <i>tòlì</i> , L <i>tìlì / tì</i> , B <i>tólí</i> ‘call’
*j	j	z	ɲj	Z <i>jówó(g)</i> , L <i>zówó(g) / zóyó(g)</i> , B <i>ɲjòwò</i> ‘cassava’; Z <i>já</i> , L <i>zée</i> , B <i>ɲjà</i> ‘water’
	j	y	ɲj	Z <i>jává</i> , L <i>yává</i> , B <i>ɲjààvà</i> ‘onion’
	j	d	ɲj	Z <i>jé</i> , L <i>dé / déé / dí</i> , B <i>ɲjèé</i> ‘mother’
*g	g	g	ŋg	Z <i>gólí</i> , L <i>gói</i> , B <i>ŋgòlì</i> ‘ear’
	g	ŋ / ø	ŋg	Z <i>góbú</i> , L <i>ábú / ɲábú</i> , B <i>ŋgòmbù</i> ‘fire’
*gw	g	gw	ŋgw	Z <i>gòlà</i> , L <i>gwálà</i> , B <i>ŋgwala</i> ‘big’
*kw	k	k / kw	k	Z <i>kòwò</i> , L <i>kòwò</i> , B <i>kòwò</i> ‘foot’; Z <i>kólé(g)</i> , L <i>kwélé / kólé</i> , B <i>kole</i> ‘be white’
*kp / *kpw	kp	kp	kp	Z <i>kpǎdí</i> , L <i>kpàdì</i> , B <i>kpándí</i> ‘be hot’
*m	m	m	m	Z <i>mè(g)</i> , L <i>mì</i> , B <i>mè</i> ‘eat’
*n	n	n	n	Z <i>nè(g)</i> , L <i>ne(g)</i> , B <i>ne(ŋ)</i> ‘tongue’
*ɲ	ɲ	ø / ɲ	ɲ	Z <i>ɲĩ</i> , L <i>ĩ, ɲí, ɲĩ</i> , B <i>ɲii</i> ‘sleep’
	ɲ	ø / ɲ	ɲ	Z <i>ɲàzà</i> , L <i>àzà, àzà</i> , B <i>ɲáhá</i> ‘woman’
*ŋ	ŋ	ø / ɲ / ɲ	ŋ, ɲ	Z <i>ŋéyé</i> , L <i>ɲã z(g) / ɲeze(g)</i> , B <i>ŋiýe</i> ‘sand’
*f	f	f	f	Z <i>fòwò</i> ‘dry season’, L <i>fò</i> ‘dry’, B <i>fowo</i> ‘dry season’
*s ₁ / *s ₂	s	s	s	Z <i>sá</i> , L <i>sáá</i> , B <i>sa</i> ‘die’
*y	y	y	y	Z <i>yà</i> , L <i>yà</i> , B <i>yá</i> ‘you (sg.)’
*ɖ	l	l	l	Z <i>ì-láy</i> ‘your mouth’, Z <i>è-làì</i> , B <i>í-láí</i>
*v	v	v, u	v	Z <i>và</i> , L <i>và / và</i> , B <i>va</i> ‘come!’; Z <i>vè</i> , L <i>vɛ, vɛ</i> ‘here’
	ɓ	ɓ / b	ɓ	Z <i>ɓà</i> , L <i>ɓa / boa</i> , B <i>ɓáó</i> ‘no’; Z <i>ɓè</i> ‘who’, L <i>ɓè</i> , B <i>ɓéé</i> ‘what’
	w	w	w	Z <i>wǎní</i> , L <i>wóní</i> , B <i>wǎni</i> ‘bird’
	z	z	h	Z <i>zá</i> , L <i>zà / zaa</i> , B <i>haa</i> ‘today’; Z <i>táá zù</i> , L <i>táá zù</i> , B <i>taa ñu</i> ‘in a village’

4.7. Tonal system

4.7.1. Introduction and terms

In all SWM languages, as well as in all the languages of the Mande family, tones play a most important part in both morphology and syntax. Tones create morphological oppositions and participate in the formation of grammatical paradigms, they serve to

distinguish between various types of syntagmas and between lexical items with different semantics. Therefore, the system of tonology is critically important for both the description and the comparison between the languages of the family. More on the significance of tones in Mande see, for instance, in [Vydrin 2003].

The tonal systems of SWM languages are not always sufficiently described. As mentioned above, there is a thorough description and comparison of nominal tonologies of five tongues of the group in [Dwyer 1973], and a comparative tonology of Western Mande in [DeZeeuw 1979]. A few papers describing tone marking in Bandi and Looma, the closest relatives of Zialo, will be used for reference in this paper [Sadler 1949/2006, 1951; Rodewald 1989; Vydrin 1989; Mishchenko 2009].

The minimal tone-distinguishing item in Zialo is the syllable which serves as a segmental base for tonal oppositions. There has long been a discussion in African linguistics on which sort of items should be taken as a minimal tone-bearing unit [Yip 2007]. Welmers [1962: 85] believed it was a morpheme bearing an ultimate tone, giving examples from the SWM language of Kpelle. However, the tonal system of Zialo cannot be treated in a similar way because grammatical tones here may vary even within one morpheme, and the underlying lexical tone is in most cases hard to identify. It would also be much easier to explain contextual phonological and morphological tone changing rules if we accept the syllable (or, more exactly, the vowel of the syllable) a minimal tone-bearing unit.

There are two level tones in Zialo: high and low. In the present paper, the high tone is marked by H, the low tone by L sign, or by accent diacritics over the vowel. This binary opposition is identical to the tonal structure of all the SWM languages except Kpelle where the third, middle level tone exists. Dwyer [1973: 38] considered the three-tone opposition as ascending to the Proto-SWM epoch and preserved exclusively in Kpelle, but this opinion is no longer considered valid: the three-tone system in Kpelle should be regarded as the result of the influence from the neighbouring SM languages. See the application of phonetic contour tones further in this section.

The temporal conjunction *hã* is the only word in Zialo which bears a super-high tone. It is a loanword widespread in the region, which was apparently borrowed into the language together with its peculiar tone.

The main difference between the tones is in pitch which stays more or less the same during the course of each syllable. The tones which change their pitch during the course of the vowel length are called contour tones, and there has been a discussion in African linguistics on how to treat and to mark contour tones [Dwyer 1973: 14-23]. In Zialo, the rare cases of tone variation within one syllable will be described as a sequence of two different tone-bearing segments:

- (2) *ɲà* *ɔ̀̀* *yà* *ɔ̀̀* *né* *vàà-gɔ̀*
 1SG.FOC CONJ 2SG.FOC CONJ 1PL.EXCL come-AOR
 ‘Me and you (sg.), we came’.

In the conjunctive marker of this example, the falling contour tone is used.

4.7.2. Basic tone rules

In Zialo, as well as in other SWM languages, there is a need to distinguish between the lexical (underlying) and the grammatical (surface) tone. Each lexeme possesses its basic lexical tone pattern:

- pèlè* ‘house’;
- pélé* ‘road’;
- pà* ‘come’;
- páá* ‘kill’.

The lexical tone in Zialo is a typical hidden category [Plungian 2000: 150], which in many lexemes (especially nouns) is never seen on the surface. Its detection, however, is extremely important for the understanding of phonological processes within NPs. It would never be possible to predict which would be the surface tone within a syntagma without learning each element's lexical tonal picture. Moreover, lexical tones are hard to avoid in the language's description: many lexemes do show them in certain contexts, so it would be counterproductive to ignore a category with one item and to detect it in another.

The lexical tone is modified under the influence of the syntactic environment of the lexeme according to the certain tonal rules. Members of such syntagmas are tightly knit together, but tonal processes never go beyond the borders of the syntagma. Among such phrasal units, the following ones play an important part in the tonology of the language:

- genitive and possessive syntagmas, including that of compound nominals (*my pen, mother's table, sunglasses*);
- attributive syntagma (*big chair, painted wall, three pencils*);
- verb phrase (*kill a dog, close a window*);
- elementary clause (*I am going, the man sat down*);
- existential clause (*It was good, I am a doctor*).

The tonal picture resulting from the syntagmatic rules will be called the grammatical or the surface tone. Rules which are fulfilled in any syntactic position depending on the phonetic surroundings are called automatic, and they are not characteristic for Zialo (though see the rule of Downdrift below). Rules which only apply within a syntagma and are governed by this syntagma are called non-automatic or syntagmatic.

The basic tonal rules of Zialo are given below.

1. **Rightward Spreading** is the rule which assimilates the tone of the following word or syllable with the tone of the previous segment. Both high and low tone may be advanced from left to right. This rule act across any morphological boundaries. In Dwyer's terms, this tone may be incorporated into a cluster of "Tone Copying" rules [1973: 42]. Below is the example of Rightward Spreading in an attributive syntagma consisting of four elements.

pèlè 'house', *kólé(g)* 'be white', *-gì* (determinative marker), **íj-* (referentiality marker, also called the referential article):

- (1) **pèlè kólé-gì* >
- (2) **pèlè wòlè-gì* (rightward lowering from the noun to the attribute) >
- (3) **(íj-)pélé wòlè-gì* (rightward raising from the referentiality marker to the noun) >
- (4) *pélé wòlè-gì* 'the white house'.

In this example, the lexical tones are shown in (1). In (2), the tone of the attribute is lowered rightwards after the low lexical tone of the substantive syntactic head. In (3), the low tone of the noun is raised after the high-tone reference marker. The surface tones are indicated in (4), and this is the way they are heard in the speech.

See the detailed analysis of this rule implementation in the nominal attributive syntagma in 6.6 below.

2. A special case of the Rightward Spreading is the **Suprasegmental Morpheme Influence**: the referential article and the polyfunctional prefixes of the 1sg. and 3sg. having no segmental expression, usually impose their tone on the lexeme they are attached to (except for cases when a different rule prevents this). These morphemes (low tone for the 1sg., high tone for the 3sg. and for the referential article) assimilate the tone of the following syllable:

tókó 'hand' > (')-*tòkò-y* 'my hand', (')-*tókó-y* 'his hand'.

3. **Clitic Tone Variability** is the rule of tonal behaviour demonstrated by clitic morphemes following personal pronouns and subject PPMs. Some of these morphemes do

not assign their permanent tone and acquire a high tone on the first vowel after a low-tone marker, and vice versa:

- (3) *nà* *óò* *tíyá* *òò* *nánà* *lí*
 1SG.FOC CONJ 3PL.FOC CONJ 1PL.EXCL.IPFV go

‘Me and him, we are leaving’;

- (4) *nà* *ló* *vè,* *á* *lò* *náy*
 1SG.FOC COP here 3SG.FOC COP there

‘I am here, and he is there’.

The rule is only applicable for a limited number of clitic auxiliaries, since some morphemes possess their own tone: e.g., *bé* (irrealis marker), *tá* (negation marker), etc.

4. **Downdrift** is a rule well-known in SMW languages and far beyond, across the language families of West Africa. Its substance lies in the lowering of the absolute pitch value of a high tone preceded by a low tone. Therefore, in a phonemic sequence of *cú-cù-cú* the third syllable will be lower in absolute pitch than the first one. This relative downshift of the tone is usually marked by a short vertical dash before the syllable: *cú-cù-^ˈcú*. See a detailed description of downdrift in [Odden 1996], and a survey of this feature in SWM languages in [Dwyer 1973: 6-10].

In Zialo, the Downdrift rule is applied in a number of cases including the possessive syntagma with certain nouns having a long vowel of the first syllable, cf. the following example:

nè- ‘my’, *báálá* ‘sheep’:

- (1) *nè-bààlá-y* (rightward lowering of the first syllable of the noun root) >
- (2) *nè-bàà^ˈlá-y* (Downdrift on the final high-tone syllable) >
- (3) *nè-bààlá-y* ‘my sheep’.

The Downdrift rule is automatic and therefore is not marked in the examples throughout the paper.

5. **Syntagmatic Border Limit** is a rule which prevents tonal assimilations from spreading beyond the boundary of the syntagma. This rule perfectly fits one of the fundamental rules of the dependency syntax [Testelefs 2001: 68-69]: phrasal categories form self-contained phonological groups of items. For example, the subject can influence the attribute in a NP, but the attribute does not impose its tone on the constituents of the subsequent verb phrase.

The intonation plays a vital role in the tonology of the language imposing its own rules on the lexical tones. The interdependence of the tone and the intonation in tonal languages is a little-studied sphere of phonology, especially for the languages of Africa, and this increases the interest towards the processes of their mutual influence. Here are the two intonational rules which are modifying tonal picture of the sentence in Zialo.

1. **Final Lowering** is applied to grammatical high-tone final syllables which change their tone to low in the absolute end of a sentence or before a pause. This rule is not automatic and acts in limited syntactic contexts described later in this paper. Here is the example of Final Lowering:

dòwà ‘pit’, **í-* (reference article), *-y* (determinative marker):

- (1) **(í-)dòwà* >
- (2) *dówá* (Rightward Spreading on both syllables of the noun imposed by the reference article) >
- (3) *dòwà-y* ‘the pit’ (Final Lowering on the second syllable in case the word is put at the end of the sentence or before a pause).

2. **Clause-final Rising** is a syntactically conditioned phonetic rule which raises the tone of any syllable ending a non-final clause in a complex sentence. The reason for this rule is clearly the intonation which assimilates the low tone of the clause-final syllabic

item. The resulting high tone thus serves as a marker for the border between the clauses. This rising tone will be marked as high throughout this paper.

(5) *wátí yè vâ wǎní ló, túwó-y vili (')-má*
 when 2SG come bird see REF\net-DEF throw 3SG.PF-on

‘The moment you see a bird, throw the net!’

The high tone may be placed on the predicate of the clause in case the clause-final item is an adverb:

(6) *nà yè vâà-ní bẽ g gà là yè-nì*
 when 2SG come-PRET yesterday 1SG.IRR NEG be-PRET

yědé-nì

be.healthy-PRET

‘When you came yesterday, I was ill’.

According to the tonal rules described here, all lexical items of Zialo can be distributed among several tonal classes. These will be described in specific sections for nouns and verbs, and the respective Arabic figure marking the tone class will be assigned to most lexemes in the vocabulary attached to the present paper.

4.7.3. Tone and stress

The issue of whether the stress should be postulated for SWM languages is still under discussion. It was often thought that stress and tone cannot coexist in one language, so linguists of the past rarely bothered themselves to look for accent signs in a clearly tonal language. In SWM Mande, however, stress and tone do not exclude each other automatically. Welmers [1962] following Casthelain [1952] insists that there is a dynamic stress in Kpelle, which according to him should be linked with tonal classes. However, neither of the two papers provides adequate examples of accent paradigms or at least accentual oppositions. Sadler [1949/2006: 31] notes that in Looma, a disyllabic noun receives more stress on the second syllable in the definite form, and this influences the phonology of the whole word form.

Vydrin [2002: 14-15] listed a number of phonetic features which would help to identify stress in tonal languages of the SM group. They are applicable for SWM as well:

- a substantial increase in vowel dynamic strength seen as drastic growth of waveform amplitude variations in any speech analysing software;
- an increase in vowel length, especially in languages lacking long vowels;
- a modification of vowel timbre, especially for unstressed vowels.

In Zialo, the stress is undoubtedly present. It is noticed in some (but not all) contexts: especially distinctly in NPs. Typically, Zialo words are oxytonal: whether consisting of two or more syllables, the stress falls on the final syllable. This picture is not distorted by either the tone or the vowel length: unstressed vowels can be long or short, and tone is not noticed to influence the accent.

A clear sign of oxytonal stress is the reduction of vowels (see 4.3.6) in the initial syllables of polysyllabic lexemes.

Stress in Zialo and, more widely, in the SWM languages clearly deserves more attention, even though it does not play a crucial role in either morphology or syntax, and the dynamic emphasis of one of the syllables is clearly secondary to the tonal oppositions.

5. Morphology

5.1. Morpheme / word phonological structure

Segmental morphemes in Zialo have no restrictions on phonological structure other than lexical roots: bound morpheme types include V, CV, CVCV, the only sonant morpheme is the determinative marker *-y*.

Junction of roots and morphemes is agglutinative and mostly follows the rules of the initial consonant alternations (see 5.3 below). There is no particular phonological difference in merging morphemes within one word form and words in a phrase. A case of historical fusion is found in the system of predicative person markers which tend to merge with conjunctions, TAM modifiers, and auxiliary verbs. The contracted series of personal pronouns represents a merger with the locative postposition *yà* ‘to, at’, see 7.1.5 below.

Suprasegmental morphemes play a vital role in the language. These are, once again, the referentiality marker (high tone), and the polyfunctional markers of the 1sg. (low tone) and the 3sg. (high tone):

(^h)-*tòkó-y* ‘my hand’;

(^h)-*tókó-y* ‘his hand’;

(^h)-*fàsà-y* ‘the rock’.

Polyfunctional markers are described in 6.10.3 and 8.8 below. The nominal category of referentiality is dealt with in 6.7.

5.2. Phonological opposition of morphological categories

Of all terminal categories in Zialo, only pronouns, PPMs, conjunction markers and interjections can possess phonological structure V, i.e. consist of a single vowel:

é ‘he, she, it’;

í ‘this’;

òò (conjunctive marker);

éé ‘no’.

As seen here, all parts of speech possessing this characteristic, except pronouns, are auxiliary. This feature creates an opposition between pronouns and other principal parts of speech such as nouns, adjectives, verbs. Bound morphemes, including person and tense / aspect markers, can also have a V-structure:

ì- ‘you, your (sg.)’;

-a (resultative marker).

Person and referentiality markers can be expressed by suprasegmental units, which is impossible for any other roots or morphemes.

5.3. Initial consonant alternations

5.3.1. General phonological rules

All consonants of Zialo except *n*, *c*, and *h*, participate in the system of bivalent initial consonant alternations which is relevant both phonologically and morphologically to the structure of the language. Initial consonants are pronounced in the “strong” or “weak” variant depending on the preceding lexeme and/or the syntactic context. The origins of this system, witnessed in all SWM languages, were explained by Welmers [1973] and Dwyer [1974], are linked with the influence of the word-final or word-initial **ŋ*, a syllabic nasal phoneme which once existed in Proto-SWM and was only preserved in certain positions in Kpelle: cf. Zialo *kpáálá* ‘field’ vs. Kpelle *kpâlāŋ* ‘id.’ [Rude 1983: 270]. Morphologically,

the reflex of this proto-language phoneme represents several distinct morphemes in Zialo which impose a “strong” initial consonant of the following syllable:

(1) the high-tone referential prefix, originating from **ɲ*:-

ì-vèlè-y ‘your house’ – (**ɲ*-)*pélé wòlè-gì* ‘the white house’;

và ‘come!’ – (**ɲ*-)*pá* ‘departure’;

(2) person markers of the polyfunctional series (the low-tone 1sg. marker from **ɲ*- and the 3sg. marker from **ɲ*-):

ì-lòkò-y ‘your hand’ – (**ɲ*-)*tókó-y* ‘his hand’, (**ɲ*-)*tòkó-y* ‘my hand’;

nāgá ná lō ‘I see that’ – *nāgá* (**ɲ*-)*tō* ‘I see him’.

(3) any word ending in the syllable-final nasal **-ŋ* now extinct in Zialo as well as elsewhere in SWM except (in some positions) Kpelle: Zialo *màsà* ‘a king’ (< **maɲsaŋ*) – *másá kpèyã-gì* ‘the red king’. The presence or absence of the reflex of this nasal phoneme at the end of each lexeme is the trigger for the division of all Zialo words into *y*-items (ending in a historical vowel, with *-y* as the determination marker) and *gì*-items (ending in the prehistoric **-ŋ*, determination marker *-gì*) which plays a vital part in the whole system of morphology of the language¹⁰. Since the pronunciation does not allow distinguishing between the two classes of words in the indefinite form, *gì*-words are marked by the bracketed *-(g)*: e.g., *màsà(g)* ‘king’.

The terms “strong” and “weak” are rather traditional than adequately reflecting the actual synchronic state of the Zialo phonology. Diachronically, it is not quite evident whether the “strong” or “weak” alternates were the primary Proto-SWM consonant phonemes, and which of them represent a mutation. In the literature dedicated to SWM, the “strong” variants are usually considered as the underlying phonemic unit, but, since I do not see the ultimate evidence in the issue, for the sake of precision I will use these terms in the paper in inverted commas only.

“Weak” consonants are massively found in the medial position of the root as in *dúwó* ‘pit’ or *gùlù* ‘tree’. Vydrin [2006a] who proposed a reliable reconstruction of proto-SWM consonant alternation system, suggests that the consonant change could also take place inside the root where the syllabic nasal **-ŋ*- once existed. In case the syllable ended in a vowel, a “weak” consonant followed in the next syllable, i.e. the same rule was in force both on the border between word forms and syllables within one word.

In Zialo, the original SWM system of consonant phonology was distorted by numerous loanwords which have penetrated into the language without being integrated into the system of consonant alternations, such as *lákólì-y* ‘the school’ < French *l’école* ‘the school’ which starts with a “weak” consonant and does not attach a referential article even in the definite form. Many auxiliaries, clitics and interjections behave specifically from a phonological standpoint and do not abide to the laws of alternations: e.g., *le* (existential verb), etc.

The table of initial consonant alternations in Zialo, with some examples, is provided in Chart 6. Each “strong” consonant may have several alternants depending on the subsequent vowel. In case the vowel is not specified, the alternation occurs before any of them:

¹⁰ It seems evident that some words may vary in belonging to *-y* or *-gì* classes of lexemes. Such examples are not habitually met but encountered from time to time: e.g., *jówóy* / *jówógì* ‘the cassava’. A slight difference in semantics may occur between the two variants: *péley* ‘the road’, *pélegì* ‘the way, method’; *fólòy* ‘the day’, *fólógì* ‘once in the past’. A comparative analysis between Looma and Zialo nominals recovers a great number of inconsistencies between the classes in the two languages: e.g., Looma *báálági* vs. Zialo *bááláy* ‘the sheep’, Looma *bóólógi* vs. Zialo *bóóláy* ‘the hat’.

“Strong”	“Weak”	Following vowel	Examples
b	w	except a	<i>bòòlò</i> ‘hat’ – <i>ì-wòòlò-y</i> ‘your hat’
	v ¹	a	<i>báí</i> ‘trap’ – <i>nè-vàli-y</i> ‘my trap’
d	l	-	<i>dì</i> ‘going’ – <i>nāgá lí</i> ‘I am going’
f	v	-	<i>fě</i> ‘pot’ – <i>kólúvé</i> ‘cauldron’
g	ɣ / y ²	e, ε, i, a	<i>gèkpùlò(g)</i> ‘elbow’ – <i>ì-yèkpùlò-gì</i> ‘your elbow’ <i>gilà</i> ‘dog’ – <i>nè-ɣilè-y</i> ‘my dog’
	w	o, ɔ, u	<i>gò(g)</i> ‘tail’ – <i>gilà wò-gì</i> ‘dog’s tail’
j	y	-	<i>já</i> ‘water’ – <i>ì-yè-y</i> ‘your water’
k	w	o, ɔ, u	<i>kòwò</i> ‘foot’ – <i>ì-wòwò-y</i> ‘your foot’
	ɣ / y ²	e, ε, i, a	<i>gézé</i> ‘cotton’ – <i>nè-yèzè-y</i> ‘my cotton’ <i>gètè</i> ‘pestle’ – <i>nè-yètè-y</i> ‘my pestle’
kp	ɓ	-	<i>kpādí</i> ‘be hot’ – <i>já bādí</i> ‘hot water’
m	ỹ ³	ε, e, i	<i>mè</i> ‘eat’ – <i>níká-y lè táfá-y ỹè</i> ‘the cow is eating the grass’
	ṽ	-	<i>mà</i> ‘on, upon’ – <i>gízè-y ṽà</i> ‘on the mountain’
ɲ	ỹ	-	<i>ɲáwā</i> ‘blood’ – <i>ì-ỹáwā-y</i> ‘your blood’
ŋ	y	-	<i>ŋàzà</i> ‘woman’ – <i>nè-yàzà-y</i> ‘my wife’
p	v	e, ε, i, a	<i>pāda</i> ‘good’ – <i>kólá vāda</i> ‘nice clothes’
	w	o, ɔ, u	<i>pōdè(g)</i> – ‘fonio’ – <i>Kòlì wōdè-gì</i> ‘Koli’s fonio’
s	z	-	<i>sò</i> ‘horse’ – <i>ì-zò-y</i> ‘your horse’
t	l	-	<i>tókó</i> ‘hand’ – <i>ì-lòkò-y</i> ‘your hand’

Notes:

(1) *b-* normally alternates with *w-* except for certain cases where the initial consonant is followed by *-a-*: in this case *v-* will be the “weak” alternant. This may happen with nouns in case the following syllable contains a front or middle vowel:

nè-vàli-y ‘my trap’;

nè-vàlè-gì ‘my belt’;

nè-vèlèkòòzà-y ‘my pants’.

After a back vowel, only *w-* is pronounced:

mó-wáí-y ‘our trap’.

Even in the abovementioned examples, the speaker can freely alternate *v-* and *w-* saying *nè-wàlè-gì*, *nè-wàli-y*, *nè-wèlèkòòzà-y*. The speaker hears no difference in pronunciation here, though he does distinctly identify the difference between *w* and *v* in all other contexts.

The initial *v-* is never heard in monosyllabic lexemes:

bá-y ‘the rice’ – *nè-wà-y* ‘my rice’.

(2) The “weak” phoneme interchanging with “strong” *k-* and *g-* has allophones preceding front vowels. These are *ɣ-* and *y-*:

gètè ‘pestle’ – *nè-yètè-y* / *nè-yètè-y* ‘my pestle’;

gāgáí ‘return’ – *nāgá yāgàli* / *yāgàli* ‘I am returning’;

gìli ‘bind, tie’ – *mááyíli* / *mááyíli* ‘get dressed’;

kìzè(g) ‘pepper, spice’ – *nè-ɣìzè-gì* / *nè-yìzè-gì* ‘my pepper’.

The same variation takes place in case the “weak” consonant is followed by *-a-* and preceded by a front vowel, cf. *gàfò* – *yàfò* ‘burn’:

- (7) *gè góbí-y yáfó-wà*
1SG REF\fire-DEF burn-RES

‘I have started the fire’.

The numeral *gílá(g)* ‘one’ often demonstrates the extreme stage of this weakening of $y- > y-$ when the initial consonant is reduced to zero in a “weak” position: *ílá*. However, this only happens when this numeral is converted into an adverb denoting an undetermined object or meaning ‘ever, once’. It is placed after the predicate:

- (8) *gè nú ílá tó-wà*
1SG REF\person one see-RES

‘I have seen a person’;

- (9) *yè pílíyání-y ló-wà ílá?*
2SG REF\chimpanzee see-RES ever

‘Have you ever seen a monkey?’

No particular rule of variability between “weak” $y-$ and $y-$ was identified. The informant does not make a phonological difference between the two variants either. In any other context, however, this difference is evident for him: *yègì* ‘now’ cannot be pronounced **yègì*, it simply will not be understood. Other examples:

síyègì ‘the man’, not **síyègì*;
síyá(g) ‘to walk’, not **síyá(g)*;
yézéyézé ‘certainly’, not **yézéyézé*;
yàlé ‘how’, not **yàlé*.

(3) *m-* has $ỹ-$ as its “weak” alternate in certain cases before front vowels:

mè ‘eat’ – *nāgá tufá-y yè* ‘I am eating the grass’.

In many other examples, however, $w̃$ is pronounced by the same informant in the same position:

méní ‘hear’ – *nāgá zùlù-gì wèni* ‘I hear the noise’;
mítá ‘spoon’ – *kólúwítá* ‘iron spoon’.

In Bandi, $ỹ-$ is always used before front vowels as a “weak” alternate for the initial *m-*. In Zialo, it looks a remnant of the same old feature, probably preserved in case of the preceding word-final determinative *-y*. Hearing *wè* instead of *yè* in the phrase *nāgá tufá-y wè*, the speaker will find the phrase absolutely correct. As well as with the “weak” counterparts of *b-* above, the variants of the “weak” alternate for *m-* are somehow conditioned by the preceding sound: a front vowel or *-y* of the preceding word in most cases imposes the $ỹ-$ alternant to be used. This rule, however, is not strict.

In a different context, these two nasal phonemes are clearly differentiated:

néwé ‘a plain’, not **néyé*.

(4) There is an irregular alternation between *k-* and *g-* seen in a few lexemes including the adjective *kúló* ‘small’ and its “weak” form *gúló*:

- (10) *í lápá gúló-y lè*
this bag small-DEF EXI

‘This is a small bag’.

Moreover, the prefixed verb *tàgùlà* ‘decrease’ has an alternative phonetic variant *tàwùlà*.

Another item with the initial *k-* / *g-* alternation is the polysemic verb *kúlá(g)* having meanings ‘take out, get out, return, exit, resolve, lose, fall’, etc. The “weak” form *gúlá(g)* (e.g., in the prefixed verb *sùgúlá(g)* ‘tell’) is encountered in parallel with a much more rarer *wúlá(g)*.

In the neighbouring Bandi language, where “strong” *k-* also normally interchanges with “weak” *w-* or $y-$ depending on the following vowel, there are cases of a “weak” initial *g-*, including the same lexemes as mentioned: adjective *kúló* ‘small’ corresponds to its

“weak” form *gúló*, and verb *kula* alternates with *gula* [Grossmann & al. 1991: 53-54]. At the same time, in Mende and Loko, the alternation *k-* / *g-* is a norm [Sengova 1981: 32; Innes 1964: 8]. In Zialo and Bandi, the behaviour of these scattered lexemes may be a retention of the proto-language situation, lexicalised in a few lexemes because of their wide usage in the language. Similar phenomena in initial consonant alternations of SWM associated with the usus of particular nouns, are mentioned in [Vydrin 2006a]. Cases of a normal *k-* / *w-* variation in the same lexemes should be understood as analogical: treating the initial *g-* as a normal “strong” variant, the speaker automatically changes it to the “weak” *w-* in appropriate contexts. However, cf. a striking irregularity in Mande showing *k* / *w* alternation:

ndopo wulo ‘a small child’ [Innes 1969: 67].

“Weak” consonants, as well as *n-* and *c-*, put in a morphologically conditioned “strong” position, do not change:

cěcě(g) ‘cicada’ – *tí-cěcě-gì* ‘their cicada’;

lákólì ‘school’ – *mó-lákólì-y* ‘our school’;

náávòlò ‘money’ – *Kòlì nààvòlò* ‘Koli’s money’;

wòkpò ‘sweet potato’ – *nè-wòkpò-y* ‘my sweet potato’;

yābā ‘mask’ – *nè-yābā-y* ‘my mask’;

zánú(g) ‘gold’ – *nè-zànù-gì* ‘my gold’.

Except for words starting in *n-*, almost all such lexemes are external borrowings.

5.3.2. Syntactic positions

Each syntactic position of a *y*-noun assigns one of the two alternants of its initial consonants. I will list the “weak” contexts below presuming that all positions not listed here are “strong”.

The “weak” initial consonant appears in the following syntactic positions in a phrase:

(1) Head nouns of a NP following a possessive / polyfunctional prefix of 2sg., 1-2-3pl., or a dependent noun within a genitive syntagma:

gùlù ‘tree’ – *nè-wùlì-y* ‘my tree’.

kólá ‘clothes’ – *Kòlì wòlà-y* ‘Koli’s clothes’;

pèlè ‘house’ – *lákólì vèlè* ‘school building’.

(2) Attributes of a head noun in a NP:

a) verbal nouns:

kólé(g) ‘to be white’ – *dápá wólé-gì* ‘the white bag’.

One must note that from a syntactic standpoint, the verbal noun in such constructions is the head, not the attribute, and the literal translation of the example above would be ‘the bag’s whiteness’. See more about this below.

b) adjectives:

gòlà ‘big’ – *tábálì wólà-y* ‘the big table’;

c) most quantifiers:

péká ‘another’ – *táá véká* ‘another village’;

màyfòlò(g) ‘first’ – *dó wáyfòlò-gì* ‘the first son’.

Note that other attributive modifiers, such as most cardinal numerals, do not change their initial consonants:

nú fèlè-gò ‘two persons’.

However, numeral *gílá(g)* ‘one’ is the only one that mutates:

nú yílá / *nú yílá* ‘one person’.

(3) Postpositive nouns and postpositions (see their classification in 6.16.1 below) following a segmental polyfunctional prefix or a NP:

sù ‘in, inside’ – *ì-zù* ‘inside of you’;

- á lò lî làkólî-y zù* ‘he is going to school’;
mà ‘on, upon’ – *né-ŵá* ‘on us (excl.)’;
 (11) *nà ló zéy-ní tábálî-y ŵà*
 1SG.FOC COP sit-PRET REF\table-DEF on
 ‘I am sitting at the table’.

(4) Finite verbs following either a predicative person marker (even a zero 2sg. marker of the imperative series) or a subject or direct object NP:

- màkè* ‘guard’ – *nāgá báálá-y ŵàkè* ‘I am guarding the sheep’;
kúyá ‘dance’ – *nāgá wùyà* ‘I am dancing’;
dápá fèlègò-y yéyá ‘buy two bags!’
dì ‘going’ – *gè líí-nì* ‘I went’;
lî ‘go!’;
kóózá ‘be long, high’ – *gúlî-y sî wóózá-á lè* ‘this tree is high’.

Note that the alternation to a “weak” consonant does not happen in case the transitive verb governs a sentential argument is preceded by a polyfunctional prefix coreferential with the sentential argument.

(5) Copula verbs *tò* and *ta*:

- nú lò zéy-ní* ‘a person is sitting’;
nú lá zéy-ní ‘a person is not sitting’.

5.3.3. Irregularities

Certain lexemes retain their “strong” initial consonants in all syntactic positions.

- (1) Nouns denoting a limited number of senior relatives, namely the following ones:
kèyèyè ‘father’ – *ì-kèyèyè* ‘your father’ (related nouns *kèkè* ‘my father’ and *kèyèyèwòlà*, *kèwòlà* ‘old man, grandfather’ behave the same way);
dìyà ‘elder sibling’ – *nè-dìyà* ‘my elder sibling’;
kéyã ‘maternal uncle’ – *nè-kéyã-y* ‘my maternal uncle’;
màmà ‘grandmother’ – *nè-màmà* ‘my grandmother’;
téná ‘paternal aunt’ – *nè-téná* ‘my maternal aunt’;
mòè ‘mother-in-law’ – *nè-mòè* ‘my mother-in-law’;

Kéyã ‘maternal uncle’ may however occasionally lenite within a NP preceded by a personal name: *Kòlî yèyã-y* ‘Koli’s maternal uncle’.

The reason for this irregularity most probably lies in the automatic attachment of some suprasegmental prefixed morpheme characterising kinship terms. Vydrin [2006a: 137-139] proposed a comparative analysis of this anomaly in all SWM languages (and beyond) concluding that the semantic criteria won’t work as the explanation of the irregularity: indeed, words for ‘husband’, ‘wife’, ‘daughter’, or ‘son’ are not included in this group of nouns. Vydrin reconstructs a low-tone **ŋ*-prefixed morpheme attached to this limited group of lexemes and probably representing a remnant of a noun class system in Mande.

It is noteworthy also that the same group of nouns has another particularity in morphology: they cannot be modified by the determinative suffix (see 6.8 below).

(2) A small group of borrowed words starting with “strong” consonants:

- jílè* ‘python’ – *Kòlî jìlè-y* ‘Koli’s python’;
jábà ‘tomtom’ – *nè-jábà-y* ‘my tomtom’;
ténémá ‘Sunday’ – *nè-tènèmá-y* ‘my Sunday’.

(3) Noun *dá* / *dé-y* ‘property’ used mainly in constructions of absolute possession never changes its initial consonant:

- (12) *í wà gà nè-dè-y*
 this COP with 1SG.POSS-property-DEF
 ‘This is mine’.

(4) “Weakening” of the initial consonant never happens to the following categories of auxiliary lexemes:

- a) conjunctions: *Kòlì tá Màsà* ‘Koli and Masa’;
- b) determinatives: *nú-y sì* ‘this man’, *nú nòpé* ‘every person’; *ɲání tà* ‘some thing’;
- c) PPMs: *nú-y gè tɔ-gɔ* ‘the man I saw’;
- d) personal pronouns: *só-y gèyà* ‘I have a horse’;
- e) polyfunctional and possessive prefixes: *nãgá tí-lólì* ‘I am calling them’;
- f) cardinal numerals: *nú fèlè-gɔ* ‘two people’, *dápá sáwá-gɔ* ‘three bags’.

5.3.4. Bound morpheme alternations

The alternation inside a polymorphemic word form always occurs according to the same rules as listed above, e.g.:

- gòlâ* ‘big’ – *gèwòlâ* ‘big one’;
kóló ‘know’ – *nááwóló* ‘know how, be able’;
gúyá ‘wash’ – *máázùwúyá* ‘wash the upper side’;
gùlò ‘fat’ – *gèwùlò* ‘a fat one’;
lâkólì ‘school’, *dòpò* ‘child’ – *lâkólìlòpò* ‘school child’.

Respectively, in case an element within a compound word is originally a *gi*-item, it causes a “strong” subsequent consonant:

- tò* ‘see’ – *gàtò* ‘understand’;
gàlà(g) ‘god’, *fèlí* ‘ask’ – *gàlàfèlí* ‘pray’.

6. Nominal system

6.1. Root structures

Nouns in Zialo are divided into primary and derived. Derived nouns are treated in 6.11 below. All primary nouns may be classified according to their root structure into the following groups. Mind that the long vowel is considered as one phoneme, as identified above in Chapter 4:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| (1) CV: | <i>kólá</i> ‘clothes’; |
| <i>já</i> ‘water’; | <i>kpáálá</i> ‘field’; |
| <i>sò</i> ‘horse’; | <i>fàsà(g)</i> ‘river shrimp’. |
| <i>wáá(g)</i> ‘kind of millet’; | (5) CVyCV: |
| <i>nè(g)</i> ‘tongue’. | <i>péylú</i> ‘spade’; |
| (2) CVy: | <i>òy(k)</i> ‘dog’. |
| <i>kòỹ(g)</i> ‘bee’; | (6) VCVCV: |
| <i>òy(g)</i> ‘servant’. | <i>álává</i> ‘Wednesday’. |
| (3) VCV: | (7) CVCVCV: |
| <i>ãdá</i> ‘place’; | <i>zùlùbù</i> ‘hyena’; |
| <i>ání</i> ‘thing’; | <i>dòwòlò</i> ‘ground’; |
| <i>ínã(g)</i> ‘devil’. | <i>káálání</i> ‘glass (for drinking)’. |
| (4) CVCV: | (8) VCVCVCV |
| <i>gìzè</i> ‘mountain’; | <i>àlà mízà</i> ‘Thursday’. |

Some important restrictions apply to the above structures.

First, there is a clear limitation on the use of initial vowels: only a very small group of nouns can start with a vowel, and most of them are borrowed items, e.g. *ínã(g)* ‘devil’. There are no nominal roots with monosyllabic V structure.

Second, about 95% of all primary nominal roots in Zialo are monosyllabic (CV) or disyllabic (CVCV). Three- and four-syllable roots are rarely encountered and, again, they are predominantly loanwords, e.g. *zùlùbù* ‘hyena’.

6.2. Morphological categories and classifications

Nominal morphology is rather pure in Zialo. The morphological categories that will be analysed in the present paper are the following ones.

(1) Number

Most nouns can be singular and plural. Morphological plurality and *pluralia tantum* items are studied in 6.9 below.

(2) Referentiality

All nouns tend to attach the prefixed marker of referentiality when used independently, and lack in certain syntagmas only. See the analysis of this category in 6.7.

(3) Determination

The determination meaning is expressed by suffixed markers in both the singular and the definite plural. There are peculiarities in treating non-referential nouns. See the detailed description in 6.8 below.

The basic classification of nouns in Zialo can be made as follows:

(1) Indigenous vs. borrowed

As shown above, borrowed nouns possess distinctive peculiarities in both root structures, morphonology and tonal behaviour. Most of them have not been entirely integrated into the system of the language, demonstrating irregularities and immunity to some basic rules of the language.

(2) Relative vs. free

In Zialo, all nouns are divided into two classes according to their semantic autonomy. Free nouns (sometimes called autosemantic) denote objects which may exist independently of any possessor (e.g., *pèlè* ‘house’, *wǎní* ‘bird’, *nú* ‘person’, etc.). Relative nouns (e.g. *tókó* ‘hand’, *kèèyè* ‘father’) have a valency for a possessor. Even if used in the isolated position (e.g., when the speaker is asked to translate the phrase *A white hand*), they should always be marked with an inalienable possession prefix (see 6.10.3 below), i.e. the speaker in fact pronounces either *my white hand* or *his white hand*. This mechanism prevents the identification of underlying lexical tones for relative nouns, and should be noted while translating the records. Since the 3sg. polyfunctional prefix correlates (both synchronically and genetically) with the reference prefixed article, all relative nouns in the vocabulary are given in the 3sg. form.

On the contrary, the possessor is optional for free nouns and cannot be expressed by polyfunctional prefixes.

(3) Noun class relics

Traditionally, the Mande languages are treated as lacking nominal classes. However, Vydrin [2006a] argues that the languages of the family, including the SWM group, show distinct traces of the older noun class system, presenting rather reliable evidence. In Zialo, nouns denoting closest relatives and friends act as a compact and closed group with some important peculiarities in plurality and determination marking (see in respective sections below). Some of them, as indicated above, are also immune to the rules of initial consonant alternations, showing only “strong” initial phonemes. In some cases, polysemic nouns may vary plurality marking:

ɲàzà ‘woman, wife’ – *ɲázà-y-tì* ‘the women’, but
ɲázá-nì ‘[my] wives’.
dò ‘son’ – *dó-y-tì* ‘the children’, but
nè-lê-gà-y-tì ‘my sons’.

In these examples, kinship terms demonstrate a specific type of plural marking: with the associative plural affix *-nì* or by means of suppletion. The same items with different (non-family) semantics require a regular plural marking. Such separation of kinship terms into a specific group of nouns with distinct marking of morphological categories may be a trace of an older noun class system.

Another possible trace of such a prehistoric system is the distribution of nouns between tonal classes, which is notable in Zialo. Certain semantic groups of nouns seem to have their tonal “preference”: for instance, the absolute majority of nouns denoting body parts belongs to the first tonal class, while most nouns meaning tools, technical improvements and wild animals belong to Class 2. This distribution definitely requires a more detailed research using data from both Zialo and its SWM relatives, for some of which the lexical tones are already known.

(4) Common nouns vs. verbal nouns

The morphosyntactic border between nouns and verbs is not that strict in Zialo as, for instance, in Indo-European languages. Each verbal root may serve as a homonymous noun by simply being put into a noun phrase as a head or adding the nominal affix of determination. This is true for both statal and dynamic verbs:

kólé(g) ‘be white’ – *kólé(g)* ‘whiteness’ (e.g., in *dápá kólé-gì* ‘the white bag’, lit. ‘the whiteness of the bag’);

pà ‘come’ – *pà* ‘arrival’ (e.g., in *Kòlì và-y* ‘the arrival of Koli’).

Except the root verbal nouns, there is a number of nominalising affixes which derive nominals (named hereinafter verbal nouns and participles) from verbs. Each of these types of

nouns, though possessing a number of distinct nominal traits, differ from common nouns in certain aspects. Verbal nominalisation is described in 8.11 below.

Syntactic government in Zialo is expressed by means of postpositive and prepositive clitics (see 6.16 and 6.17, respectively) which modify the whole NP rather than the single noun. There is no fusion between nouns and postpositions, and no evidence for the genesis of case systems in the language.

6.3. Tone classes

Classifying tonal patterns for Zialo nominals, it is appropriate to utilise one of the two methods proposed for the description and explanation of tonology of the closely related language of Looma.

The first of these methods is described in detail by Sadler [1949/2006, 1951] who was one of the first researchers to introduce a systematic approach to a tonological structure of a SWM language. He regarded it as a system of tonal correlations between words within a set of syntagmas, and divided lexical items into two groups. Words of Sadler's group A lower the tone of the following constituent of a syntagma in case the latter is also a group A word, and have no influence on group B items. Group B words do not affect subsequent word forms. Though Sadler did not specify the exact list of syntagmas where this correlation takes place, his examples include the attributive, genitive, possessive and direct object syntagmas, as well as the postposition phrase and the elementary clause with an intransitive verb. He also analysed the tone of some bound morphemes (mainly verbal suffixes) which behave as group A words.

This description of tone correlation, though remains a good reference tool, does not seem adequate to the present-day state of descriptive methods of linguistics. Moreover, a number of rules formulated by Sadler appeared too vulnerable in practice, which allowed Vydrin [1989] to substantially amend the system, adding groups C and D to Sadler's outline.

A different approach was proposed by David Dwyer [1973] who sought to recover the underlying tonal pattern of each nominal lexeme and the rules of systematic tonal change within each of the three syntagmas: genitive, possessive and, partly, attributive, as well as the system of plurality marking. His thesis is by far the most comprehensible and valuable insight into the comparative tonology of the SWM languages, even though later research on individual languages of the group has contributed much to the understanding of their tonal systems.

Having unfortunately no space (nor enough data) to delve too deep into the comparative aspect of the development of the Zialo tonology, I will try to briefly classify the nominals of the language according to their lexical (underlying) tones, and show the basic rules of syntagmatic tonal change, even though realising that this can only be a sketch of the whole picture. I will follow Dwyer's numeric system of marking nominal tone classes, so that my tonal Class 1 corresponds to his Class 1 of Proto-SWM, etc.

Looma has been treated by Dwyer as the only SWM language which has undergone the so called process of "inverting" the Proto-SWM tones, which resulted in the opposite tone picture of most Looma lexemes comparing to the other SWM tongues [Dwyer 1973: 137]. Having analysed the tonology of Zialo, I should say that this language has also inverted the original Proto-SWM tones and demonstrates in most case a picture similar to that of Looma, cf.

Bandi *pèlè wòlé-ŋí* 'the white road';
Looma *pélé wólè-gì* id.;
Zialo *pélé wólé-gì* id.

There is a distinct difference in tonal structure between the original Zialo nouns and borrowed items. Indigenous nouns may be divided into two classes whose tonal behaviour is summarised in the charts below using the examples of the definite form of the noun, the possessive and the attributive syntagmas. The genitive syntagma with a verbal noun (VN) is given in the same slot as the attributive syntagma with adjectives and numerals.

Classes 1/1a and 2 unify up to 90% of Zialo nouns, most (but not all) of them indigenous, including both relative and free nominal lexemes.

Chart 7

Class	Underlying tone	Definite form	Genitive / possessive syntagma	Attributive syntagma	Examples
1	<i>bà</i> ‘rice’, <i>pèlè</i> ‘house’	<i>báy</i> , <i>pélèy</i>	<i>nè-wày</i> , <i>nè-vèlèy</i>	<i>bá wòlègì</i> , <i>bá fèlègò</i> , <i>pélé wòlègì</i> , <i>pélé fèlègò</i>	<i>dò</i> , <i>kpèlè</i> , <i>dòwà</i> , <i>dòpà</i> , <i>tòkpò</i> , <i>gùlò</i> , <i>gòzà</i> , <i>bòwà</i> , <i>gètè</i> , <i>gàkù</i> , <i>ɲàzà</i>
1a	<i>màsà(g)</i> ‘chief’	<i>másági</i>	<i>nè-ɰàsàgi</i>	<i>másá kòlègì</i> , <i>másá fèlègò</i>	<i>dòòli(g)</i> , <i>kpàki(g)</i> , <i>fòòvè(g)</i> , <i>nèyã(g)</i>

The following tonal modifications take place within the syntagmas.

(1) The definite form of the noun contains the referential high-tone prefix which produces Rightward Spreading of the high tone to the noun. However, the underlying low tone of the noun switches the Final Lowering rule on: this is why the final syllable of polysyllabic Class 1 nouns is low in the definite form, but high in the attributive and genitive syntagmas:

ɲàzà ‘woman’ > *(*ɲ-)ɲázà-y* ‘the woman’, but
*(*ɲ-)ɲázálópò-y* ‘the girl’, lit. ‘the female child’¹¹;
*(*ɲ-)ɲázá wòlè-gì* ‘the white woman’.

The same with trisyllabic items:

kūdiyi ‘chief’ > *(*ɲ-)kúdíyì-y* ‘the chief’.

Monosyllabic nouns acquire the high tone of the referential article in the definite form:

dò ‘son’ > *(*ɲ-)dó-y* ‘the son’.

(2) Class 1a incorporates *gi*-nouns of Class 1. In the definite form, the second syllable of the noun is not word-final, so the Final Lowering does not occur, and the tonal picture of the definite form is HHL.

(3) In the attributive syntagma, the low lexical tone of Class 1 nouns is transferred to the root of the subsequent attribute, disregarding the lexical tone of these latter.

Chart 8

Class	Underlying tone	Definite form	Genitive / possessive syntagma	Attributive syntagma	Examples
2	<i>táá</i> ‘town’ <i>pélé</i> ‘road’	<i>táy</i> , <i>pélèy</i>	<i>nè-lày</i> , <i>nè-vèlèy</i>	<i>táá wólègì</i> , <i>táá fèlègò</i> <i>pélé wólègì</i> <i>pélé fèlègò</i>	<i>fá</i> , <i>ɲó</i> , <i>já</i> , <i>báálá</i> , <i>dúwó</i> , <i>dósó</i> , <i>javá</i> , <i>fɔfɔ</i> , <i>kówó</i> , <i>wáté</i> , <i>góbú</i>

¹¹ The same is concerned high-tone prefixed person markers which only modify the tone of the first syllable of Class 1 nouns: *fòlò* ‘day’ – *mó-fòlò-y* ‘our (incl.) day’.

(1) Since the lexical tone pattern of Class 2 nouns is HH, no Final Lowering occurs in the definite form, as different from Class 1 items.

(2) The high tone of Class 2 nouns does not change the underlying high tone of the attribute (*pélé wólégì* ‘the white road’), but changes the tone of the first syllable of a low-tone attribute: *pélé* ‘road, *gɔ̀là* ‘big’ > *pélé wólà-y* ‘the big road’.

Classes 3 to 6 encompass borrowed nouns.

Class 3 incorporates disyllabic lexemes with the lexical LH tone picture, borrowed in different periods of prehistory from both the African languages (especially Maninka) and European tongues (French and English). Class 3 nouns do not attach the referential prefix, so the low tone of their first syllable is preserved even in the independent definite form.

Chart 9

Class	Underlying tone	Definite form	Possessive syntagma	Attributive / VN syntagma	Examples
3	<i>bùlú</i> ‘bread’	<i>bùlúy</i>	<i>nè-bùliy</i>	<i>bùlú wólégì,</i> <i>bùlú wólày</i>	<i>sùsù, bùbù, bũbũ,</i> <i>zipɔ̃, pànú(g)</i>

(1) The high tone of the last syllable of the noun is transferred to the attribute according to the rules, identical to those of Class 2 above.

(2) In a possessive / genitive syntagma, the tone of the preceding modifier (noun or possessive prefix) spreads to the whole noun.

Class 4 encompasses borrowed items with the low lexical tone LL(L); as well as Class 3 items, they mostly do not attach a referential prefix on them. A characteristic syntagmatic feature of them is the retention of the high tone on the second syllable of the high-tone attribute: i.e., the lexical low tone of the noun is not “strong” enough to spread to the whole attribute or verbal noun.

Chart 10

Class	Underlying tone	Definite form	Possessive syntagma	Attributive syntagma	Examples
4	<i>inã(g)</i> ‘mouse’	<i>inãgì</i>	<i>nè-inãgì</i>	<i>inã kòlégì,</i> <i>inã wólày</i>	<i>zòkò(g), cēcē(g), sètì,</i> <i>zòwò</i>

Class 5 consists mainly of trisyllabic loanwords of various lexical tones, the majority of them cannot attach the referential prefix in the isolated position. Whatever their lexical tones, they always make the tone of the following attribute low, and always adjust their tone to the possessive prefix.

Chart 11

Class	Underlying tone	Definite form	Possessive syntagma	Attributive syntagma	Examples
5	<i>álává</i> ‘Wednesday’, <i>sīdòlò</i> ‘scarlet’, <i>lákólì</i> ‘school’	<i>áláváy,</i> <i>sīdòlòy,</i> <i>lákólìy</i>	<i>nè-àlávày,</i> <i>nè-sīdòlòy,</i> <i>nè-lákòlì</i>	<i>álává wòlégì,</i> <i>sīdòlò wòlégì,</i> <i>lákólì wòlégì</i>	<i>mã gól, mízílì,</i> <i>náávólò, ténémá,</i> <i>kálámó, dótóló</i>

Finally, Class 6 incorporates borrowed lexemes which possess low lexical tones, may attach the referential article but make the tone of the following attribute high, whatever the lexical tone of the latter is.

Chart 12

Class	Underlying tone	Definite form	Possessive syntagma	Attributive syntagma	Examples
6	<i>sivìli</i> 'Saturday'	<i>sívíliy</i>	<i>nè-zivìliy</i>	<i>sivìli wólégì</i> <i>sivìli félégò</i>	<i>sùkàlà, fènètèlè</i>

All nominal tone classes share the following syntagmatic rules.

(1) The underlying (lexical) tone of relative nouns is very rarely observed in the speech and can only be reconstructed by analysing their syntagmatic behaviour. As briefly mentioned above, this happens because relative nouns always have a polyfunctional person marker prefixed to them: for instance, the word 'chin' will be translated by the speaker as either (')-*nèkpà-y* 'my chin' or (')-*nèkpà-y* 'his chin'. What the lexical tone of the word is, would be unclear. The only indicator here is the attribute in a NP: *nèkpà wòlè-gì* 'the white chin' shows that the lexical tone of the noun is LL, so *nèkpà* should be distributed to Class 1.

(2) The determinative affix *-gì* never changes its lexical low tone.

(3) The referential article is attached to verbal nouns, participles and adjectives as well, in case they are put in an isolated position:

gòlà 'big' > (**íj-*)*gòlày* (right spreading of the high tone to the low-tone Class 1 adjective);

kólég(g) 'be white' > (**íj-*)*kólégì* 'whiteness, being white' (no change to the high-tone verbal noun of Class 2).

(4) Possessive prefixes and dependent nouns in a NP always influence the tone of the subsequent head noun. In the charts above, only the 1sg. examples are given. The tones of each of possessive prefixes are indicated in 6.10.2 below. The high tone of the possessive prefix only spreads to the first syllable of the following low-tone noun, and the second syllable preserves its low tone because of the Final Lowering rule.

(5) Groups of nouns resistant to the process of initial consonant alternation (listed in 5.3 above) do not change their tone following low-tone possessive prefixes or low-tone dependent nouns within a NP:

kèèyè 'father' (Class 1) >

kééyè 'father' (referential prefix added) >

nè-kééyè 'my father' (no change to the noun despite the low tone of the possessive prefix);

gé-kééyè 'his father' (no change);

dá 'property' > *dé-y* 'the property' > *nè-dé-y* 'my property'.

(6) Nominal objects following a low tone of the preceding word do not change the tone, but undergo the rule of Downdrift:

(13) *ɲázà-y* ¹*jé-y* *vè-gò* *gèyà*
REF\woman-DEF REF\water-DEF give-AOR 1SG.CNTR

'The woman gave me the water'

(7) Cardinal numerals starting from 'two' always have a "strong" initial consonant in any NP. This is the reason why the Rightward Spreading does not "pass" the border between the noun and the modifying numeral, leaving the latter with its own tone.

(8) In a possessive NP with a verbal noun or adjective as the second constituent, the following processes are under way:

pélé 'road' (Class 2) >

pélé wólà-y ‘the big road’ (Right Spreading of the high tone to the 1st syllable of a low-tone adjective);

nè-vèlè-y ‘my road’ (Right Spreading of the low tone of the possessive prefix);

nè-vèlè wólà-y ‘my big road’ (the adjective preserves the surface high tone on the first syllable).

In case a relative noun is modified by a possessive prefix of the polyfunctional series, its tone may well spread to the first syllable of the attribute:

téná ‘aunt’ (never used in the isolated position) >

(*’*)-*tènà wólé-gì* ‘my white aunt’.

A special note should be made regarding compound nouns. These derived lexemes, described in detail in 6.11.4 below, are originally combinations of two or more nouns (or NPs) linked within a genitive syntagma, where each subsequent noun is modified by the preceding one. Compound nouns behave the same way as the corresponding genitive syntagmas: the first low-tone component dictates a low tone on the second component even in case the latter has a lexical high tone:

sòvâàlè(g) ‘donkey, horse’ (*sò* ‘horse’, Class 1 + *báálé(g)*, Class 2, the compound behaves as a Class 1 noun).

Since a low-tone noun after a high-tone component only changes the tone of the first syllable, the second one remains low, so the whole compound word remains a low-tone item:

jábélà-y ‘river bank’ (*já* ‘water’, Class 2 + *kpèlà* ‘near’, Class 1, the resulting noun behaves as a Class 1 noun);

ḡàzàlòpò ‘daughter’ (*ḡàzà* ‘woman’, Class 1 + *dòpò* ‘child’, Class 1, no change in tone, the compound behaves as a Class 1 item).

6.4. Morphological marking

Zialo nouns use affixation (mostly suffixation) and suprasegmental morphemes as inflexion markers. Affixation is used for building the morphological categories of determination (6.8), plurality (6.9), as well as for constructing derivatives (6.11). Suprasegmental morphemes are represented by polyfunctional prefixes of inalienable possession (6.10.3) and the high-tone prefix of referentiality (6.7).

Root suppletion is found in a very limited number of irregular plural nouns (*dò* ‘son’ – pl. *děḡàytì*).

There is no morphological reduplication of nouns in Zialo.

6.5. Syntactic positions

The noun may occupy the following syntactic positions in a clause:

- subject NP

(14) *dápá-y sì wólé-yáá lè*
REF\bag-DEF this be.white-RES EXI

‘This bag is white’;

- direct object NP

(15) *nánà pélé lò*
1PL.EXCL.IPFV REF\house build

‘We are building a house’;

- argument of a postposition

(16) *ḡè (’)-dégò kálámó-y w̃à*
1SG 3SG.PF-say-AOR REF\teacher-DEF PP

‘I told this to the teacher’;

- (17) *yá li kóví-y zù*
 2SG.IPFV go REF\yard-DEF in
 ‘You (sg.) are going home’.

Place names do not require a postposition to mark either location or direction:

- (18) *gè vâà-gò Mâsâdâ*
 1SG come-AOR Macenta
 ‘I came to Macenta’.

- within a VP of an existential clause

- (19) *kúdíyì-y wà gè*
 REF\chief-DEF be 1SG.COM
 ‘The chief is myself’;

- postpositive modifier (see postpositive nouns in 6.16 below).

6.6. Noun phrase structure

The noun phrase in Zialo is a well-defined phrasal category which may perform the roles of the subject, the direct and indirect object. The unity of the NP is best demonstrated by its ability to be modified by determination and plurality markers which are always put at the end of the phrase whatever is its length:

- (20) *Kòlì bôlá kééyè lápá wólé gólâ-y-tì lè*
 Koli friend REF\father bag be.white big-DEF-PL EXI
 ‘These are the big white bags of Koli’s friend’s father’.

Classes of words which may be incorporated within a NP will be called its immediate constituents and are considered in the present section. There are types of invariable words which, though syntactically modifying the NP, cannot adopt morphological markers of nominal categories:

- (21) *dápá wólâ-y-tì kpě nííná lè*
 REF\bag big-DEF-PL all new EXI
 ‘These big bags are new’.

Such lexemes will be called determinatives, whose description is given in one of the following sections of the same chapter.

Noun phrases in Zialo comprise of two types: the full NP and the pronoun phrase. Specific types of the NP include the vocative phrase and the coordinative (conjunctive and disjunctive) groups of NPs.

6.6.1. Full NP

The structure of the full noun phrase includes the head noun (or the head NP) which is its only obligatory element. The head noun can be modified by another constituent of the NP: another noun or NP, an adjective, a numeral, a verbal noun, a participle, a possessive or polyfunctional marker, or demonstrative pronoun.

The order of positioning the dependent constituents of the full NP (except for possessive NPs) can be expressed by the following scheme: NAN_D, where N is the head noun, A - the attribute (adjective or verbal noun), n is a numeral and D is a deictic pronoun. This order corresponds to one of the three models postulated by Joseph Greenberg in his Universal 20:

nú wólâ-y fêlê-gò sî ‘these two big people’.

6.6.1.1. adjective

Adjectives always follow the head noun, forming the attributive syntagma. Markers of determination and plurality are attached to the adjective:

dápá nííná-y ‘the new bag’;

(*)-sókpá wòlà-y-tì(g)* ‘his big noses’.

6.6.1.2. numeral

Both cardinal and ordinal numerals are used to modify the head noun of a NP. Ordinal numerals attach nominal affixes of determination and plurality, the same as adjectives. Cardinal numerals use their own affix of determination *-gò* which complements the nominal affix. Optionally, the nominal determination marker can follow it:

dó vèlèkèlè-y ‘the second son’;

nú sáá-gò ‘the three people’;

nú sáá-gò-y ‘the three [previously mentioned] people’.

6.6.1.3. other noun / NP

In a genitive syntagma, the modifying noun or NP precede the head noun. Semantically, this modifier may denote a variety of meanings including possession (see 6.10.1), a part of the whole object, material, etc. Both the head noun and the dependent one may be shaped by a determinative affix:

Kòlì wòwà-y ‘Koli’s knife’;

jé-y zúlú-gì ‘the noise of the flowing water’;

gũ dèyà ‘hair’ (lit. ‘hair of head’).

Only the head noun may attach plurality markers.

The dependent NPs are clearly recursive, for they may themselves encompass other NPs or postposition phrases. In reality, three to four recursive positions in a genitive NP create a limit for the audience’s comprehension:

nè-màmà gúlè-y-tì(g) ‘the songs of my grandmother’;

tókó béyà mèyã ‘a sort of small bananas’ (lit. ‘hand finger banana’).

The latter example may well be regarded as a compound noun (see 6.11.4).

A particular case of the genitive syntagma is concerned the postpositive (or locative) nouns described in 6.16.2.

6.6.1.4. verbal noun / participle

Verbal nouns semantically represent attributes following the noun, even though syntactically they act as head nouns themselves. Such a dichotomy is clearly seen from the examples:

(*)-gólí béyã-gì* ‘his red ear’, lit. ‘the redness of his ear’;

pélé wòlè-gì ‘the white house’, lit. ‘the whiteness of the house’.

Participles are clear attributes to the noun:

tókó-y sáyá-gò-y ‘the cut hand’, lit. ‘the hand which is cut’.

Please see the morphosyntactic analysis of verbal nouns and participles in 8.11 below.

6.6.2. Pronoun phrase

A pronoun phrase as a variety of the NP is produced by a focalised pronoun (with an optional adverbial intensifier), an interrogative pronoun, or a coordinative group of two or more pronouns.

(22) *jà bálá gè liì-gò nà*
1SG.FOC too 1SG go-AOR there

‘Me too, I went there’;

(23) *jà yá nã á ÿì*
1SG.FOC EMPH 1SG.IPFV sleep

‘Me, I am going to sleep’.

6.6.3. *Vocative NP*

In Zialo, most nouns do not have a specific vocative form:

- Màsà, mój!* ‘Masa, let’s go!’;
Diyà, mó lì nà! ‘Brother, let’s go there!’;
Dópò-y, vâ vè! ‘Son, come here!’

The only exception is the noun denoting the speaker’s own mother: *ndè* ‘my mother’ is almost exclusively used in the vocative meaning:

- (24) *é yé gé-jé-y ṽà: vâ lé ndè*
 3SG say 3SG.POSS-mother-DEF PP come IMP my.mother
 ‘She said to his mother: come here, mom!’

6.6.4. *Coordinative group*

A coordinative NP containing several conjuncts, nominal or pronominal, is constructed by either simple juxtaposition or by means of conjunctive markers: *ðð*, *tá* and *nãbð wà*.

6.6.4.1. *juxtaposition*

The method of juxtaposition is used in case two attributes (adjectives, verbal nouns or participles) are used within one NP without coordinative contraction:

- (25) *nã á mǎgólò bèyã gòlà-y yẽ*
 1SG.IPFV mango be.red big-DEF eat
 ‘I am eating the big ripe mango’.

6.6.4.2. *conjunction ðð / yðð*

Conjunction *ðð* links two subject or object NPs, as well as two focalised pronouns. It is postposited to each of the constituents of the coordinative group. The group is always followed by a clause, where the predicative person marker indicates collectively the objects or people given in the coordinative NP:

- (26) *jà ðð Màsà ðð nánà lì làkólì-y zù*
 1SG.FOC CONJ Masa CONJ 1PL.EXCL.IPFV go school-DEF in
 ‘Masa and I, we are going to school’.

The allomorph *yðð* is placed after a closed front vowel and *o / ɔ*:

- (27) *Kòlì yðð Màsà ðð té líí-nì dóbó-y zù*
 Koli CONJ Masa CONJ 3PL go-PRET REF\bush-DEF in
 ‘Koli and Masa went to the bush’.

Note that the tone of the conjunction varies according to that of the preceding word: after low-tone heads, the tone of the conjunction is falling.

The order in which the constituents of the coordinative group are posited is strict. It corresponds to Silverstein’s hierarchy [Silverstein 1976] in which locutors precede non-locutors, and the 1st person prevails over the 2nd one: 1sg. > 1pl. > 2sg. / 2pl. > 3sg. / 3pl. This rule, however, is not effective in possessive syntagmas: the 2sg. possessor can precede the 1sg. one, see example (29).

The 3rd person singular pronoun of the focalised series in a coordinative construction may be replaced by the demonstrative pronouns *sì* ‘this’ or *nð* ‘that’ in case the person referred to is unknown to the speaker:

- (28) *jà ðð nð ðð, né vâà-gð*
 1SG.FOC CONJ that CONJ 1PL.EXCL come-AOR
 ‘Me and him, we came’.

A well-known or previously mentioned person is expressed by the 3sg. focalised pronoun:

nà sò, á sò ‘me and him’.

Possessive NPs can also act as coordinative members in the clause, and no ellipsis of noun is permitted. There is no hierarchy of possession in such phrases, so the 2nd person may be put to the left of the 1st one :

(29) *ì-kééyè sò nè-kééyè sò té và-à*
2SG.POSS-father CONJ 1SG.POSS-father CONJ 3PL come-RES

‘My and your fathers have come’.

In case possession is expressed by a genitive syntagma, both coordinative possessors are moved leftwards and linked with *sò*:

(30) *Kòlì yóò Màsà sò tí-kééyè và-à*
Koli CONJ Masa CONJ 3PL.POSS-father come-RES

‘The father of Koli and Masa has come’.

The coordinative direct object NP requires a recapitulative object marker coreferential to both constituents of the phrase:

(31) *gè yà Kòlì yóò Màsà sò tí-ló fólófolò*
1SG HAB Koli CONJ Masa CONJ 3PL.PF-see every.day

‘I see them, Koli and Masa, every day’.

The indirect object NP is indicated in the main clause by a pronoun of the contracted series (see 7.1.5).

(32) *gà wò và jábíy- y vè mà Kòlì yóò Màsà*
1SG PROSP come REF\pineapple-DEF give IPFV Koli CONJ Masa
sò tíyá
CONJ 3PL.CNTR

‘I will give pineapples to Koli and Masa’.

This duplicating person marker is not needed in case of a coordinative preposition phrase:

(33) *gè vàà-gò kóví-y zù gà Kòlì yóò Dàvid sò*
1SG come-AOR REF\yard-DEF in with Koli CONJ Davide CONJ

‘I went home with Koli and Davide’.

However, the same meaning may be expressed by focalising the coordinative NP at the beginning of the sentence:

(34) *Kòlì yóò Dàvid sò gè vàà-gò kóví-y zù gà*
Koli CONJ Davide CONJ 1SG come-AOR REF\yard-DEF in with
tíyé
3PL.COM

‘I went home with Koli and Davide’.

In this sentence, the coreferential person marker of the main clause is the 3pl. comitative pronoun *tíyé*.

6.6.4.3. conjunction *tá*

Etymologically, *tá* is a 3pl. predicative person marker of the irrealis series (see 8.8.1.3 below). As such, it may not combine actors of the 1st and 2nd persons, and coordinates nouns or NPs exclusively. It is mainly used in existential phrases where it is put between two coordinative nominal predicates. No hierarchy of constituents of the phrase is followed:

(35) *gà là gà kálámó tá dótóló*
1SG.IRR NEG with REF\teacher CONJ doctor

‘I am neither a doctor nor a teacher’.

In case the coordinative group should serve as the subject of the clause, the “true” subject will only be expressed by the first constituent, while the second one is placed to the indirect object position.

- (36) *méyã-gà lá gèyà tá mǎgólò*
 REF\banana-PL NEG 1SG.CNTR CONJ mango

‘I have neither bananas nor mangoes’.

Conjunction *tá* may also link two NPs:

- (37) *té vǎà-gò gà nú púú-gò tá níká fèlè*
 3PL come-AOR with REF\person ten-DEF CONJ REF\cow two

‘They brought ten people and two cows’.

6.6.4.4. conjunction *nǎbò wà*

Conjunction *nǎbò wà* is a circumposition consisting of two clitics: *nǎbò* separates two conjuncts, while *wà* occupies the final position in the sentence. Syntactically, this construction is used to mark coordinative objects in a chain of logical sequence:

- (38) *nǎ á kpóbé-gì yé gà kálì-y nǎbò bówálévè-y wà*
 1SG.IPFV REF\work- do with REF\hoe- CONJ REF\machete- CONJ
 DEF DEF DEF

‘I am working with a hoe and a machete’ (i.e. first with a hoe, and then with a machete).

- (39) *né wè-gò gà ì-kééyè nǎbò nè-kééyè wà*
 1PL.EXCL meet-AOR with 2SG.POSS-father CONJ 1SG.POSS-father CONJ

‘We met your father and [then] my father’.

Object NPs can also be linked by this conjunction, note that the verb is optionally placed before it:

- (40) *nánà yà bá wòlè-gì yè nǎbò bá bèyã-gì*
 1PL.EXCL.IPFV HAB rice be.white-DEF eat CONJ rice be.red-DEF

wà

CONJ

‘We are eating white rice and [then] red rice’.

Postpositional verbs with indirect objects require the postposition to precede the conjunction and the second constituent of the coordinative group:

- (41) *gà wò vǎ jábíbí vè mà Kòlì yá nǎbò*
 1SG.IRR PROSP come REF\pineapple give IPFV Koli to CONJ

Màsà wà

Masa CONJ

‘I will give a pineapple to Masa and Koli’.

In a postposition phrase with two coordinative postpositions or postpositive nouns, the ellipsis of the dependent noun occurs, and it is replaced by a coreferential polyfunctional person marker:

- (42) *mǎgólò-y tǎnigàà-nì tó dápá-y zù nǎbò (‘)-bú-y*
 mango-DEF some-PL COP REF\bag-DEF in CONJ 3SG.PF-under-DEF

wà

CONJ

‘There are mangoes in and under the bag’.

6.6.4.5. disjunction

In all types of NPs, including those with adjectives and verbal nouns, disjunction is constructed with the clitic morpheme *bà* ‘or’. The second disjunct occupies the indirect object position following the main predicate:

- (43) *yá jé-y bǎlè bà dǎ-y lè yè*
 2SG.IPFV REF\water-DEF drink DISJ REF\palm.wine-DEF COP 2SG

(*ʔ*)-pó?

3SG.PF-want

‘Do you want to drink water or palm wine?’

(44) *yá* *bélékóózá-y-tì* *gùyà* *bà* *dómã-gì-tì?*
 2SG.IPFV REF\trousers-DEF-PL wash DISJ REF\shirt-DEF-PL

‘Are you washing the trousers or the shirts?’

Sentence-level disjunction is described in 9.2.1.2 below.

6.7. Referentiality

The prefixed referential article is a suprasegmental high-tone morpheme derived from the proto-language syllabic nasal **ʃ*-. It has common origins with the 3sg. prefix of the polyfunctional paradigm (see 6.10.3) [Vydrin 2006a]. This prefix appears on every indigenous Zialo noun in the independent subject or object position and imposes the tone raising and the preservation of the “strong” initial consonant:

fòlò / *vòlò* ‘day’ > (*ʃ*)-*fólò-y* ‘the day’.

Words starting with *n*- also attach the prefix, which is seen in the tonal change of Class 1 nouns:

nè(g) ‘tongue’ - *né-gì* ‘the tongue’.

Nouns starting with a “weak” consonant are not modified by the prefix. In most cases, as defined above, they represent borrowings. All borrowed lexemes are divided into two groups according to the ability to attach the referentiality prefix. The distribution depends on two criteria. First, it is the age of the loanword: recent borrowings tend to be indifferent to the category of referentiality. Second, the usage of the noun matters as well: widely-used lexemes are adjusted to fit the grammatical structure of the language and thus attach the suffix:

kálámó-y ‘the teacher’ - *nè-yàlámò-y* ‘my teacher’, cf.

ténémá-y ‘the Sunday’, *nè-tènèmà-y* ‘my Sunday’.

Indigenous nominals in the vocabulary enclosed into this paper are given with their “strong” initial alternant, but their underlying lexical tones are indicated.

6.8. Determination

The nominal category of determination is expressed by attaching the determinative (definite) suffix to the NP. As mentioned above, its two allomorphs *-y* and *-gì* are derived from Proto-SWM **-í* which was deglutinated with the remnant of the word-final **-ŋ* forming the allomorph *-gì*. Following a historical word-final vowel, **-í* was reduced to *-y*:

**pélé-ì* > *pélé-y* ‘the house’;

**kízéŋ-ì* > *kízé-gì* ‘the hot pepper’.

The determinative marker is set at the end of a NP in case the attribute of the head noun is expressed by a noun, a postpositive noun (see its definition in 6.16), an adjective, a participle, a verbal noun, or a numeral:

làkólì lòpò-y ‘school pupil’;

kūdiyì yèlè-gì ‘to the chief’ (i.e. to his place);

kpídí wàlà-y ‘the long night’;

dābá kòlè-gì ‘the white crocodile’;

ŋázá fèlè-gò-y ‘the two women’.

The double definiteness marking is normal in genitive NPs where both nouns need to be emphasised as definite. Double marking is used to indicate people who are well-known to the speaker (esp. the family):

(45) *dó-y* *jé-y* *gé-ló-y* *wúwé-yà*
 REF\son-DEF REF\mother-DEF 3SG.POSS-son-DEF wake-RES

‘The mother has woken her boy up’.

Note that words which are not constituents of the NP (demonstrative pronouns, postpositions, adverbs, other determinatives) do not attach the definite marker:

(46) *síyẽ-gì* *sì* *zìdìlò-y* *lè*
REF\man-DEF this Zialo-DEF EXI

‘This man is a Zialo’;

(47) *jà* *ló* *pé̀lè-y* *wù*
1SG.FOC COP REF\house-DEF under

‘I am in the house’.

Though mostly denoting well-known or previously mentioned objects, definite nouns are used by speakers in an unmarked isolated position. For example, the question ‘How to say a man in Zialo?’ will generate answer: ‘Nu-y’. Definite nouns may also be used in a generic non-referential sense:

(48) *gílè-y* *wóózá* *jàlé-y* *wà*
REF\dog-DEF long REF\cat-DEF PP

‘The dog is taller than the cat’;

(49) *nè-zòvàmè-gì* *jówó-gì* *néé-yáá* *lè* ()-bè
1SG.POSS-donkey-DEF REF\cassava-DEF be.pleasant-RES EXI 3SG.PF-for

‘My donkey likes cassava’.

See also the usage of plural non-referential nouns in 6.9.7 below.

Irregularities in marking the category of determination include the following:

(1) a group of relative nouns denoting senior relatives and siblings does not attach determination markers: *nè-kééyè* ‘my father’, *nè-téná* ‘my paternal aunt’, *nè-màmà* ‘my grandmother’, *nè-mðè* ‘my mother-in-law’, *nè-diyà* ‘my elder sibling’. Semantically, they do not encompass all family members, cf. other kinship terms: *nè-jè-y* ‘my mother’, *nè-nðkò-y* ‘my father-in-law’, *nè-dèyè-y* ‘my younger sibling’. Some of these relative nouns may optionally omit or adopt the determination marker;

(2) the words *ɓó* ‘friend’ and *ɓòlá* ‘friend’ vary in adding or omitting the determinative affix. When a concrete person is meant who is known to both the speaker and the audience, no definite marker is likely to be used;

(3) the word *táá* ‘village, town’ lacks the suffix in case the speaker tells about a concrete settlement, in most cases his or her native place:

(50) *gè* *vàm-gò* *nè-làm* *zù*
1SG come-AOR 1SG.POSS-village in

‘I came to my village’.

6.9. Plurality

6.9.1. General remarks

Plurality is mostly expressed by means of attaching agglutinative suffixed markers to a NP.

Relative nouns such as kinship terms and personal names are distinguished from all other nouns by using a different pluraliser.

In a NP, the following categories of lexemes may attach plural affixes:

- (1) nouns: *nú-y-tì* ‘the persons’;
- (2) adjectives: *pé̀lé nì̀nà-y-tì* ‘the new houses’;
- (3) verbal nouns: *kpáálá ɓázi-yà* ‘yellow fields’;
- (4) interrogative pronouns: *ɓè-ní m̀̀̀ndò?* ‘who are (they) there?’;
- (5) deictic and cataphoric pronouns: *ɓáálá-y ǹ̀̀-tì* ‘those sheep’.

A NP modified by a cardinal numeral does not require plurality marking:

- (51) *níká fêlè-gò èyà*
REF\cow two-DEF 2SG.CNTR

‘You have two cows’.

Within one NP, only one item with plurality indication is possible. At times, several plurality affixes are allowed with one noun, see below.

The category of nominal plurality is closely connected with that of determination: the definite plural in Zialo is opposed to the indefinite one.

6.9.2. Definite plurality marker -tì(g)

This marker is the most common indicator of plurality in Zialo. It has a constant low tone and is attached to a definite NP, expressing a known or previously mentioned object(s) or people. This means that it always follows the determinative affix -y / -gì:

- púpú* ‘ant’ – *púpú-y-tì* ‘the ants’;
fòlò ‘day’ – *fóló wòòzà-y-tì* ‘the long days’;
sàvàlà(g) ‘shoe’ – *nè-zàvàlà-gì-tì* ‘my shoes’.

Deictic pronouns also require the pluraliser, though in this case the determinative marker stays with the head noun:

- (52) *báalá-y nò-tì tēy-àà lè*
REF\sheep-DEF that-PL be.black-RES EXI

‘Those sheep are black’.

Cataphoric pronouns may also add the definite plural marker:

- (53) *í-tì té vâà-gò bēgì tá lá yēdé-nì*
this-PL 3PL come-AOR yesterday 3PL.IRR NEG be.healthy-PRET

‘The ones who came yesterday they are sick’.

Note that -tì(g) requires the preservation of the “strong” initial consonant of the following lexeme.

6.9.3. Associative plurality marker -nì(g)

This marker communicates the associative plurality meaning. Its usage is restricted by the following groups of lexical items:

- (1) all nouns denoting familial relatives:

- kèèyè* ‘father’ – *kèèyè-nì*;
dìyà ‘elder sibling’ – *dìyà-nì*;
kéyã ‘maternal uncle’ – *kéyã-nì*;
ḡàzà ‘wife’ – *ḡàzà-nì*.

Note that the word *ḡàzà* in its other meaning ‘woman’ uses a different plural marker: *ḡàzà-y-tì(g)* ‘the women’. The same goes for *dò* ‘son’ – pl. *dò-nì* (or *dēgàytì*, see below), but *dò* ‘boy, child’ – pl. *dó-y-tì*.

- (2) A limited group of nouns denoting socially close people and divine creatures:

- bòlá* ‘friend’ – *bòlá-nì* ‘my friends’ (e.g., in my native village);
gàlà(g) ‘god’ – *gàlà-nì*;
bó ‘friend of childhood’ – *bó-nì*.

Again, mind that the word *bòlá* ‘friend’ has a definite plural form *bòlá-y-tì* if referred to the friends of some other person or friends in general.

- (3) A group of interrogative and demonstrative pronouns:

- bè* ‘who’ – *bè-ní*;
nà ‘this’ – *nà-ní* ‘these’.

- (4) Some pronominal quantifiers:

- tànìgàà* ‘some’ – *tànìgàà-nì*;
kpě ‘all’ – *kpě-nì* ‘id.’;

péká ‘another’ – *péká-nì* ‘other (pl.)’.

(5) Personal names:

Kòlì – *Kòlì-nì* ‘several Kolis’ or ‘Koli and other people with him’.

In this meaning, the number of constituents of the group is unlimited, and *-ni(g)* will shape the final one:

(54) *Màsà tá Bala tá Kòlì-nì té v àà-gò*
 Masa CONJ Bala CONJ Koli-PL 3PL come-AOR

‘Masa, Bala, Koli and other people with them came’.

The usage of the associative plural affix is restricted: NPs modified by verbal nouns cannot be pluralised by *-ni(g)* and require the definite plural affix *-tì(g)*:

(55) *nè-yàzà-nì té v àà-gò*
 1SG.POSS-wife-PL 3PL come-AOR

‘My wives came’, but

(56) *nè-yàzà wòòzà-y-tì té v àà-gò*
 1SG.POSS-wife be.long-DEF-PL 3PL come-AOR

‘My tall wives came’.

This restriction does not affect adjectives:

(57) *nè-yàzà wòlà-nì té v àà-gò*
 1SG.POSS-wife big-PL 3PL come-AOR

‘My big wives came’.

Thus, the usage of the associative plurality marker is one of the criteria of identifying true adjectives in Zialo (see 6.12).

6.9.4. Indefinite plural affix *-gà / -yà / -wà*

This affix is attached to nouns or NPs to mark the plurality of indefinite objects or objects not previously mentioned in the discourse:

(58) *ḡázá bòòlò-gà té v àà-gò*
 REF\woman be.talkative-PL 3PL come-AOR

‘Talkative women came’ (the speaker does not know them).

The affix has several allomorphs conditioned by the final vowel of the noun they are attached to:

(1) *-yà* following front and middle oral vowels:

pèlè ‘house’ – *pé lé-yà*;

bété ‘bed’ – *bé té-yà*;

dí lí ‘a fly’ – *dí lí-yà*;

bá á lá ‘sheep’ – *bá á lá-yà*;

(2) *-wà* following back oral vowels:

bò lò ‘neck’ – *bò lò-wà*;

bò ò ò ‘hat’ – *bò ò ò-wà*;

pò lù ‘back’ – *pò lù-wà*.

(3) *-gà* following nasal vowels, *-y*, *-ỹ* and indefinite *gì*-words:

bè yĩ ‘small bowl’ – *bè yĩ-gà*;

kò ỹ(g) ‘bee’ – *kò ỹ-gà*;

kò(g) ‘door’ – *kò-gà*.

A NP is unrestricted to use this affix on both adjectives and verbal nouns:

(59) *ḡázá wòlè-gà té v àà-gò né-láá zù*
 REF\woman be.white-PL 3PL come-AOR 1PL.EXCL.POSS-town in

bē gì

yesterday

‘White women came to our town yesterday’.

Occasionally, the marker can be moved to the noun in a quantitative NP:

- (60) *nú-gà* *bíízí* *tíyá* *lò* *vè*
 REF\man-PL be.numerous 3PL.FOC COP here
 ‘There are many men here’.

There is no semantic difference between (60) and (61):

- (61) *nú* *bíízí-gà* *tíyá* *lò* *vè*
 REF\man be.numerous-PL 3PL.FOC COP here
 ‘There are many men here’.

6.9.5. Relative plural affix *-wà* / *-gà*

Used with a limited group of human nouns mostly denoting the closest relatives, this marker (the invariant phonetic form is *-à*) forms a part of an agglutinative chain of affixes expressing double plurality. It is always followed by the determinative affix *-y-* and the definite plural marker *-tì(g)*.

There are two allophonic variants of the morpheme:

- (1) *-gà* after front, middle and nasal vowels:

nú ‘person’ – *nú-gà-y-tì* ‘the parents, the family’;
siyẽ(g) ‘man, husband’ – *síyẽ-gà-y-tì* ‘the family men’, ‘husband and his brothers’;
dò ‘son’ – *dẽ-gà-y-tì* ‘the sons’;
ɲàzàlò ‘daughter’ – *ɲázálẽ-gà-y-tì* ‘the daughters’;
bòlá ‘friend’ – *bòlá-gà-y-tì* ‘the friends’;

The plural form for *dò* ‘son’ is based on the suppletive root *dẽ* ‘child’.

- (2) *-wà* after back vowels:

dòpò ‘child’ – *dópó-wà-y-tì* ‘children’.

In a full NP, the suffix is not transferred to the end of the phrase, but remains with a head noun:

bòlá-gà wóózá-y-tì ‘the tall friends’.

Thus, its syntactic status differs drastically from that of the other plurality markers of Zialo: it modifies a concrete noun but not the whole noun phrase. A possible diachronic explanation for this fact may be its archaic origin: this suffix has fully grammaticalised to become a bound nominal morpheme, while the other plurality markers are both transcategorical and relocatable within the NP, which may witness their comparatively recent origin from previously independent lexical items.

This type of plurality marking looks rather marginal in the contemporary language and represents a remnant of a formerly productive nominal class witnessed across the SWM group of languages [Vydrin 2006a: 156-170]. Duplicate forms *bòlá-y-tì(g)* and *bòlá-gà-y-tì(g)* ‘friends’ denote the relations between these friends and the speaker: if he speaks about his own friends, he will use *bòlá-gà-y-tì(g)*. *Núgà-y-tì(g)* ‘parents, family’ is semantically different with *núy-tì* ‘people’ in the same way.

Forms *dópó-wà-y-tì(g)* and *dópò-y-tì(g)* ‘children’, *nè-lẽgà-y-tì(g)* and *nè-lòy-tì(g)* ‘my children, my sons’ do not seem to constitute any semantic difference for the speakers, but the former ones are used more frequently and are understood by the speakers as normal, unmarked plural forms.

Another evidence of the gradual loss of comprehensibility of this plurality marker is its deglutination: the speakers reassess *dópó-wà-y-tì* as *dópó-wà-y-tì*, a definite plural form of *dópó-wà* which they tend to use as the singular form ‘child, son’ instead of the normal *dòpò*. Without the determination marker, the word *dópó-wà* is reassessed as an indefinite plural form.

6.9.6. Agentive plural affix *-bela*

Verbal derivatives with the agentive suffix *-mo* form their plurality with the suppletive suffix *-bela*. The determinative affix and the definite plurality marker are obligatory:

- (62) *kpóbébéla-y-tì té pélé-y wě-gò*
 REF\worker.PL-DEF-PL 3PL REF\road-DEF meet-AOR

‘The workers linked the roads together’.

The origin of this suffixoid is nominal, though this can only be recovered by means of comparison with the other SWM languages (namely Bandi and Mende).

There is at present no evidence on whether this suffix lenites its initial consonant after a vowel, as it does, for instance, in Bandi.

6.9.7. Non-referential (generic) plural

Generic NPs with the plural meaning require a determinative affix *-y / -gì* and in most cases do not add any plurality markers:

- (63) *síyě-gì-tì pé tátá tí-déyè-y lèwè*
 REF\man-DEF-PL all 3PL 3PL.POSS-younger.sibling-DEF hit

‘All men hit their younger brothers’;

- (64) *yà lá gílè-y lòwòlòwò, á lá vá-nì*
 2SG.IRR NEG REF\dog-DEF tease 3SG NEG be.good-PRET

‘One should not tease dogs, it is not good’.

Personal names used in generic sense add a specific noun *dàwó* ‘name, personality’ which is put in the definite plural form:

- (65) *Kòlì làwó-y-tì kpóló-wáá lè Dàlàsù láwó-y-tì tó*
 Koli person-DEF-PL be.strange-RES EXI Dalasu personality-DEF-PL COP
gè tí-wó
 1SG 3PL.PF-want

‘All Kolis are strange, I prefer Dalasus’;

- (66) *nè-yètèyà-y zú Kòlì làwó sáá-gò nò ló gè*
 1SG.POSS-life-DEF in Koli personality three-DEF only COP 1SG

(‘)-tò-wà

3SG.PF-see-RES

‘I have only seen three Kolis in my life’.

6.9.8. Collective pluralia tantum nouns

Some Zialo nouns constantly express a collective plural meaning and avoid plural affixes. Semantically, they mostly signify a bulk of small objects:

gílí ‘termite(s)’;

púpú ‘ant(s)’;

gũdèyà ‘hair’.

Nouns denoting pair objects may equally mean one or both of them:

gólí ‘ear(s)’;

gààzù ‘eye(s)’.

6.10. Possession

6.10.1. Genitive syntagma

In case the possessor is expressed by a noun / NP, the meaning of possession is expressed within the genitive syntagma, of which the head noun follows the dependent one. As well as in any other NP, the modifier can be a pronoun phrase itself:

Kòlì lòmã-gì ‘Koli’s shirt’;
nè-bòlà wòwà-y ‘my friend’s knife’.

6.10.2. Pronominal alienable possession

In a pronoun phrase, possession can be alienable and inalienable. Alienable possession is expressed morphologically by a prefixed possessive marker of the following set:

Chart 13

	sg.	du.	pl.
1st excl.	<i>nè-</i>		<i>né-</i>
1st incl.		<i>mó-</i>	<i>àmó-</i>
2nd	<i>ì-</i>		<i>wò-</i>
3rd	<i>gé-</i> ¹²		<i>tí-</i>

Possessive markers cause the “weak” initial consonant of the following noun. The noun or the NP should be put in the definite form:

nè-lòmã-gì ‘my shirt’;
gé-ló-y ‘her son’;
tí-vélékóózà-y ‘their trousers’.

Alienable possession is used with all free nouns, and this is the primary sphere of its usage in all SWM languages. See the next subsection on the expansion of the usage of possessive markers.

6.10.3. Pronominal inalienable possession

Nouns denoting body parts and physiological liquids are the only groups of nouns which may optionally be used in an inalienable possession construction. This construction is formed by attaching the prefixed polyfunctional person markers to the noun:

Chart 14

	sg.	du.	pl.
1st excl.	<i>ò-</i>		<i>né-</i>
1st incl.		<i>mó-</i>	<i>àmó-</i>
2nd	<i>ì-</i>		<i>wò-</i>
3rd	<i>ó-</i>		<i>tí-</i>

(-)-tòkó-y ‘my hand’;
(-)-tókó-y ‘his hand’.

Since the polyfunctional marker paradigm only differs from the possessive marker set in the 1st and 3rd person singular, the two are synchronically quite mixed. In the contemporary Zialo language, the domain of alienable possession is gradually expanded to the relative nouns as well, leveling the syntactic difference between these two classes of nouns. The process of leveling seems to gradually elide the polyfunctional markers from any possessive constructions. All nouns denoting body parts, family relatives, and physiological liquids which are inalienable possessive items in other SWM languages are used with possession prefixes in Zialo:

kèèyè ‘father’ – *nè-kééyè* ‘my father’;
tókó ‘hand’ – *gé-lókó-y* ‘his hand’;

¹² Lawolozu *gí-*

náwá ‘blood’ – *nè-yàwà-y* ‘my blood’.

It is interesting to note that some deictic pronouns, especially *nà* and *nò* ‘that’, can be used to mark the 3sg. possessor with both alienable and inalienable possessed items:

(67) *é nà wú-gì wòlò*
3SG that head-DEF hit

‘She hit her head’.

This is one of the examples of the gradual expansion of deictic pronouns towards marking the 3rd person.

6.10.4. Possessive word *dá*

A lexical means of expressing absolute possession is the construction with the postpositive noun *dá* / *dé-y* ‘property’. The person / number meanings are expressed by placing possessive markers ahead of it. The construction of absolute possession is usually placed into the predicative position:

(68) *kólá vādà-y sì wò-dé-y lè*
REF\clothes nice-DEF this 2PL.POSS-property-DEF EXI

‘These nice clothes are yours (pl.)’;

(69) *bàzá-y sì lá gà nè-jè-y dá*
headdress-DEF this NEG with 1SG.POSS-mother-DEF property

‘This headdress is not my mother’s’.

However, it is possible to use it in a prepositive attributive position as well, where it serves as an extended possessive pronoun:

(70) *ì-dá láá zù mìnì?*
2SG.POSS-property village in where

‘Where is your village?’

(71) *ì-dá nú-gà-y-tì tó mìnì?*
2SG.POSS-property REF\person-PL-DEF-PL COP where

‘Where is your family?’

The construction most often expresses alienable possession meaning. Such semantic groups of nouns as body parts, physiological liquids, and most widely used kinship terms cannot use it at all. Otherwise, the absolute possession construction and the possessive prefixes are interchangeable in the sentence.

Note that *dá* never changes its “strong” consonant and its high lexical tone.

6.11. Word formation

Nouns in Zialo may form derivatives with a number of morphological means: conversion, reduplication, and affixation (both pre- and suffixation). Compounding as the other type of word formation will also be considered in this section.

6.11.1. Syntactic derivation (conversion)

A change of a lexeme into a different terminal category (part of speech) without a change in its material form is called conversion or syntactic derivation.

The most evident case of conversion is the creation of postpositions, invariable determinative elements expressing a variety of locative meanings and semantic roles. All postpositions in Zialo are derived from nouns. The correlation between postpositions and nouns is the issue regarded in 6.16 below.

Certain nouns in Zialo have generated homonymous adverbs modifying a NP or a clause, or conjunctions introducing a dependent clause. Some examples are given below:

- *káví(g)* ‘old time’ / ‘long’:

- (72) *gúlè-y wòyà gà (‘)-méní káví gúlè-y*
 REF\song-DEF 2PL.FOC with 3SG.PF-hear REF\old.time REF\song-DEF

lè

EXI

‘The song you are hearing is an old one’, but

- (73) *dótóló-y sì yà bàlè yè káví*
 doctor-DEF this HAB work do long

‘This doctor works here for a long time’.

- *pòlù* ‘back’ / ‘together’, ‘again’

té yé-nì wòlù
 3PL be-PRET together

‘They were together’;

- (74) *yà vílá wòlù yè (‘)-kpáté yílá*
 2SG.IRR can again 2SG 3SG.PF-cook once

‘Can you cook it once again?’

- *wáté, wátí-y* ‘time’ / ‘when’

- (75) *álò sévè-y wònè wátí-y nòpé mà*
 3SG.IPFV REF\writing-DEF write time-DEF any IPFV

‘He is writing letters all the time’;

- (76) *wátí-y nè-yàzà-y yè-nì kóózù*
 when-DEF 1SG.POSS-wife-DEF be-PRET REF\pregnant

‘When my wife was pregnant’.

The last example shows that nouns of time duration, used as conjunctions introducing a temporal clause, can in fact adopt determinative affixes, thus not being fully grammaticalised into invariable grammatical words:

- (77) *kúyè-y, síyè-gì lò là-ní gé-wété-y zù*
 REF\night-DEF REF\man-DEF COP lie-PRET 3SG.POSS-bed-DEF in

‘At night, the man is lying in his bed’.

6.11.2. Reduplication

Derivational reduplication of nouns is a relatively rare grammatical instrument in Zialo. With nouns denoting time of the day, full reduplication builds distributive adverbs of time by either root repeating or infixing the associative marker *ɔ* / *ɔɔ* (free allophonic variation):

- kpīdī* ‘night’ – *kpīdī-ɔ-kpīdī* ‘every night’;
fòlò ‘day’ – *fólófóló, fóló-ɔ-fóló* ‘every day’;
wátí ‘time’ – *wátí-ɔ-wátí* ‘from time to time, sometimes’;
gàlù(g) ‘month’ – *gálú-ɔ-ɔ-gálú* ‘every month’.

Lexical reduplicated nouns (both fully or partially reduplicated) are mostly ideophonic, and mostly represent examples of unmotivated reduplication [Rozhansky, ms.], i.e. the original non-reduplicated noun is not used in the language, though its meaning may sometimes be extracted from a comparison with a genetically related tongue:

- fêfê(g)* ‘wind’, cf. Looma *fê* ‘to blow’;
fùfùlè(g) ‘dust’, cf. Bandi *fùli(η)* ‘sawdust’;
kèkè ‘my father’, cf. Looma *ké* ‘father’.

Unique examples of reduplicated nouns derived from nouns are witnessed. These items either denote small animals, insects and reptiles, or bulks of very small objects:

- pàlà* ‘dirt’ – *pàlàvàlà(g)* ‘dirt, bog’;
kòdè(g) ‘a small bird’ – *kòdèwòdè(g)* ‘butterfly’.

The noun *kpòkpò(g)* ‘chair’ may have been derived from *kpò(g)* ‘gathering, assembly’ with a primary meaning ‘seating place for gatherings’, but I cannot be sure about this etymology.

6.11.3. Affixation

Some derivational affixes listed below may equally join nouns and verb roots, which may freely act as basic verbal nouns in Zialo (see 8.11.1 for details on the formation of the basic verbal nouns). They are placed in the current section for the sake of logical sequence, but at least some of them may well be regarded as cases of verbal derivation.

6.11.3.1. abstract suffix -fá

Suffix *-fá* is grammaticalised from noun *fá* ‘thing, story, tale’:

(78) *nã á fá-y sì yàtò*
 1SG.IPFV REF\thing-DEF this understand
 ‘I understand this story’.

As a nominal suffix, *-fá* is used for the category-preserving derivation expressing abstract meanings of method, state or process:

òlálá ‘friend’ – *òlálává* ‘friendship’.

The same suffix acts as a nominaliser for intransitive verbs, see 8.11.3 below.

6.11.3.2. locative suffix -dà

Homonymous to the relative noun *dà* ‘mouth’, this suffix may form nominal derivatives with a close meaning ‘entry’:

pèlè ‘house’ – *pèlèlà* ‘entrance, door’.

Another possible cognate is the verb *dà* ‘lie, put, set’, which probably fits the suffix better, since most nouns built modified by *-dà* indicate neutral locations:

kòvilà ‘city’, lit. ‘place of households’, cf. *kòvì* ‘yard, family house’;

pélé záyàlà ‘crossroads’, lit. ‘place where roads cut each other’, cf. *sàyà* ‘cut’.

The same suffix is found in the toponym *Màsàdà* ‘Macenta’, lit. ‘place of a king’. Note that the French pronunciation *Macenta* preserved the original **-ŋ* in **masaŋ* ‘chief, king’¹³.

6.11.3.3. substantivising prefix gè-

This prefix forms free nouns from relative ones, to express their generic sense, when used separately from any particular possessor. The subsequent initial consonant is “weak”:

gùlò ‘oil’ – *gèwùlò* ‘human fat’.

kpúló(g) ‘his elbow’ – *gèbùlò(g)* ‘elbow [generally]’.

Nominal lexemes serving as affixoids to denote gender / age groups of domestic animals can be used in their generic sense with prefix *gè-*:

-sà ‘female’: *níká-zá* ‘cow’, *gèzà* ‘female [generally]’;

-sìnà, -sìnè ‘male’: *báálá-zìnè* ‘sheep’, *gèzìnè* ‘male [generally]’, ‘thumb’;¹⁴

-jùwò ‘cub’: *té-yùwò* ‘chicken’, *gèyùwò* ‘cub [generally]’.

The same suffix substantivises adjectives:

kúló ‘small’ – *gègúló* ‘a small one’;

gàlà ‘big’ – *gèwàlà* ‘a big one’.

¹³ Note a different etymology of this toponym: *Macenta* < **masaŋ taa* ‘king’s town’. However, the Zialo pronounce the second constituent of this compound noun with a distinct voiced *-d-*. Sadler [1949/2006: 29] also translates the toponym as ‘kingdom’, with a suffix of place.

¹⁴ Etymologically, *sìnè* may be related to the deictic noun *sìnè* ‘this person’ (see 6.14.2.3).

Interestingly, such nominal derivatives name fingers of the human hand:

gèyùwò ‘little finger’;

gèwòlà ‘long finger’.

Generic nouns shaped by *gè-* replace adjectives in a primary or secondary nominal predicate position:

(79) *dápá-y sì lá gà gèníínà*
REF\bag-DEF this NEG with new.one

‘This bag is not new’;

(80) *dápá-y sì yè-nì gà gèníínà-y*
REF\bag-DEF this be-PRET with new.one-DEF

‘This bag was new’.

The substantivisation of adjectives occurs in case it is needed to set the latter into a predicative syntactic position. The same must be said about the substantivisation of ordinal numerals:

màyfǎlǎ(g) ‘first’ – *gèwǎyǎfǎlǎ(g)* ‘the first one’.

6.11.4. Compounding

Since there is no difference in rules of linking together roots within a word, from one side, and a NP, from the other, it is rather difficult to distinguish between a compound noun and a genitive NP by phonological or morphological means. For instance, from a morphological standpoint, a combination like *māgólò wùlù* ‘mango tree’ or *dòwòlò yìzè(g)* ‘ginger’ may be treated in both ways. It is however essential for compiling the dictionary of the language to make a clear distinction between true composite nouns and NPs.

Three criteria will be used in this paper to identify nominal compounds.

(1) Lexically, it is possible to identify compounds when one of their elements is not used in the language as an independent lexeme. Such composite units with a concrete semantics will be called compound nouns, even though they are not so numerous:

jábìlì ‘cloud’ (*já* ‘water’, the second element **kpìlì* is unknown in Zialo, but cf. Looma *kpìlì(g)* ‘be dense, thick’ [Vydrin 1987: 95]);

tókóbéyà ‘finger’ (*tókó* ‘hand’, the second element *-kpèyà* ‘finger’ is not used separately, but cf. *kòwòbèyà* ‘toe’);

gǔdébókótí ‘three stones for cooking food on fire’ (Bandi *ngunde(ŋ)* ‘cook’ [Grossmann & al. 1991: 81], Zialo *bó* ‘do’, *kótí* ‘stone’).

Nouns denoting domestic animals build compounds to mark gender and age groups with *sìnè* ‘male’, *sà* ‘female’, *kpé alá(g)* ‘mature female, heifer’, and *jùwò* ‘cub’:

bá alá ‘sheep’ – *bá alá zínè* ‘male sheep’, *bá alá zá* ‘sheep’, *bá alá yúwò* ‘lamb’;

ní ká ‘cow’ – *ní ká bélé* ‘heifer’.

The second elements of such compounds are not used independently, except for generic nouns with the substantivising prefix *gè-* (see 6.11.3.3 above).

(2) The semantic criterion of identifying compound lexemes is their compositionality: to discover it, the meaning of the combination of two roots should be compared to the sum of meanings of its both parts. A *tea-cup* will in this case be equal to a *cup* for *tea*, allowing one to consider it a mere combination of two nouns. A reader of the dictionary will thus be able to fully recognise the meaning of the word *tea-cup* if he looks up for both of its components. A *bushbuck* in this understanding will not mean just a *buck* of the *bush* but a species of small nocturnal spiral-horned antelope known as *Tragelaphus scriptus*. Therefore, it deserves a special slot in the dictionary as a nominal compound.

In Zialo, the following compound nouns are semantically identified:

bòwàlèvè ‘machete’ (*bòwà* ‘knife’ + *tèvè* ‘cut’, lit. ‘knife for cutting’);

bélé túkpù ‘shorts’ (*bélé(g)* ‘pants’ + *tùkpù* ‘part, piece’, lit. ‘part of trousers’);

wĩtɛ ‘duck’ (*wĩ(g)* ‘Frenchman, foreigner’ + *tɛ* ‘hen’, lit. ‘French hen’).

(3) Finally, the syntactic criteria should be applied: first, a compound noun may encompass a postposition phrase which would normally be placed at the indirect object position at the right end of the sentence. Second, the verb phrase is incorporated into a NP preceding the head noun, which would never be possible in a normal clause:

dãwãázùbèlè(g) ‘mustache’ < *dã* ‘mouth’, *mãázù* ‘over’, *kpèlè(g)* ‘beard’.

bàyúlásùmítá ‘spatula for rice dishes’ < *bà* ‘rice’, *gúlá(g) sù* ‘take out’, *mítá* ‘spoon’.

Such lexemes are quite productive in the language, cf. an instantly created compound item of the following example:

(81) *bówálévè-y sì tífáyábówálévè-y lè*
 REF\machete-DEF this REF\grass.cutting.machete-DEF EXI

‘This machete is a grass cutting machete’.

In the vocabulary given as an Appendix to the present paper, all the three criteria will be used for identifying compound nouns.

There are a few examples of borrowing compound nouns from external languages: e.g., *lãkólì* ‘school’ and *kálámó* ‘teacher’ are both loanwords (from French and Maninka, respectively), but the compound noun *lãkólìkàlãmò* ‘school teacher’ is not a mere compound but a loanword itself, since the initial *k-* is not “weakened” after the *y*-word *lãkólì*. The word actually is directly borrowed from Maninka *lekoli karanmoo* ‘id.’ [Vydrin, p.c.], of which the first component is itself a loanword from French.

Anthroponyms in Zialo are mostly borrowed from Looma, and family names form a distinct group of compound nouns. Their origins are sometimes clearly seen, since the first component is usually the name of the totem animal which is prohibited for the members of the clan to eat:

Guilavogui < *gilà-wò-gì*, cf. Looma, Zialo *gilà* ‘dog’;

Koivogui < Looma *kòlì* ‘panther’ (Zialo *kòlì*);

Zoumanigui (in Zialo *Zomenigì*) < *zùmà-nì-gì* vs. Looma *some*, Zialo *sùwã* ‘attentive’, *-nì(g)* associative plural affix.

An isolated case of nominal composition is represented by *táázù* ‘village’ and *kóózù* ‘pregnant woman’, examples of lexicalised postposition phrases emerged out of the extensive *usus* of these particular combinations.

6.12. Adjectives

6.12.1. Morphological and syntactic criteria

Quality in Zialo is most often expressed by the qualitative construction with statal verbs (8.8.2) or the basic verbal noun (8.11.1):

kpéyã(g) ‘be red’:

ì-bèyã-ã lè ‘you are red’;

súwá báyã-gì ‘the raw flesh’, lit. ‘the redness of the meat’.

Only a very small group of lexemes in Zialo can be identified as adjectives. By definition, lexemes which can modify the head noun in an attributive syntagma but lacking some of the important morphological and syntactic characteristic of both verbs and nouns, will be called adjectives.

First, different from qualitative verbs, adjectives cannot accept tense / aspect and modality affixes.

Second, they cannot form derivatives such as verbal nouns or participles, as verbs do. Nominalisation of adjectives is only possible with the substantivising prefix *gè-*.

Third, adjectives cannot be used in a predicative position in the sentence. They are replaced by a nominalised derivative with prefix *gè-* or a derivative verb based on the same or suppletive root:

kúló ‘small’ – *tàgùlà* ‘diminish, decrease’: *gè tàgùlà* (‘)-*bá* ‘I diminish it’;

gàlà ‘big’ – *bàlò* ‘grow, get bigger’: *gè bá wàlò* ‘I grow rice’;

pã dà ‘good’ – *pã* ‘be good’.

The adjective *níná* corresponds to a homonymous verb: *dápáy sì níná-nì* ‘this bag was new’ (see below).

Adjectives stand closer to nouns than to verbs: their morphology is scarce but includes categories of plurality and determination, expressed by means of the same affixes as with nouns. They do not form synthetic degrees of comparison (these are built analytically; see 6.16.3 below, example (151)). At the same time, different from nouns, adjectives may not form a full NP or occupy the subject position in the sentence. Having said this, Zialo should be classified as an “adjective-type” language as opposed to “noun-type” languages (e.g., Russian or Latin) and “verb-type” languages (e.g., Korean or Japanese) where attributive modifiers belong to classes of nouns and verbs, respectively. It is well known that a great number of African languages demonstrate a very limited number of true adjectives which nevertheless form quite a distinct class of lexemes [Plungian 2010, Chapter 1, § 3.2]. This phenomenon is found in Australian languages as well [Dixon 1994]. Typologically, such sparse adjectives usually express meanings of size, shape, general estimation, and colour, and this is exactly the case in Zialo.

Finally, adjectives are morphologically differentiated from quantifiers which are also used in an attributive position within a NP (see 6.6 above): while quantifiers are invariable, adjectives may accept determinative and plural affixes.

Based on these criteria, I can name the following five adjectives in Zialo:

gàlà ‘big’;

kúló ‘small’;

kúlókúló ‘very small, petty’;

níná ‘new’;

pãdà ‘good, nice, beautiful’;

póló ‘old’.

The ordinal numeral *màyfóló(g)* ‘first’ is syntactically close to adjectives. Its usage is examined below in section 6.13.2.

6.12.2. Syntactic positions

Adjectives may be set into the following two positions in a phrase.

(1) A postpositive attribute within a NP:

(82) *sì dápá wólà-y lè*
this REF\bag big-DEF EXI

‘This is a big bag’.

(2) An adverbial modifier within a comitative preposition phrase with *gà(g)* ‘with’:

(83) *é gúlè-y lò gà pãdà*
3SG REF\song-DEF sing with good

‘She sings well’.

6.12.3. Morphology

Adjectives use inflectional categories of determination and number. Definite and plural forms are built in a way identical to that of nouns:

pélé vãdà ‘a nice house’;

pélé vãdà-y ‘the nice house’;

pélé vādà-yà ‘nice houses’;
pélé vādà-y-tì(g) ‘the nice houses’.

Mind that adjectives within a relative NP, different from verbal nouns, can be modified by the associative plurality affix *-ni(g)*:

ḡázá wòlà-nì ‘big wives’.

A boundary should be drawn between adjective *nííná* ‘new’ and the homonymous verb *nííná* ‘be new, renovate’. The latter may attach TA suffixes and form participles:

(84) *dápá-y sì nííná-gò lè*
 REF\bag-DEF this new-NMLZ EXI

‘This bag is a new one’;

(85) *dápá-y sì nííná-nì gè (‘)-fè-nì yà*
 REF\bag-DEF this be.new-PRET 1SG 3SG.PF-give-PRET 2SG.CNTR

‘This bag was new [when] I gave it to you’.

Adjective derivation is also rather poor. The only case of corroborative reduplication is *kúlókúló* ‘very small, petty’, an adjective referring to people in pejorative sense.

Adjectives can form nouns adding the substantivising prefix *gè-*, see 6.11.3.3 above for details.

Adverbs of manner are built from adjectives with suffix *-gò / -wò*:

(86) *é yá bòòlò gòlà-wò*
 3SG HAB speak big-ADV

‘She speaks much’.

The adverb is always put at the sentence-final position:

(87) *dólé-y lè (‘)-mà gòlà-wò*
 REF\hunger-DEF COP 1SG.PF-on big-ADV

‘I am very hungry’ (lit. ‘hunger is on me much’).

The adjective *nííná* can be converted into an adverb with the meaning ‘again’ (cf. French *de nouveau*, Russian *снова*):

(88) *gà lá bùlù yéyá-gò, (‘)-ké yè lì mǎ ḡsá níínáy*
 1SG.IRR NEG bread buy-AOR 3SG.PF-QUOT 2SG go shop again

là

DEP

‘I did not buy bread, you need to go to the shop again’.

6.13. Quantifiers

Quantifying words in Zialo include numerals of three kinds, to be briefly analysed in the present section, and a number of invariable quantitative determinators which, for the sake of logical classification, will be considered in the next section of the chapter.

6.13.1. Cardinal numerals

The primary cardinal numerals of Zialo are given in the following list:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1 | <i>ḡílá(g)</i> |
| 2 | <i>fèlè(g)</i> |
| 3 | <i>sáwá(g), sáá(g)</i> |
| 4 | <i>náání(g)</i> |
| 5 | <i>dóólú(g)</i> |
| 6 | <i>gòzità(g), gòyità(g)</i> |
| 7 | <i>gòfèlà(g)</i> |
| 8 | <i>gòzàkpà(g)</i> |

9	<i>tààwù(g)</i>
10	<i>púú(g)</i>
100	<i>gú(g), gũ gílá</i>
1000	<i>wà(g), wà gílá</i>

Notes:

(1) *Sáwá(g)*, *sáá(g)* are free allophonic variants of the same lexeme. It seems that the form with the dropped intervocal glide *sáá* was borrowed from Looma or reduced under its influence.

(2) *Gỳyità(g)* is an allophone of *g̀̀zità(g)* only used in compound cardinal numerals and in fast colloquial speech. When asked to list the numerals one by one, or to translate a sentence, the speaker will pronounce *g̀̀zità(g)*.

(3) *Gú(g)* ‘hundred’ and *wà(g)* ‘thousand’ are not used independently and always require a specifying numeral.

The compound character of numerals from ‘six’ to ‘eight’ is evident: they contain a three-syllable structure uncharacteristic for indigenous Zialo nouns. As everywhere in SWM (and beyond, cf. the SM languages [Idiatov 2002]), numerals after five are based on combining the root meaning ‘five’ with the first numerals. This type of compounding is widely used across the Mande language area and should most probably be attributed to the Proto-Mande language.

In Zialo, the etymology of both elements of numerals ‘six’, ‘seven’ and ‘eight’ goes beyond the contemporary lexicon of the language:

g̀̀- ‘five’, cf. Bandi *ngɔ-*, Mende *wɔ-* (in compounds only), cf. Vai *soolu* ‘five’, *somfela* ‘seven’, *sonsakpa* ‘eight’;

-zità ‘one’, cf. Bandi *ita*, *hita*, Mende *itá*: forms of these two languages are cognate to Zialo *gílá* / *yílá* / *ílá* and differs in the “strong” intervocal consonant (cf. also Mende *ngílá*);

-fèlà ‘two’, cf. Vai, Mandinka *fela* ‘two’;

-zàkpà ‘three’, cf. Vai *sakpa* ‘three’ [Innes 1969: 107, 1971: 74; Heydorn 1970/71: 167].

The striking similarity of the second components of the Zialo numerals ‘seven’ and ‘eight’ with Vai and Mandinka can witness they were in fact borrowed into a chronological predecessor of Zialo from a culturally superior West Mande language, which would explain their phonetic difference from the indigenous Zialo numerals ‘two’ and ‘three’, respectively.

Numerals larger than ten are constructed analytically by juxtaposition, where the modifier follows the head numeral.

púú fèlè ‘twenty’;

gũ gílá gílá ‘one hundred and one’;

wà gílá gú fèlè g̀̀yità ‘one thousand two hundred six’.

Units are attached to the definite forms of the tens following the postposition *máázù* ‘over’:

púú-g̀̀ máázù yílá ‘eleven’, lit. ‘one over ten’. Remember that the only numeral which undergoes initial consonant alternation is *gílá(g)* ‘one’, while the higher numerals retain their “strong” consonant, thus

púú-g̀̀ máázù fèlè ‘twelve’.

All cardinal numerals use the morphological category of determination. The determined form is built with suffix *-g̀̀* which can be further modified by the nominal determinative affix *-y*:

nú fèlè ‘two people’ (unknown to the speaker), *vs.*

nú fèlè-g̀̀ ‘the two people’ (concrete or previously mentioned).

(89) *nú sáwá-g̀̀-*y* lá v̀̀à-g̀̀*
REF\person three-DEF-DEF NEG come-AOR

‘The three people [we talked about] did not come’.

Appositive usage of numerals may generate recursive NPs where the numeral enters a NP preceding the head noun:

- (90) *é gá kóná púú-gò lò-y lè*
 3SG with REF\year ten-DEF child-DEF EXI

‘He is a ten-year child’.

The definite form of the numeral may be used independently in the position of the direct object, with the ellipsis of the head noun:

- (91) *méyã-gì ló, fèlè-gò yéyé yè li*
 REF\banana-DEF COP two-DEF take 2SG go

‘Here are the bananas, take two [of them] and go’.

A numeral may be used in the subject position in case it denotes mathematic figures:

- (92) *dóólú-gò sáá-gò vilì ()-sú nà wà gá gòzàkpà-gò*
 five-DEF three-DEF throw 3SG.PF-in that COP with eight-DEF

‘Five plus three will be eight’ (lit. ‘Five thrown into three is eight’).

The definite form of the numeral *gílá* is used independently meaning ‘the only one’ or ‘alone’:

- (93) *gílá-gò lè*
 REF\one-DEF EXI

‘He is alone’.

To emphasise that the objects were numerous, determinated numerals may also add the nominal plurality affix *-tì(g)*:

- (94) *pélé fèlè-gò-y-tì tí-wé-yàà lè*
 REF\road two-DEF-DEF-PL 3PL.PF-meet-RES EXI

‘The two roads have been linked together’.

In most other semantic contexts NPs modified by numerals are considered as singular as indicated by the 3sg. object marker in example (94a):

- (94a) *dóólú-gò-y ná è wò-gò zá, nà yélé*
 five-DEF-DEF now 3SG.DEF get.caught-AOR today that still

- ()-fè gèyà wòlù*
 3SG.PF-give 1SG.CNTR again

‘And the five ones we got today, give them to me again’.

6.13.2. Ordinal numerals

As in many languages across the world, the first ordinal numeral is morphologically distinct from the rest of the list. In Zialo, *màyfóló(g)* ‘first’ resembles an adjective: it modifies a NP as an attribute and may be substantivised by means of the prefix *gè-* when used in the predicative position:

- (95) *sì wà gá nú wáyfóló-gì*
 this COP with REF\person first-DEF

‘This is the first person’;

- (96) *nà ló gèwáyfóló-gì*
 1SG.FOC COP first.one-DEF

‘I am the first one’.

Higher ordinal numerals are built from the respective cardinal ones with suffix *-kèlè*. Different from cardinal numerals, the ordinal ones change their initial consonant to a “weak” allophonic variant when put in the attributive position following the head *y*-noun:

- dó vèlèkèlè-y* ‘the second son’;
ḡázá zàwàkèlè-y ‘the third wife’.

Some Zialo speakers (mostly residing in Macenta) use ordinal numerals identical to the Looma ones (of the Lulama dialect) with suffix *-sìyè* which must have been borrowed from this neighbouring language:

- (97) *dó zàwàsìyè-y làsè bà Kòlì*
 REF\son third-DEF name PP Koli
 ‘The third son is called Koli’.

6.13.3. Distributive numerals

Cardinal numerals are reduplicated to express the distributive meaning, which is an extremely widespread feature of African languages [Rozhansky, ms.]. In a clause, distributive numerals are preceded by preposition *gà(g)* ‘with’:

- (98) *méyã-gì-tì dà gà sáwá sáwá*
 REF\banana-DEF-PL put with three three
 ‘Put the bananas by three’;

- (99) *tátá lì dóbó-y zù gà nú yílá gílá*
 3PL.IPFV go REF\bush-DEF in with REF\person one one
 ‘They are going to the bush one by one’.

The latter example contains quite an interesting grammatical feature of the Zialo language: noun *nú* ‘person’ acts as a numerative classifier for counting people. So far, this appears the only classifier found in the language, and it is obligatory in the distributive construction with human objects. No non-human noun requires any numerative indicator in the same construction.

The trend towards the formation of numerative classifying morphemes is occasionally witnessed across the neighbouring group of South Mande, most distinctly in Gban [Zhel'tov 2005] and Dan-Blo [Erman 2006]. However, this is the first time they are encountered in a SWM language, and this phenomenon definitely deserves a closer look across all other SWM tongues.

6.14. Determinatives

As stated above, invariable words modifying a NP without acquiring its morphological category markers, are called determinatives. These include invariable quantifiers, demonstratives, adverbs and intensifiers which will be described in the present section:

- bówálévè-y-tì múnò* ‘those machetes’;
ɲázà-y-tì kpě ‘all women’;
tábálí véká ‘another table’;
nú tà vâà-gò ‘some person arrived’.

Not all determinatives follow the head noun; some of them (e.g., cataphoric pronouns) precede it.

6.14.1. Quantificational determinatives

A closed list of invariable adverbial quantifiers is used to modify NPs. Quantificational determinatives are immune to the initial consonant alternations and always demonstrate the “strong” alternant:

- *kpě(g)* ‘all, every, each’:
- (100) *gílè-y và-à é súwá-y kpě mè*
 REF\dog-DEF come-RES 3SG REF\meat-DEF all eat
 ‘The dog has come, and it ate all the meat’

- *pé(g), nòpé(g)* ‘all, every, each / no, none’

(101) *gà lá dótóló nòpé kóló*
 1SG.IRR NEG doctor none know

‘I do not know a single doctor’;

- *tà* ‘some, a little’

(102) *nú-y tà vâ-â*
 REF\person-DEF some come-RES

‘Someone has come’;

- *bólóbóló(g)* ‘many, much’

(103) *nú bólóbóló gé wé-gò fétí-y wâ*
 REF\person many 3SG meet-AOR REF\festivity-DEF on

‘Many people gathered for the festivity’.

This last example demonstrates a complex sentence with a relative clause where the subject ‘many people’ is expressed by the singular PPM *gé*. This is normal for Zialo: most quantifiers with a meaning of multitude require a singular agreement marker. One of such words is the verb *kpíízí(g)* ‘be numerous’.

Numeral *gílá(g)* ‘one’ can serve as a quantificational modifier to a noun or NP meaning ‘some’ or, with a negated predicate, ‘no, none’:

(104) *nú yílá pélé lò-gò*
 REF\person one REF\house build-AOR

‘Some man built a house’;

(105) *nú yílá tá pélé lò-gò*
 REF\person one NEG REF\house build-AOR

‘No one built a house’.

Cf. also the adverbial use of the reduced form *ílá* derived from the same numeral (see 8.12.5 below).

The indefinite pronoun *tànìgàà* ‘some’ refers to a different grammatical class but functions as a quantifier and should be noted here. The associative plurality affix *-ni(g)* can be added to indicate that the objects are definite:

(106) *nú-y tànìgàà-nì té vâ-â-gò, tànìgàà tá lá*
 REF\person-DEF some-PL 3PL come-AOR some 3PL.IRR NEG

vâ-â-gò

come-AOR

‘Some people came, some did not’.

6.14.2. Demonstratives

6.14.2.1. deictic pronouns

The nature of the deictic pronouns is dual: they are allowed to act in the sentence both as determinatives modifying a subject or object NPs (the “true” determinative function), or substitute each of them (the pronominal function). The latter function permits some deictic pronouns to replace the 3rd person pronouns of the focalised series (see 7.1.2), thus following a typological process widespread in the world’s languages.

This diversified syntax of deictic pronouns is further emphasised by their ability to act as cataphoric pronouns and pronominal adverbs of location.

There are several grades of deictic pronouns in Zialo. The main criteria of their opposition is the distance between the object and the speaker, and – for distant objects – its visibility to the speaker. There is no strict semantic boundary between the pronouns, but five grades can be firmly established:

sì ‘this’ (proximal; the object is located in speaker’s hand or in front of the speaker);

í ‘this’ (proximal; the object is located close to both the speaker and the addressee);

nà ‘that’ (distal; the object is at the disposal of the addressee);

nò ‘that’ (distal; the object is distant from both the speaker and the addressee but in visibility for the speaker);

mùndò, mùndàdà ‘yonder’ (distal; the object is not seen by either the speaker or the addressee).

The basic syntactic positions of deictic pronouns within the sentence are the following.

(1) Attributive modifier of a NP:

(107) *dápá-y sì nè-dé-y lè*
REF\bag-DEF this 1SG.POSS-property-DEF EXI

‘This bag is mine’.

The definite plurality marker can optionally be added, while the determinative affix always stays with the NP:

(108) *báálá-y nò-tì tēy-àà lè*
REF\sheep-DEF that-PL be.black-RES EXI

‘Those sheep are black’.

(2) Subject substitutor

Deictic pronouns function as subjects in existential clauses only.

(109) *nò kólí lè?*
that REF\panther EXI

‘Is that a panther?’

(110) *sì nè-làpà-y lè*
this 1SG.POSS-bag-DEF EXI

‘This is my bag’;

The anaphoric pronoun *má* ‘that’ can be added to the deictic pronoun in this function (see its usage in 6.14.2.2).

(111) *sì má làpà-y wóló-wàà lè*
this that bag-DEF grow-RES EXI

‘This is the big bag’ (lit. ‘the bag which has grown’).

(3) Relative clause pronominal marker

Several deictic pronouns serve to introduce the relative clause in complex sentences. The pronoun will be coreferential to the 3rd person object marker of the principal predicate:

(112) *sì è vâà-gò gà lá ()-kóló*
this 3SG.DEP come-AOR 1SG.IRR NEG 3SG.PF-know

‘The one who came, I do not know’;

(113) *nà ló è ()-ké-gò*
that COP 3SG.DEP 3SG.PF-do-AOR

‘That is what he did’.

The proximal pronoun *í* ‘this’ may also refer to an object further described in the relative clause. In case it denotes multiple objects or people, the definite plurality affix may be added:

(114) *í è vâà-gò, gà lá ()-kóló*
this 3SG.DEP come-AOR 1SG.IRR NEG 3SG.PF-know

‘This one who came, I do not know [him]’.

(115) *í-tì té vâà-gò bēgì tá lá yēdé-nì*
this-PL 3PL come-AOR yesterday 3PL.IRR NEG be.healthy-PRET

‘Those who came yesterday are sick’.

(4) Nominal predicate

Again, existential sentences allow deictic pronouns to form nominal predicates.

(116) *kūdíyì-y wà nò-tì*
REF\chief-DEF COP that-PL

‘The chiefs are these [people]’.

(5) Distal deictic pronouns *nà*, *nò* and *mùnò* can act as deictic adverbial modifiers with the set of locative meanings – allative, ablative and essive:

(117) *àmó li mùnò àmó (‘)-mé*
 1PL.INCL go there 1PL.INCL 3SG.PF-eat

‘Let’s go there to eat it’.

Deictic adverbs may be duplicated:

(118) *á lò ná mùnò nò?*
 3SG.FOC COP now there there

‘Is he there now?’

Proximal deictic pronoun cannot function in the adverbial position. Instead, the demonstrative adverbs described in 6.14.2.4 are used.

(6) Deictic pronouns can serve as the 3rd person markers in several syntactic contexts. The expansion of demonstrative pronouns to the expression of the category of person is not an uncommon diachronic process in the world’s languages. It is widely known that demonstratives are probably the most widespread source of the 3rd person pronouns. In the SWM languages, the third person pronouns must also be derived from older demonstratives: at least, the reconstructed forms **i* ‘he / she / it’ and **ti* ‘they’ [Babaev 2010] correspond well with some of the present-day deictic pronouns in the languages of the group: cf. Looma and Zialo *í* ‘this’ or Kpelle *tí* ‘that’, Looma *téy* ‘that’.

This correspondence between personal and demonstrative pronouns is more of a historical importance. Typologically, however, it seems very interesting that the modern deictic pronouns of Zialo are often used to replace the 3rd person pronouns in positions where the other SWM languages do not show anything of the kind.

The syntactic positions of person markers where this replacement takes place are the following.

- Subject personal pronouns

The 3rd person independent pronouns may be replaced by deictic items in the coordinative construction, see 6.6.4 above:

(17) *jà òò nò òò, né vâà-gò*
 1SG CONJ that CONJ 1PL.EXCL come-AOR

‘Me and him, we came’.

Demonstratives can be used instead of the independent pronouns in existential phrases as well.

(18) *gílá-gò nò lè*
 REF\one-DEF that EXI

‘It is only him’;

(19) *kũdíyì-y wà nò-tì*
 REF\chief-DEF COP that-PL

‘The chiefs are they’.

- Object personal pronouns

The distal deictic pronoun *nà* ‘that’ is used to indicate the 3rd person direct object of the verb.

(20) *é ná wòlò*
 3SG that hit

‘She hit her’.

Only human objects can be expressed this way. Parallels to this usage are encountered in both South-West and South Mande languages (e.g., Looma, cf. [Sadler 1949/2006]), but the Zialo language has made it a common and widely used construction.

- Possessive person markers

The pronominal possessor in Zialo is normally expressed by prefixed person markers of two series: for inalienable and alienable possessed nouns. A person mentioned in the previous discourse may be expressed by the deictic pronoun *nà* preceding the possessed noun. This construction is valid to express both alienable and inalienable possession:

- (21) *é nà wú-gì wòlò*
3SG that head-DEF hit

‘She hit her head’.

Only singular examples of this kind are found in my records.

6.14.2.2. *anaphoric / cataphoric pronouns*

Pronoun *má* ‘that, the above-mentioned’ refers to any object which was previously mentioned in the discussion, usually in the preceding sentence. Though playing a syntactic role of an attribute, it is always put in the preposition to the governing NP, as opposed to deictic pronouns described above:

- (119) *gè níká-y yéyá-gò, má níká-y lò gà*
1SG REF\cow-DEF buy-AOR that REF\cow-DEF COP with

níkábé-lá-gì

REF\heifer-DEF

‘I bought the cow, that cow is a heifer’;

- (120) *dópò-y tà vää-gò ì-yèlè-gì, má lòpò-y*
REF\child-DEF some come-AOR 2SG.PF-to-DEF that REF\child-DEF

nè-lò-y

1SG.POSS-son-DEF EXI

‘The child who came to your place is my son’.

In rare cases, *má* can function as a proform replacing the previously mentioned NP. With the ellipsis of the head noun, the anaphoric pronoun acquires a number of nominal characteristics, e.g., the ability to build postposition phrases:

- (121) *é bálí tánìgàà zílè-gò kpáálá-y zù, é má wólébele*
3SG REF\trap some put-AOR REF\field-DEF in 3SG that surround

gà tànìgàà-nì

with some-PL

‘He put some traps in the field, some around it’.

The same pronoun can play a cataphoric subject role addressing the coreferent NP or clause of a modal sentence:

- (122) *má lá néé-nì Kòlì và lì táá zù*
that NEG be.pleasant-PRET Koli come go REF\town in

‘Koli should not go to town’ (lit. ‘it is not good that Koli goes to town’).

Synonymous to *má*, pronoun *í* may play a role of an anaphor referring to the subsequent clause:

- (123) *í néé-yàà lè (˘)-bè nèyà gélè-y wò*
this be.pleasant-RES EXI 1SG.PF-for 2SG.COND REF\laughter-DEF do

‘It pleases me when you laugh’.

6.14.2.3. *deictic nouns*

As mentioned above, deictic pronouns are capable of word formation. They generate a special group of derivative deictic nouns with double syntactic nature: they may substitute NPs as pronouns, but possess all morphological categories of the noun. Deictic nouns formed by adding suffix *-nè* to any of the deictic pronouns refer to human objects only:

ínè, sìnè ‘this person’;

nònè, mùndònè, mùndànè ‘that person’.

Deictic nouns may attach nominal determinative and plural affixes:

- (124) *né yà ló kó-y zù nà sìnè-y*
 1PL.EXCL HAB COP REF\war-DEF in with this.person-DEF

‘We are at war with this guy’.

It is worth noting that *sìnè* is homonymous to the relative noun meaning ‘male’ and might be genetically related to it.

A similar group of nouns derived from deictic pronouns by adding suffix *-mání* refer to inanimate objects:

ímánì, sìmánì ‘this thing’;
nòmánì, mùndmánì ‘that thing’.

6.14.2.4. deictic adverbs

Some of the deictic pronouns which can be used in the locative adverbial position are listed in 6.14.2.1 above and are not repeated in this section.

Deictic adverbs express all the three locative meanings: direction (elative and allative) and location proper (essive).

- *vè* ‘here, hence, hither’¹⁵

- (125) *á vílá è vâ vè*
 3SG.IRR can 3SG.DEP come here

‘He can come here’;

- (126) *jà ló vè*
 1SG.FOC COP here

‘I am here’.

The same as the deictic pronouns, the locative adverb can be placed into the independent subject position in case the location is focalised by the speaker:

- (127) *vè báálá wólé-gì lè*
 here REF\sheep be.white-DEF EXI

‘Here is the white sheep’.

Cf. the usage of *vè* as a linker introducing relative clauses of location in 9.2.2 below.

- *nòvè* ‘there’

Created by a juxtaposition of two demonstratives: *nò* ‘that, there’ and *vè* ‘here’.

- (128) *é yé-nì nòvè bēgì?*
 3SG be-PRET there yesterday

‘Was he there yesterday?’

- *này* ‘there, thence, thither’

- (129) *gè lì-gò này*
 1SG go-AOR there

‘I went there’;

- (130) *á wó yé này*
 3SG.IRR PROSP be there

‘He will be there’;

- (131) *Kòlì vâà-gò này bēgì*
 Koli come-AOR there yesterday

‘Koli came from there yesterday’.

¹⁵ Lawolozu *bè*

6.14.2.5. *intensifiers*

Intensifiers are invariable adverbs of degree which modify a subject or object NP or a focalised personal pronoun. They always close the phrase:

- *kpálá(g)* ‘too, even’
- (132) *nè-diyà* *bálá, é* *bá-y* *yéyá-gò*
 1SG.POSS-elder.sibling too 3SG REF\rice-DEF buy-AOR
 ‘My brother too, he bought the rice’;

- *kpele* ‘here, exactly’
- (133) *jà* *bele* *wà*
 1SG.FOC here COP
 ‘Here I am’.

- *nò(g)* ‘only’
- (134) *dó* *fèlè-gò* *nò* *gèyà*
 son two-DEF only 1SG.CNTR
 ‘I have only two sons’;

- *tètèlè(g)* ‘only, exactly’
- (135) *pélé-y* *lò* *gà* *páláválá* *lètèlè*
 REF\road-DEF COP with REF\mud exactly
 ‘The road is certainly muddy’.

In the last example, *tètèlè(g)* does not modify the clause but refers to the noun *páláválá* ‘mud’ exclusively.

6.15. Discourse function markers

Zialo uses a variety of grammatical means of focalising the needed information in the sentence. In most cases, this is done by moving the focalised NP or pronoun leftwards to the very beginning of the sentence. No syntactic separator is needed to isolate the pronouns of the focalised or emphatic series, or focalised NPs containing a single noun:

- (136) *nè-zòvààlè-gì,* *jówó-gì* *néé-yàà* *lè* *(-)-bè*
 1SG.POSS-horse-DEF REF\cassava-DEF be.pleasant-RES EXI 3SG.PF-for
 ‘My donkey likes cassava’ (lit. ‘[For] my donkey, cassava is good for it’).

See the usage of focalised and emphatic personal pronouns in 7.1 below.

Habitually, however, the focus is separated from the subsequent topic by a copula verb (see focus copulative constructions in 8.12.4.4 below) or one of the markers listed in this section.

6.15.1. *Focus marker ya*

Focalised subject NPs can be modified by the clitic marker *ya*. Note that this marker has a variety of meanings in Zialo (it may express habitual or simultaneous action), but these latter may well be homonyms.

- (137) *má* *lá* *néé-nì* *Kòlì* *yà* *lì* *táá* *zù,* *gà*
 that NEG be.pleasant-PRET Koli FOC go REF\town in 1SG.IRR
wò *lì*
 PROSP go
 ‘Koli should not go to town, I will’;

The same marker is used to put extra emphasis on focalised pronouns:

- (138) *jà* *yá,* *nã á* *ÿì*
 1SG.FOC EMPH 1SG.IPFV sleep
 ‘I [not you], I am sleeping’.

6.15.2. *Topic marker bá*

The topic may be emphasised by placing *bá* after a NP or a pronoun of the focalised series. It may also follow a copula separating the topic from the main clause:

- (139) *nè-diyà* *lò bá é vâ gúlè-y* *lò*
 1SG.POSS-elder.sibling COP TOP 3SG come REF\song-DEF sing

‘As for my elder sister, she is singing a song’;

- (140) *gè bálè, Kòlì wá, é lélébò*
 1SG work Koli TOP 3SG rest

‘I am working, and as for Koli, he is having rest’.

6.15.3. *Topic marker dóbá*

The postpositive marker *dóbá* is used primarily in the narrative speech, topicalising the subject or the object NP of the sentence. *Dóbá* does not lenite, always preserving its “strong” initial consonant:

- (141) *kó-y* *dóbá é wu né-wà*
 REF\war-DEF TOP 3SG put 1PL.EXCL-on

‘The war broke among us’;

- (142) *gílè-y* *dóbá é zíyá kóówò-y* *nà wà*
 REF\dog-DEF TOP 3SG walk REF\trunk-DEF that on

‘[As for] the dog, it walked on the tree trunk’.

6.15.4. *Emphatic morpheme gélé*

This discourse morpheme usually follows NPs or personal pronouns of the focalised series to emphasise the participant:

- (143) *nì Kòlì lá vá mà, jà yélé gà vâ*
 if Koli NEG come IPFV 1SG.FOC EMPH 1SG.IRR come

‘If Koli is not coming, I will come’.

6.16. Postpositives

6.16.1. *General remarks*

Postpositives in Zialo are a special class of lexemes forming indirect object phrases modified by NPs and pronominal markers of the polyfunctional series. They express a variety of locative meanings and semantic roles.

Diachronically, their genesis from nouns (mostly relative nouns) is of no doubt and is traced back in a great lot of Mande languages of the region. Most of postpositives in Zialo have originated from nouns denoting body parts and locations: *dà* ‘mouth’, **mà* ‘surface’, *pòlù* ‘back’, *kàmà* ‘back of shoulders’, etc.

Some of them are originally nominal compounds:

fáwà ‘during’ < *fá* ‘thing’ + *mà* ‘on’;

mááwèlè ‘because of’ < *mà* ‘on’ + *pélé* ‘road; by means of’ (note that *máá-* is a high-tone morpheme when prefixed).

Synchronically, however, there is a complicated issue of defining the categorial status of postpositives: whether they should actually be treated as nouns (sometimes called, not quite correctly, “locative nouns”) or postpositions.

From the first glance, postpositives demonstrate some nominal characteristics: for instance, they are modified by person markers of the polyfunctional series when referring to a pronominal object:

- (144) *é wólò né-wà*
 3SG be.big 1PL.EXCL.PF-PP
 ‘He is bigger than us (excl.)’.

What is different between “true” postpositions and postpositive nouns, is the level of grammaticalisation of the formerly independent nouns into invariable auxiliary morphemes. The differentiating signs here cannot be any strict because most postpositive nouns are currently undergoing the process of gradual transformation into postpositions. Therefore, the syntactic boundary between the two classes seems quite flexible. One of the criteria is the ability of postpositive modifiers to acquire the nominal morphological category markers, but this can also vary, cf. two examples with the same translation:

- (145a) *wóté wátí-y zù gè òdòlò-nì nè-lò-y yèlè*
 class time-DEF in 1SG talk-PRET 1SG.POSS-son-DEF towards
 (145b) *wóté wátí-y zù gè òdòlò-nì nè-lò yèlè-gì*
 class time-DEF in 1SG talk-PRET 1SG.POSS-son towards-DEF

‘During the lesson, I talked with my son’.

The determinative affix of the final phrase may be placed on the noun *dò* ‘son’ – and in this case we are dealing with a postposition phrase, where *gèlè(g)* is an invariable auxiliary – or on *gèlè(g)* ‘towards’ – and if so, the combination is a clear NP, more precisely a genitive syntagma.

Such a dual nature is applied to a limited number of postpositives though. Most of them are consistently able or unable to act as nouns, so the boundary between postpositions and postpositive nouns can be drawn. The following subsections describe the two categories separately.

Another classificatory attribute is semantics. Postpositions and postpositive nouns can denote argument roles (directive, benefactive, causal) or serve to localise the action or state (relative, inessive, subessive etc.). According to this criteria, they may be divided into role postpositives and location postpositives. The semantic classification, though more straightforward than the syntactic one, is not convenient for the present description, since the same postposition may express a variety of both role and location meanings. Therefore, I am following the syntactic classification according to the criteria listed in the subsections below. Semantic roles of each postpositive are briefly described in the list below.

Syntactically, both postpositive nouns and postpositions always occupy the indirect object position in the sentence, following the predicate:

- (146) *mó lí-yà lākólì-y zù*
 1DU go-RES school-DEF in

‘We have left for school’.

In case the focus is made on the indirect object, it is transmitted to the subject position, while the postposition acquires a recapitulative person marker of the polyfunctional series coreferential to the noun:

- (147) *pélè-y gè yè-nì ()-bú Māsàdà é wǔ-gò*
 REF\house-DEF 1SG be-PRET 3SG.PF-under Macenta 3SG burn-AOR

‘The house I lived in Macenta burned down’.

It should be noted that toponyms are the only group of nouns which do not require any postpositive when direction or location are expressed:

- (148) *jà ló Māsàdà*
 1SG.FOC COP Macenta

‘I am in Macenta’;

- (149) *gè lì-gò Māsàdà*
 1SG go-AOR Macenta

‘I went to Macenta’;

- (150) *sótá-gì-tì* *tátá* *gúlá* *Màsàdà*
 REF\foreigner-DEF-PL 3PL.IPFV return Macenta
 ‘The foreigners return from Macenta’.

The tonal behaviour of postpositive items can be briefly described according to the following rules:

(1) Most of them (but not all) have low lexical tone.

(2) The tone of the postposition is usually influenced by the prefixed polyfunctional person marker: 1sg. *bà* ‘to me’, but 3sg. *bá* ‘to him’. In case the monosyllabic postposition finishes the sentence, the Final Lowering rule may eliminate its high tone:

- (151) *()-kòòzà* *lè* *()-bà*
 1SG.PF-long EXI 3SG.PF-than

‘I am taller than him’.

(3) The tone of the postposition is not influenced by the modifying noun.

6.16.2. Postpositive nouns

Postpositive nouns have not lost their connection to the nominal class. This group of nouns demonstrates two distinct nominal characteristics:

(1) They are still used as autonomous nouns and may form a full NP:

- (152) *()-pòlù-y* *lá* *yědé-nì*
 1SG.PF-back-DEF NEG be.healthy-PRET

‘My back is not healthy’;

- (153) *Nè-kééyè* *lò* *()-pòlù-y*
 1SG.POSS-father COP 1SG.PF-behind-DEF

‘My father is behind me’.

(2) They may attach determinative affixes and therefore act as the second noun in a genitive NP:

- (154) *lòvè* *nè-yilà* *lùwò-y*
 pass 1SG.POSS-dog before-DEF

‘Pass before my dog’.

The most common postpositive nouns are listed below.

- *bù* ‘under, inside’

The original meaning is obviously ‘lower or bottom part’ (cf. Bandi *mbu-ha* ‘impotent’, literally ‘bottom-dead’) though this noun is no longer used independently in Zialo. As a postpositive, it expresses direction or location to or from underneath a plain surface, thus expressing the subessive meaning. With the word *pèlè* ‘house’ and a few other words denoting buildings its meanings are inessive and illative: the house is understood as the roof under which a person is moving or staying. With the word *já* ‘water’ and other nouns denoting liquids *bù* means ‘in, into’.

- (155) *á* *lò* *()-bú-y*
 3SG.FOC COP 3SG.PF-under-DEF

‘He is under it’;

- (156) *pélè-y* *è* *lè-gò* *()-bú,* *nè-vèlè-y*
 REF\house-DEF 3SG.DEP enter-AOR 3SG.POSS-under 1SG.POSS-house-DEF

lè

EXI

‘The house he entered is mine’;

- (157) *súkálá-y* *vélé-yà* *jé-y* *wù*
 REF\sugar-DEF dissolve-RES REF\water-DEF under

‘The sugar has dissolved in the water’.

- *dá, dé-y* ‘for, for the sake of’

Noun *dá* originally means ‘property’ and is used in constructions denoting possession (see 6.10.4 above for details):

(158) *sévébákù-y sì nè-dé-y lè*
REF\pen-DEF this 1SG.POSS-property-DEF EXI

‘This pen is mine’.

Modifying an argument of a dynamic verb, its role is exclusively benefactive: the action is performed in the direct interest of someone:

(159) *Kòlì ló Màsà bàlè gà gé-dé-y*
Koli 3SG.IPFV Masa work with 3SG.POSS-for-DEF

‘Koli makes Masa work for him’.

Again, note that *dá* is immune to initial consonant alternation.

- *dà* ‘near, next to, at, past’

Whether a cognate with the nominal derivational affix *-dà* ‘place’ or the noun *dà* ‘mouth’, this locative postpositive may also be related to the verb *dà* ‘put, lie’. The basic meaning of the postpositive noun is ‘vicinity’. It may be used with existential, stative and dynamic verbs, denoting praeterlative (‘past’) and adessive / apudessive (‘at, near’) meanings:

(160) *síyě-gì è gé-gélé-gì gílì-gò vè, álò*
REF\man-DEF 3SG.DEF 3SG.POSS-boat-DEF bind-AOR here 3SG.IPFV

bàlè mélé là-y
work mayor at-DEF

‘The man whose boat is bound here is working in the townhall’;

(161) *nã g, lòvè pélé là-y*
1SG.IPFV pass REF\house past-DEF

‘I pass the house’.

The compound noun *pèlèlà* also means ‘door, entrance’, lit. ‘mouth of a house’.

- *dàwù* ‘during’, ‘in front of’

Postpositive noun *dàwù* is probably a contamination of two: *dà* ‘in the vicinity’ and noun *bù* ‘bottom, under’. In the sentences denoting time, it expresses the period of the action which is ongoing or, in most cases, has already finished (‘during, for the period of’). In locative phrases, it was only found in antessive phrases (‘in front of smb / smth’):

(162) *gè bàlè-gò vè kóná fèlè-gò làwù*
1SG work-AOR here REF\year two-DEF during

‘I worked there for two years’;

(163) *nà ló lò-ni (‘)-dàwù*
1SG.FOC COP stand-PRET 3SG.PF-in.front

‘I am standing in front of him’.

- *díwá, díwázù* ‘among, between, in the middle of’

Intrative meanings (‘between, among’) are expressed by this noun which has the original semantics ‘middle, centre’. Multiple objects serve as its arguments, and they can be both human or inanimate. In location phrases, its primary meaning is not modified (‘in the middle, in the centre’). The origin of this noun is most probably knit with the lexeme *dì* ‘heart’, used also in the meaning ‘center’, with the suffixed postposition *bà*.

(164) *á ló tá-y líwá*
3SG.FOC COP village-DEF between

‘He is in the middle of the village’;

(165) *nà ló nè-bòlà-y-tí díwá*
1SG.FOC COP 1SG.POSS-friend-DEF-PL between

‘I am among my friends’.

In a few examples at my disposal, the meaning ‘between, among’ is expressed by a postpositive noun *dòwázù* which should be considered as identical in meaning with *díwázù*:

(166) *yà* *ɔ̀* *nò* *ɔ̀* *wò-lòwàzù*
 2SG.FOC CONJ that CONJ 2PL.PF-between
 ‘Between you and him’.

Both postpositive nouns have cognates in Bandi: *ndowáhu* and *ndiiwáhu*, respectively [Grossmann & al. 1991: 71-72].

- *fáwã* ‘during’

Indicates the period of time of the action or state which are still actual. Most probably, this noun originates from the combination of noun *fá* ‘matter, thing’ and postposition *mà* ‘on’.

(167) *jà* *lɔ́* *vè* *dɔ́wɔ̀-y* *yíla fáwã*
 1SG COP here REF\week-DEF one during
 ‘I am here for one week’.

- *gèlè(g)* ‘at (smb’s place), towards’:

Noun *gèlè(g)* originally had the primary meaning ‘place’ (cf. this meaning in Bandi *ngele* [Grossmann & al. 1991: 78]). It introduces a person towards or inside whose location / residence the action is being directed. Therefore, the spectrum of its meanings includes lative (‘to, towards smb’s place’) and essive (‘at smb’s place’). Several verbs govern this postpositive noun with the meaning of interaction with a person or addressing it:

(168) *á* *và* *vè*, *wòyà* *lò* *wò-yèlè-gì*
 2PL.IMP come here 2PL.FOC COP 2PL.PF-at-DEF
 ‘Come (pl.) here, you are at home’;

(169) *á* *lí* *yá* *và* *yena* (‘)-*gèlè-gì*
 3SG.IRR NEG HAB come rarely 1SG.PF-to-DEF
 ‘He rarely comes to my place’;

(170) *Kòli* *lɔ́* *ɓ̀d̀d̀lò* *ɲázà-y* *yèlè è* *vè* *káví*
 Koli 3SG.IPFV speak REF\woman-DEF to 3SG.DEP here long
 ‘Koli is speaking with a woman who lives here for long’.

- *kákàlá* ‘beside, in front of’

This locative postpositive noun indicates adessive and antessive meanings: the action or state taking place near or in front of a large inanimate object. It is originally a combination of *káká* ‘side’ and *dà* ‘place, at’:

(171) *gè* (‘)-*tɔ̀-nì* *pélé* *yàkàlá-y*
 1SG 3SG.PF-see-PRET REF\house in.front-DEF
 ‘I saw him in front of the house’.

- *kákawã(g)* ‘beside, near’

Another combination of *káká* ‘side’, this time with an unclear noun (actually, *bã(g)* means ‘fruit’ and ‘to produce’). The primary meaning is adessive / apudessive, modifying a noun denoting a large solid inanimate object (e.g., a building):

(172) *jà* *lɔ́* *nè-vèlè* *yàkawã-gì*
 1SG.FOC COP 1SG.PF-house beside-DEF
 ‘I am beside my house’.

- *kpèlà* ‘next to, beside’

Among a few adessive postpositives, *kpèlà* is used most frequently. It can form NPs with both human and non-human nouns, and the adessive meaning is the only one: the action takes place near someone or something. The original meaning is ‘side’: cf. its usage in the compound noun *jábèlà* ‘river bank’.

(173) *wĩ-gì* *sì* *góbú* *bélà-y* *lè*
 Frenchman-DEF this REF\fire near-DEF EXI
 ‘This Frenchman is near the fire’;

(174) *dó-y* *jé-y* *gé-ló-y* *zéy-gò* *ɓ̀d̀ỳd̀* *bélà*
 REF\son-DEF REF\mother-DEF 3SG.POSS-son-DEF sit-AOR REFL near

‘The mother seated her child next to herself’.

- *máávélè(g)* ‘for, for the sake of’

This postpositive noun is a combination of the locative postposition *mà* ‘on, upon’ and instrumental *pélé* ‘by means of’. The primary meaning is benefactive, introducing a participant of the action in whose interest this action is performed by someone else.

(175) *nā ġ yìsiyà ṅázà-y zù yè gúlè-y lò-gò*
 1SG.IPFV think REF\woman-DEF PP 2SG REF\song-DEF sing-AOR

gà ()-máávélé

with 3SG.PF-for

‘I am thinking about the woman you sang for’.

It may also be used in existential phrases:

(176) *ṅà ló vé gà ì-ṽààvélé*
 1SG.FOC COP here with 2SG.PF-for

‘I am here for the sake of you’.

Note that the ability to participate in a prepositional construction seen in the last example is also a criterium for distinguishing nouns from postpositions.

- *pélé / pélé(g)* ‘by means of’

The difference between genetically related *pélé* ‘road’ (*y*-noun) and *pélé(g)* ‘way, method’ (*gi*-noun) is semantic: the latter is an abstract noun. In a few cases, my informants replaced *pélé(g)* by *pélé* with no change in meaning. Being a postpositive noun, *pélé(g)* denotes the trajectory or, more generally, the method of the action:

(177) *inā-gì-tì táta yà wòlà né-vélé-y*
 mouse-DEF-PL 3PL.IPFV HAB penetrate 1PL.EXCL.POSS-house-DEF

wù gà pélé là vélé-y nãbò dówà-y zù
 under with REF\house mouth by.means-DEF CONJ REF\hole-DEF in

vélé wà

by.means CONJ

‘The mice penetrate into our house through the door and the holes’.

In this example, *pélé* can be equally treated as an element of compound postpositions *dàvélè* and *zùvélè(g)*. *Pélé(g)* is easily added to other postpositives to create different meanings, see *máávélè* above or *pòlùvélè* below. But note the position of the determinative affix in both phrases:

pélé là vélé-y ‘through the door’, but

dówà-y zù vélé ‘through the hole’.

The former phrase should be treated as a genitive NP consisting of the noun *pèlèlà* ‘door, entrance’ and the postpositive noun *vélé* ‘by means of’. The latter one has two interpretations: a double postposition phrase, or a compound postposition *zùvélè*. Since the double postpositions are quite uncommon for either Zialo or the languages of the region, the second decision is preferable.

- *pòlù* ‘behind’

A purely locative postpositive noun originally meaning ‘back’. It marks the action or state taking place behind or at the rear part of someone or something, as well as the direction backwards.

Nearly the same meanings are expressed by the compound postpositive noun *pòlùvélè* ‘behind’. The only semantic difference from *pòlù* is in expressing the whole area behind something or someone:

(178) *gè kóví-y ló ()-pòlù-y*
 1SG REF\yard-DEF see 1SG.PF-behind-DEF

‘I see the yard behind me’;

- (179) *gè báálá-y tà lè-gò táá wòlùvèlè-y*
 1SG REF\sheep-DEF some see-AOR village behind-DEF
 ‘I saw some sheep [somewhere] behind the village’.

- *pòwà* ‘next to’

Used exclusively with inanimate objects, this noun expresses the adessive meaning:

- (180) *gùlì-y lè pélé wòwà-y*
 REF\tree-DEF COP REF\house near-DEF
 ‘The tree is next to the house’.

- *tùwò* ‘before, in front of’

This postpositive noun can express both temporal precedence or location in front of someone or something:

- (181) *lèvè ()-tùwò-y*
 pass 1SG.PF-before-DEF
 ‘Pass before me’.

6.16.3. Postpositions

The second group of postpositive morphemes consists of items which have already lost the status of autonomous nouns and cannot act as a subject NP or even constitute an integral part of it. As shown above, NPs act as a single phrasal unit adopting determinative or plural markers, while postpositions cannot be marked by either of them. These clitic morphemes mostly denoting locative, directive and benefactive meanings will be called postpositions:

- lákólì-y zù* ‘to school’;
nè-bòlà-y-tì yà ‘to my friends’.

The most common postpositions of Zialo are listed below, with some brief descriptions:

- *bà* ‘to, towards; because of’

Postposition *bà* encompasses a variety of meanings depending on the predicate controlling it. Its primary semantics must be directive: with a number of verbs of motion, it marks physical approach or direction towards an object or a person:

- (182) *é wáábùlù-gò ()-bà*
 3SG approach-AOR 1SG.PF-to
 ‘He approached me’;

- (183) *nèyà nález-y vili dówólè-y wà*
 2SG.COND REF\cat-DEF throw REF\ground-DEF to
 ‘If you throw the cat to the ground...’

Another, but a close meaning is that of purpose of action, quite frequent with motion verbs:

- (184) *nè-kééyè liè-gò dósó-y wà*
 1SG.POSS-father go-AOR REF\hunt-DEF to
 ‘My father went hunting’.

However, besides the physical direction or purpose, *bà* can mark a few semantic roles which cannot be referred to as directive. One of them is the cause of action or state, which may refer to both human and non-human objects:

- (185) *ì-và ló gè vàà-gò vè*
 2SG.PF-because COP 1SG come-AOR here
 ‘I came here because of you’.

In phrases of comparison, *bà* is the postposition equal in meaning to the English conjunction ‘than’:

- (186) *()-kóózà lè ()-bà*
 3SG.PF-long EXI 1SG.PF-than
 ‘He is taller than me’.

- *bè* ‘for’

The primary meaning of this postposition is benefactive: the action is performed in the interest of some person:

(187) *dótóló vǎdá ló gè và ()-kólí dópó-wà-y-tì bè*
 doctor good COP 1SG come 3SG.PF-search REF\child-PL-DEF-PL for
 ‘I am looking for a good pediatrician’.

In rare cases the semantic field of *bè* expands to the recipient role where it competes with *yà*:

(188) *dápá bíízí tó yà, gè yà ()-pó*
 REF\bag be.numerous COP 2SG.CNTR 1SG JNT 3SG.PF-want

yè gílá fě ()-bè / gèyà
 2SG one give 1SG.PF-to / 1SG.CNTR

‘You’ve got many bags, I want you to give me one’.

Another domain where these two postpositions concur is the possessive semantics: *bè* marks mental abilities of human beings, e.g.:

(189) *kí pǎdà-y lò ()-bè / gèyà*
 REF\memory good-DEF COP 1SG.PF-to / 1SG.CNTR

‘I have good memory’.

- *dá / lá* ‘with him, it’

This postposition represents a fusion between a person marker of the 3sg. and a semantic role marker. It replaces the 3sg. pronoun of the comitative series in most contexts. Despite its most frequent appearance in the “weak” form of initial alternations (*lá*), the “strong” one (*dá*) is occasionally found as well, cf. the idiomatic expression *dá dá* ‘agree’ in the example below:

(190) *àní yà lá lá-nì ()-dá, ì-lò-y*
 though 2SG.IRR NEG lie-PRET 3SG.PF-with 2SG.POSS-son-DEF

á wó lí kpáálá-y zù
 3SG.IRR PROSP go REF\field-DEF in

‘Even though you do not agree with it, your son will go to the field’.

- *gà* ‘on the surface’

This rarely met postposition with the superessive meaning governs nouns denoting water surfaces:

(191) *ání-y nò è jé-y yà nè-wòòlò-y lé*
 thing-DEF that 3SG.DEP REF\water-DEF on 1SG.POSS-hat-DEF EXI

‘The thing that is floating along the river is my hat’.

- *gèlè* ‘about’

Used mostly with verbs of speech and sensual perception, such as ‘hear’ or ‘read’:

(192) *je-y gè và bòòlò gèlè, á lò nàý*
 REF\water-DEF 1SG come speak about 3SG COP there

‘The river I am speaking about is there’.

Alternatively, it may express the addressee meaning:

(193) *álò yà và gà fábówò-y dópó-wà-y-ti gèlè*
 3SG.IPFV HAB come with REF\gift-DEF REF\child-PL-DEF-PL to

‘He usually brings gifts to the children’.

- *kóózù* ‘inside’

Literally meaning ‘in the belly’ (*kóó* ‘belly, stomach’) this compound postposition is rarely used and serves to emphasise that the action is directed inside a volumetric object:

(194) *pánǔ-gì-tì tó zéy-nì bò wòòzù*
 REF\basket-DEF-PL COP sit-PRET REFL inside

‘The baskets are put one into the other’.

- *kòmà* ‘astride’

This superessive postposition is used with volumetric objects on which one can sit or hang something. The original noun’s meaning is ‘back of the shoulders’, a cognate is found in Bandi [Grossmann & al. 1991: 46].

(195) *nú-y lò lî só-y wòmà*
 REF\person-DEF 3SG.IPFV go REF\horse-DEF astride

‘The man is riding the horse’;

(196) *nú lí yà zéy dápá-y wòmà*
 person NEG HAB sit REF\bag-DEF astride

‘One should not sit on the bag’.

- *kolēbele* ‘around’

A postposition with a narrow usage, originating from the verb ‘turn (around)’:

(197) *é bálí tànìgàà zìlè-gò kpáálá-y wólēbele*
 3SG REF\trap some descend-AOR REF\field-DEF around

‘He put some traps around the field’.

- *mà* ‘on, upon’

The autonomous noun *ma* ‘place, surface’ is a widespread root across Western Mande. In Zialo, *mà* is not used autonomously, but only as a postposition with superessive and superlative meanings: the action or state takes place upon a flat surface of a horizontally or vertically placed object:

(198) *gúlò-y wú-yà dówólò-y w̃à*
 REF\oil-DEF pour-RES REF\ground-DEF on

‘The oil has melted on the ground’.

General location at some place where the action is performed might also be expressed by this postposition:

(199) *nũ bólóbóló gé w̃é-gò fétí-y w̃à*
 REF\person many 3SG meet-AOR REF\festivity-DEF on

‘Many people gathered at the festivity’.

Other cases of its usage are numerous, e.g. expressing aspects of physical state of the human organism:

(200) *dólé-y lò (˘)-mà*
 REF\hunger-DEF COP 1SG.PF-on

‘I am hungry’ (lit. ‘hunger is on me’).

- *máázù* ‘on, over’

A possible extension of postposition *mà* ‘on’ is *máázù* which has a generalised meaning ‘in the upper part, in the area above something’. It is mostly used in locative phrases and in compound numerals:

púú máázù fèlè ‘twelve’ (lit. ‘two over ten’).

- *sù* ‘in, into, inside, according to’

Basic inessive and illative meanings are expressed by this quite common postposition which might govern almost any kinds of nouns, including those denoting buildings, large and small volumetric objects, geographic locations and flat surfaces (such as ‘bed’, ‘road’ etc.):

(201) *gè wò lî dóbó-y zù lìnà*
 1SG PROSP go REF\bush-DEF in tomorrow

‘I will go to the bush tomorrow’;

(202) *nã á lî pélé-y zù*
 1SG go REF\road-DEF in

‘I am going down the road’.

A number of common verbs govern this postposition, e.g. *gìsiyà sù* ‘think about’. See other ways of using this postposition in the verbal system in Chapter 8 (section 8.7) below.

- *tètèmà* ‘for’

The original lexeme on which this compound postposition is based is not witnessed in Zialo but has a cognate in Bandi *tete* ‘point finger at smb / smth’ [Grossmann & al. 1991: 99]. In Zialo, this postposition marks the semantic role of experiencer:

(203) *lòdṵwã gó-y vã-gò lè Dàliyà lètèmà*
 Looma language-DEF be.good-NMLZ EXI Darya for

‘The Looma language is interesting for Darya’.

- *válàbà* ‘without’

Absence or lack of any physical object is expressed by this postposition:

(204) *gè yà li dápá válàbà*
 1SG HAB go REF\bag without

‘I go without the bag’.

Note that nouns preceding *válàbà* do not add the determinative marker, the same as in negative sentences.

- *yà* ‘at, in possession, to’

This polyvalent postposition is used to mark possession. It contracts with person markers to build the special set of personal pronouns (see 7.1.5) but does not merge with NPs:

(205) *kólá vãdà-y lò nè-kééyè yà*
 REF\clothes nice-DEF COP 1SG.POSS-father at

‘My father has nice clothes’.

Otherwise, this postposition introduces a recipient or addressee towards whom the action is directed. The most common usage is the recipient role with the verb *fè* ‘give’:

(206) *méyã-gì vè Kòli yà*
 REF\banana-DEF give Koli to

‘Give Koli the banana’.

Besides marking these two semantic roles, *yà* acts as a locative (more exactly, essive) marker denoting space limited by the object:

(207) *wõní-y sì gùlì-y yà*
 bird-DEF this REF\tree-DEF in

‘This bird is on the tree’ (i.e. in the space of the tree, in its crown);

(208) *kólá-y-tì tátá wè fólò-y yà*
 REF\clothes-DEF-PL 3PL.IPFV dry REF\sun-DEF in

‘The clothes are drying in the sun’.

The survey of postpositives presented in this section is by no means exhaustive, covering only the basic meanings with a bulk of examples. The functioning of postpositive nouns and postpositions in Zialo deserves a specific attention, and a closer look at their semantics will hopefully be the subject of one of my future works.

6.17. Prepositions

Apart from postpositives, a noun or a NP can attach a number of preposited clitic morphemes. Most of them express associative, comitative and instrumental meanings.

Preposition *gà(g)* precedes a NP and has multiple meanings. Governed by a verb of motion or existence it usually expresses the comitative meaning:

(209) *té vâà-gò gà nú púú-gò*
 3PL come-AOR with REF\person ten-DEF

‘They came with ten people’.

It may also mark the constructions of identification denoting that an object or a person belongs to a larger group of similar items:

(210) *pélé-y sì ló gà pélé gùlò-y*

REF\house-DEF this COP with REF\house small-DEF
 ‘This house is a small house’ (i.e. it belongs to a category of small houses);

(211) *nè-diyà* *yé-yà* *gà* *kūdíyì-y*
 1SG.POSS-elder.sibling be-RES with chief-DEF

‘My elder brother has become the chief’ (i.e. he became a member of the social class of chiefs).

Another common usage of *gà(g)* is transforming adjectives into adverbs of mannerv complementing a VP:

(212) *é* *yà* *bóyí-gì-tì* *zúgúlá* *gà* *pãdà*
 3SG HAB tale-DEF-PL tell with good

‘He tells stories well’.

Preposition *gà(g)* is used with personal pronouns of the comitative series (see 7.1.4), except for the 3sg. which requires a special fused form *lá* expressing both the person / number and the comitative meanings:

(213) *gè* *vàà-gò* *lá* *pélé-y* *wù*
 1SG come-AOR with.3SG REF\house-DEF under

‘I came with him to my house’.

See more about *lá* in the preceding section of this paper.

The major semantic difference between *gà(g)* and two other comitative prepositions, *ná* and *wà*, is that the latter ones are only used with human objects and have a single comitative meaning, when two participants of the action are equal, cf.:

gè *vàà-gò* *gà* *Kòlì* ‘I brought Koli’, but

gè *vàà-gò* *ná* *Kòlì* ‘I came together with Koli’.

More examples follow:

(214) *nã á* *lì* *ná* *nú-y* *sì* *gè* *wẽ-gò* *(-)-má*
 1SG.IPFV go with REF\person-DEF this 1SG meet-AOR 3SG.PF-PP

pélé-y *zù*
 REF\road-DEF in

‘I am going with this person whom I met on the way’.

(215) *á* *lì* *wà* *Kòlì*
 2PL.IMP go with Koli

‘Go (pl.) with Koli’.

No semantic difference between *ná* and *wà* is identified.

Other common prepositions include:

- *ánísá* / *áysá*, *sání* ‘before, ago’

A possible calque from French (cf. French *avant dix minutes* ‘ten minutes ago’) the construction with preposition *sání* / *ánísá* is used exclusively to denote temporal antecedence of the action to the moment of the speech. Normally, *sání* is a conjunction introducing temporal clauses (see 9.2.4.2 below).

(216) *é* *lí-gò* *sání* *mìnìtì* *púú-gò*
 3SG go-AOR before minute ten-DEF

‘He left ten minutes ago’.

The variant *áysá* is most probably a loanword from Looma *aisa* [Prost 1967: 111] rather than an intervocal reduction which would be quite untypical for Zialo. All the three variants of this preposition are mostly used in NPs modified by numerals:

(217) *é* *yé-nì* *mùndò* *áysá* *kóná* *púú*
 3SG be-PRET there before REF\year ten

‘He was there ten years ago’.

- *kéndò* ‘except’

This compound preposition (most probably related to the verb *ké* ‘do’) can precede nouns or focalised pronouns forming a separate NP or pronoun phrase at the left-hand edge of the sentence:

- (218) *kénò* *Kòlì*, *nú-y-tì* *kpě* *té* *lí-gò*
except 1SG.FOC REF\person-DEF-PL all 3PL go-AOR
‘Except Koli, everyone left’.

7. Pronominal system

7.1. Personal pronouns

7.1.1. General remarks

The problem of categorial definition of various kinds of person markers in Mande languages has deserved much attention in the literature. Formerly, all person markers, whether independent, predicative or possessive, were habitually treated as personal pronouns of different series. This traditional approach would treat all the following (underlined> Zialo person markers as pronouns:

- [1] tíyá lè Màsàdà ‘they are in Macenta’;
- [2] té lí Màsàdà ‘that they go to Macenta’;
- [3] tá lí Màsàdà ‘they will go to Macenta’;
- [4] tátá lí Màsàdà ‘they are leaving for Macenta’;
- [5] tí-lápá-y ‘their bag’;
- [6] nāgá tí-lè ‘I see them’.

Despite their functional uniformity – all of them express person / number meanings – there is a number of syntactic criteria which create a strict counteropposition between the person markers in these six examples.

First, the degree of autonomy of person markers is different. The pronoun in example [1] is fully autonomous:

- (219) *bè* *vàà-gò?* *Tíyá* *lè*
 who come-AOR 3PL.FOC EXI

‘Who came? They did.’

Pronouns of this series are independent enough to build clauses substituting a subject NP or filling the subject valency of the verb.

As opposed to personal pronouns, person markers of [2], [3] and [4] are not autonomous in the sentence. They always accompany the predicate, expressing the person / number meanings of the subject of the clause. They are not separable from the verb phrase: a direct object and predicative modifiers are the only elements that may be inserted between these person markers and the predicate.

- (220) *té* *pélè-y* *lè*
 3PL REF\house-DEF see

‘They see the house’.

These person markers cannot be used separately from the predicate and do not constitute a separate utterance. They cannot form existential clauses either. Typologically, such morphemes are usually compared to the French subject markers: the word *je* ‘I’ can only be used in a clause: *Je vois la maison* ‘I see the house’, but cannot form phrases *per se*: *Qui voit la maison?* **Je*. ‘Who sees the house?’ **I*. Instead, a pronoun of a different series should be used: *Qui voit la maison? Moi* ‘Who sees the house? Me’.

The Zialo person markers of examples [2] to [4] can thus be named predicative person markers (PPMs).

There is a big difference in the inventory of meanings expressed by personal pronouns and the PPMs. The pronoun in example [1] only expresses nominal categories, namely those of person and number. Person markers in (2) to (4) incorporate a number of grammatical categories of the verb in addition to the categories of person and number: they express tense / aspect, polarity and modality while the verb may stay in the same root form:

- (221) *gèy* *và* *kóví-y* *zù*
 1SG.PRNEG come REF\yard-DEF in

‘I will not go home’.

Here, the PPM *gèy* is expressing a cluster of the following meanings: 1st person, singular number, prospective aspect, negative polarity. The verb form *pà* ‘come’ is not modified at all. This difference between personal pronouns and PPMs shows that the latter should be treated as a part of the verbal system rather than the pronominal one.

Another syntactic property of PPMs is their inability to substitute the subject of the clause. In case the subject is expressed by a NP, the 3rd person PPM is obligatory in the same clause¹⁶:

(222) *nú-y-tì* *tátá* *li* *Màsàdà*
REF\person-DEF-PL 3PL.IPFV go Macenta

‘The people [they] are going to Macenta’.

The PPM that follows the subject NP marking the same actant of the predicate is usually called the duplicating, copy, or recapitulative person marker. It does not replace the subject as proper pronouns can do, but repeats it. The 1st and 2nd person subjects may be expressed by the PPMs, but their syntactic status is not equal to the “true” subject. This can be seen, for example, in a serialised construction, where each finite verb must be accompanied by an obligatory PPM:

(223) *àmó* *wé* *táá* *zù,* *àmó* *zéy,* *àmó*
1PL.INCL meet REF\town in 1PL.INCL.IMP sit 1PL.INCL.IMP
kpóóló *lé*
REF\word say

‘Let’s meet in town, sit and talk’.

The ellipsis of the subject, normal for a subject NP, does not occur here. The PPM cannot be called the subject, but the clitic agreement marker of the verb, and the following example should thus be regarded as the null-subject VP:

(224) *tátá* *li* *Màsàdà*
3PL.IPFV go Macenta

‘They are going to Macenta’.

Following these differences in syntactic status, it becomes clear that personal pronouns should be treated separately from PPMs. This categorial split in person marking is a frequent feature of the African language systems. Creissels [2005] performed a typological analysis of the syntax of “pronominal markers” (as he called person markers) in various African tongues, classifying predicative person markers into three categories according to their syntactic autonomy in the sentence and the stage of their grammaticalisation into auxiliary morphemes. The PPMs of Zialo mostly correspond to Creissels’ Stage II markers: they are obligatory in the verb phrase and do not substitute subject NPs.

The status of person markers in examples [5] and [6] is not at all independent: they are inseparable morphemes attached to the following noun or verb. In [5], we are dealing with the possessive prefix, and [6] is an example of the object person marker (named “polyfunctional markers” in this paper, following [Vydrin 2010]) described in 6.10.3 above.

It can be easily shown that both the object markers and possessive markers are:

- non-autonomous (i.e., they cannot form a phrase *per se*);
- inseparable from their syntactic head (e.g., a possessed noun, a transitive verb, a postposition or a qualitative form of the verb), cf. the equivalents in Zialo and English:

(225) *ì-kééyè* *śò* *nè-kééyè* *śò* *té* *và-à*
2SG.POSS-father CONJ 1SG.POSS-father CONJ 3PL come-RES

‘My and your fathers have come’;

¹⁶ Exceptions applied here are listed in 8.8.1.

- intransposable (i.e. cannot be moved from their prefixed position, as clitic morphemes can be);
- non-transcategorical (in the case of the possessive markers which cannot be attached to any other item than the possessed noun).

Moreover, the paradigm of polyfunctional markers incorporates two suprasegmental morphemes (of the 1st and 3rd person singular) which can in no way act separately from their syntactic head.

Possessive markers in SWM languages were treated as syntactically independent “possessive pronouns” by a number of authors. Dwyer [1973] was probably the first to treat them as prefixed morphemes, which approach was later accepted for Kpelle in [Thach & Dwyer 1981], for Looma in [Wilhoit 1999], etc. Bearing in mind the characteristics listed above, there is no ground to treat possessive markers in Zialo as independent or even clitic morphemes.

These and other syntactic criteria of subdivision between personal pronouns and other types of pronominal markers have been discussed in the literature dedicated to South Mande languages, cf. [Khachaturyan 2010b], and may be applied to the SWM languages as well.

Throughout the present paper, the three-fold opposition between personal pronouns, PPMs and bound person markers is consistently sustained. Diachronically, all these three subclasses of person markers have originated from the same source, and their genetic relation is clearly seen. The processes of fusion and grammaticalisation have resulted into the present state of person marking not only in Zialo and other SWM languages, but also in South Mande [Vydrin 2006b] and beyond, cf. [Babaev 2008].

Personal pronouns in Zialo have several series given in Chart 15 below. In the present paper, the names of the series are glossed the following way:

- focalised: FOC;
- emphatic: EMPH;
- comitative: COM;
- contracted: CNTR.

Chart 15

	1sg.	2sg.	3sg.	1du.incl.	1pl. incl.	1pl. excl.	2pl.	3pl.
FOC	<i>nà</i>	<i>yà</i>	<i>á, é, éyà</i>	<i>móyá</i>	<i>àmóyá</i>	<i>néyá</i>	<i>wà, wòyà</i>	<i>tíyá</i>
EMPH	<i>nàyéy (-gì)</i>	<i>yàyéy (-gì)</i>	<i>éyáy (-gì)</i>	<i>móyáy (-gì), méy(-gì)</i>	<i>àmóyáy (-gì)</i>	<i>néyáyèy (-gì), néy(-gì)</i>	<i>wèy (-gì)</i>	<i>tíyáy (-gì)</i>
COM	<i>gè</i>	<i>yè</i>	<i>á, lá</i>	<i>mòyè</i>	<i>àmòyè</i>	<i>nèyè</i>	<i>wòyè</i>	<i>tìyè</i>
CNTR	<i>gèyà</i>	<i>iyà</i>	<i>gèyà</i>	<i>móyá</i>	<i>àmóyá</i>	<i>néyà</i>	<i>wòyá</i>	<i>tíyá</i>

The description of each of these series is given in the four sections below.

7.1.2. Focalised series

Chart 16

1sg.	2sg.	3sg.	1du.incl.	1pl. incl.	1pl. excl.	2pl.	3pl.
<i>nà</i>	<i>yà</i>	<i>á, é, éyá</i>	<i>móyá</i>	<i>àmóyá</i>	<i>néyá</i>	<i>wòyà, wà</i>	<i>tíyá</i>

The pronouns of the focalised series (for brevity, called “the focalised pronouns” herinafter even though this term does not full reflect the domain of their usage) normally

occupy the extreme left position in the sentence, denoting the subject exclusively. They are used in several contexts:

(1) Focalising the subject marked by the PPM of a subsequent clause:

(226) *nà, gè kpálé ké-gò*
1SG.FOC 1SG work do-AOR

‘Me, I worked’.

(2) Forming existential phrases of various meanings:

nà wà kálámó-y ‘I am a teacher’ (identification);

nà lá lé ‘it is not me’ (deixis);

nà ló vè ‘I am here’ (location).

See more on existential clauses in 8.12.4 below.

(3) Forming stative constructions referring to the present tense:

(227) *á lò làà-nì bété-y zù*
3SG.FOC COP lie-PRET REF\bed-DEF in

‘He is lying in bed’.

The basic verbal noun in this construction, accompanied by postposition *sù*, may rarely be used to indicate the process going on at the moment of the speech act:

(228) *nà ló ní-y zù*
1SG.FOC COP REF\sleeping-DEF in

‘I am sleeping’.

(4) Forming progressive constructions with dynamic verbs preceded by the adverbial modifier *nàtó*:

(228) *tíyá nàtó gúlá kpáálá-y zù*
3PL.FOC PROG return REF\field-DEF in

‘They are returning from the field’;

(229) *àmó và bóólò bādí-y-tì gélé tíyá nàtó*
1PL.INCL come speak bandit-DEF-PL about 3PL.FOC PROG

tí-zòò

3PL.PF-take

‘We are speaking about the bandits which are being caught’.

(5) Forming coordinative phrases with conjunction *òò* (see 6.6.4.2 above):

(230) *nà óò wà óò, àmó vāà-gò*
1SG.FOC CONJ 2PL.FOC CONJ 1PL.INCL come-AOR

‘Me and you (pl.), we came’.

In a conjunctive construction, the 3rd person singular pronoun may be replaced by deictic pronouns *nò* or *sì*:

(231) *nà óò nò óò, né vāà-gò*
1SG.FOC CONJ that CONJ 1PL.EXCL come-AOR

‘Me and him, we came’.

Deictic pronouns frequently substitute PPMs in various types of verbal constructions, as well as possessive markers (see 6.10). The difference between *á* ‘he’ and *sì* / *nò* in the conjunctive construction is the level of referentiality: *á* refers to the concrete person whom the speaker knows already, while *sì* / *nò* presume that the person is unknown to the speaker.

Demonstratives can be used instead of the focalised pronouns in existential phrases as well. The difference in usage seems the same: a speaker will say *nò* ‘he’ if he does not know the person, or *á* if they are acquainted with each other, or in case the speaker knows who exactly is meant:

(232) *gílá-gò nò lè*
REF\one-DEF that EXI

‘It is only him’, meaning that the subject of the phrase is uncertain.

A number of intensifiers can follow focalised pronouns, some of them are the same as the nominal intensifiers listed in the previous chapter (see 6.14.2.5):

- *kpúté* ‘self’:
nà büté-y lé ‘it is me myself’.

- *kpálá* ‘too’:

(233) *nà bálá gè lì-gò nà*
1SG.FOC too 1SG go-AOR there

‘Me too, I came’.

- *kélé* ‘exactly, only’

(234) *nì Kòlì lá và mà, nà yélé gà và*
if Koli NEG come IPFV 1SG.FOC exactly 1SG.IRR come

‘If Koli does not come, I will come’;

- *bà* (topic marker):

(235) *yè bàlè, nà wá, gè léélébò*
2SG work 2SG.FOC TOP 1SG rest

‘You are working, and as for me, I am having rest’.

- *yà* (emphasis marker):

(236) *yà yá, nã á yì*
2SG.FOC EMPH 1SG.IPFV sleep

‘You [not me], you are sleeping’.

The distribution of the three variants of the 3rd person singular pronoun given in Chart 16 is not stable, and speakers tend to mix them in colloquial speech. Pronoun *é*, identical to the 3sg. PPM of the basic series, seems to be mostly used in existential phrases with the copula verb *bà* ‘be’ expressing presentation and identification:

é wà gà kálámó-y ‘he is a teacher’;

é wà gènííná-y ‘it is the new one’.

The reason for using a PPM instead a pronoun here is more or less clear. Syntactically, *bà* is a copulative verb, which normally would require a PPM of the basic series instead of the 3sg. pronoun. The PPM of the basic series is omitted in case the subject is expressed by a NP, according to the exception listed in the conjugation section below (see 8.8.1).

In other types of existential constructions with copulas, the 3sg. pronoun *á* is used:

(237) *á lè vè*
3SG.FOC COP здесь

‘He is here’;

(238) *á lá zólé-nì*
3SG.FOC NEG honest-PRET

‘He is not honest’.

With the sentence-final existential verb *le*, the 3sg. pronoun can be both *á* and *éyá*:

á lè / éyá lè ‘it is him’

á lá lè / éyá lá lè ‘it is not him’.

This *éyá* could develop as a result of analogical levelling within the paradigm, under the influence of other person forms *móyá*, *tíyá*, etc. The same must have happened with alternative interchangeable variants of the 2pl.: *wà* and *wòyà*:

wòyà ló vè ‘you are here’ = *wà ló vè*;

wà ló zéy-nì ‘you are sitting’ = *wòyà ló zéy-nì*.

Since both variants are possible and are considered normal in almost any position, I do not have enough grounds to postulate separate pronominal series for them. Extra data at our disposal may clarify the syntax of these allomorphs in the future.

7.1.3. *Emphatic series*

Chart 17

1sg.	2sg.	3sg.	1du. incl.	1pl. incl.	1pl. excl.	2pl.	3pl.
<i>nàyéy</i> (-gì)	<i>yàyéy</i> (-gì)	<i>éyáy</i> (-gì)	<i>móyáy</i> (-gì), <i>méy(-gì)</i>	<i>àmóyáy</i> (-gì)	<i>néyáyèy</i> (-gì), <i>néy(-gì)</i>	<i>wèy</i> (-gì)	<i>tíyáy</i> (-gì)

Forms divided by commas are freely interchangeable variants. Contracted forms are more colloquial, uncontracted ones with *-yey* are used in more distinct speech, or when asked to pronounce slowly.

This series of pronouns marks strong emphasis of the subject. Emphatic pronouns are always positioned at the very beginning of the sentence:

(239) *nàyéy-gì, nã g, lì*
1SG.EMPH-DEF 1SG.IPFV go

‘[It is exactly] me who is going’.

Affix *-gì*, most probably originated from the nominal determination marker, is optional. Its presence helps to identify the origin of the emphatic pronouns: it seems that they represent a merger between personal pronouns and the intensifier *ya* still in use with focalised pronouns:

nàyéy-gì < *nà* (1SG.FOC) + *ya* (EMPH) + *-y* (DEF) (+ *-gì*).

The narrowing of *a* > *ε* before the definite marker *-y* is a common phonetic process in Zialo (see 4.3.8 above).

7.1.4. *Comitative series*

Chart 18

1sg.	2sg.	3sg.	1du. incl.	1pl. incl.	1pl. excl.	2pl.	3pl.
<i>gè</i>	<i>yè</i>	<i>á, lá</i>	<i>mòyè</i>	<i>àmòyè</i>	<i>nèyè</i>	<i>wòyè</i>	<i>tìyè</i>

This series marks the indirect object of the verb and are mostly used within a preposition phrase with the comitative / instrumental marker *gà(g)* ‘with’ (see 6.17 above):

(239a) *gè vàà-gò vè gà wòyè*
1SG come-AOR here with 2PL.COM

‘I brought you here’ (lit. ‘I came here with you’).

Existential phrases of identification with the copula *bà* ‘be’ require the same comitative construction:

(240) *kúdíyì-y wà gà gè*
REF\chief-DEF COP with 1SG.COM

‘The chief is me’ (lit. ‘the chief’s title is with me’).

In fast colloquial speech, the preposition may be omitted, and the pronoun is used independently:

kúdíyì-y wà gè ‘the chief is me’;
Gílávò tá tìyè ‘they are not Guilavogui’.

The 3sg. form *á* is a borrowing of the pronoun of the focalised series into the comitative paradigm:

(241) *gè vàà-gò gà á*
1SG come-AOR with 3SG.FOC

‘I brought him’.

This 3sg. form is very rarely used though. Normally, the comitative paradigm fills the 3sg. slot with *lá* (see 6.16) which is in fact an inflected postposition. This irregularity is a common phenomenon in all the SWM languages.

The demonstrative pronoun *nð* is frequently used to mark the non-locutor person, both in the singular and in the plural:

- (242) *nãgá* *và* *gà* *nð-tì* *kóví-y* *zù*
 1SG.IPFV come with that-PL REF\yard-DEF in
 ‘I am bringing them home’.

The semantic conditions of utilising demonstrative pronouns for the 3rd person marking are outlined in 7.1.2 above.

7.1.5. Contracted series

Chart 19

1sg.	2sg.	3sg.	1du.incl.	1pl. incl.	1pl. excl.	2pl.	3pl.
<i>gèyà</i>	<i>èyà</i>	<i>gèyà</i>	<i>móyá</i>	<i>àmóyá</i>	<i>néyà</i>	<i>wòyá</i>	<i>tíyá</i>

The fusion of person markers with locative postpositions is a frequent phenomenon in the SWM languages [Babaev 2010]. In Bandi, Loko, Mende and Kpelle, postpositions expressing the benefactive semantics are form paradigms of person / number agreement. Looma and Zialo use inflected postpositions derived from combinations of the polyfunctional person markers with the noun **geya* ‘palm, hand’ and the essive / lative postposition *yà* ‘to, at’. Diachronically, the Zialo forms result from this three-fold contraction:

- gèyà* ‘at me, to me’ < *(*g*)-*gèyà yà* ‘in / into my hand’;
gèyà ‘at him, to him’ < *(*g*)-*gèyà yà* ‘in / into his hand’, etc.

The noun **geya* is no longer used as an independent lexeme (though cf. the homonymous verb *gèyá* ‘buy’), but can be reconstructed from a comparison with Bandi *ngèà*, Looma *zéá*.

Two meanings are applied for the contracted series:

(1) physical possession

- (243) *méyã-gà* *lá* *gèyà*
 REF\banana-PL NEG 1SG.CNTR

‘I have no bananas’;

- (244) *dó* *fèlè-gð* *móyá*
 REF\son two-DEF 1DU.INCL.CNTR

‘We (incl.) have two sons’;

(2) recipient (mostly with the verb *fè* ‘give’:

- (245) *jé-y* *tàgùlò* *vè* *gèyà*
 REF\water-DEF some give 1SG.CNTR

‘Give me some water’;

- (245a) *ámó* *bõbõ-y* *vè-gð* *tíyá*
 1PL.INCL candy-DEF give-AOR 3PL.CNTR

‘We (incl.) gave them candies’.

7.2. Non-personal pronouns

7.2.1. Reflexive / reciprocal pronoun *ðyð*

Pronoun *ðyð* ‘self’ (in fast colloquial speech often contracted to *ðð* or even *ð*) is a universal means of marking all aspects of reflexivity. From the first glance, its usage with transitive

verbs allows to regard it both as an object pronoun and as a verbal prefix of the reflexive voice:

(246) *gè b̀̀ záyà-à gà b́̀wà-y*
1SG REFL hurt-RES with REF\knife-DEF

‘I have cut myself with a knife’;

(247) *é b̀̀ lévé-yà*
3SG REFL scare-RES

‘He got scared’;

(248) *té b̀̀ ló-wà*
3PL REFL see-RES

‘They have seen themselves / each other’.

The morphologisation of the reflexive pronoun leading to the emergence of reflexive verbs is a typologically widespread process. The phrase *gè b̀̀ wùyà-à* ‘I have washed myself’ with a reflexive pronoun can be reinterpreted as *gè b̀̀-wùyà-à* with a verbal prefix of reflexivity. The clue to the syntactic nature of the reflexive morpheme may be the stage of its grammaticalisation. But the situation reminds the identical use of reflexive pronouns in Slavic languages: the Russian phrase *я мыл себя* ‘I washed myself’, lit. ‘I washed self’ is an alternative to the more common *я мыл-ся*, lit. ‘I washed-self’ where the former reflexive pronoun is contracted to become a bound reflexive marker. In Zialo, the same contraction occurs with *b̀̀ỳ̀ > b̀̀* in a direct object position.

The criterion of syntactic separability does not give the clue either. The reflexive morpheme can be treated as being bound to the verb: in fact, no direct object can be inserted between the pronoun and the predicate, because the pronoun itself fills the direct object valency of the verb. Therefore, two different approaches to the direct object reflexive marker can be equally accepted:

(1) the reflexive marker is a syntactically independent pronoun capable of serving as the direct object of a transitive verb; and

(2) the reflexive marker is an invariable preverb transforming transitive verbs into intransitive reflexive ones.

In all other syntactic positions, the pronominal nature of *b̀̀ỳ̀* causes no doubt. The positions where it may be used are summarised below.

(1) Direct object of a bivalent verb:

(249) *nè-b̀̀là-y b̀̀ỳ̀ vá-á*
1SG.POSS-friend-DEF REFL kill-RES

‘My friend has killed himself’;

(250) *Kòlì néé-yà lè b̀̀ỳ̀ wè*
Koli be.pleasant-RES EXI REFL for

‘Koli likes himself’.

(2) Direct object of a polyvalent verb:

(251) *Kòlì b̀̀ỳ̀ yé-yà gà Màsà f́́t́́-y zù*
Koli REFL do-RES with Masa photo-DEF in

‘Koli showed himself to Masa on the photo’;

(252) *Kòlì ló b̀̀ỳ̀ ló gà è vá-nì*
Koli 3SG.IPFV REFL see with 3SG.DEP be.good-PRET

‘Koli seems nice to himself’

(3) Indirect object in a coargument position:

(253) *Kòlì pélè-y ló-g̀̀ b̀̀ỳ̀ wè*
Koli REF\house-DEF build-AOR REFL for

‘Koli built the house for himself’.

(4) Indirect object in a circumstantial NP:

(254) *dó-y jé-y gé-ló-y zéy-gò bòyò bèlà*
 REF\son-DEF REF\mother-DEF 3SG.POSS-son-DEF seat-AOR REFL near
 ‘The mother seated her child next to herself’.

(5) Prepositive possessive attribute:

(255) *Kòlì bòyò yilè-y REF\mĩ-gò*
 Koli REFL dog-DEF bite-NMLZ
 ‘Koli was bitten by his own dog’.

(6) The reflexive pronoun can act as an intensifier to the subject NP. In this case, it may adopt the determinating affix:

(256) *yà lá jálé-y bè, jálé-y lò lì bòyò*
 2SG.IRR NEG REF\cat-DEF chase REF\cat-DEF 3SG.IPFV go REFL

wè

for

‘Do not chase the cat, it is leaving by itself’;

(257) *Kòlì ló nò yè bòyò-y*
 Koli 3SG.IPFV that do REFL-DEF

‘Koli is doing it himself’.

(7) The reciprocal usage of the reflexive pronoun is often encountered. In a reciprocal construction, it is placed into an object position:

(258) *té fá lé bòyò wà*
 3PL REF\tale say REFL PP

‘They tell stories to each other’;

(259) *pánú-gì-tì tó zéy-nì bò wóózù*
 REF\basket-DEF-PL COP sit-PRET REFL inside

‘Put the baskets one into the other’.

7.2.2. Interrogative pronouns

Interrogative pronouns do not constitute a homogeneous group in Zialo. The reason is their ultimate origin: some of them have still not lost their original categorial properties. For instance, *bè(g)* ‘who?’ may function as the subject of the clause and attach the associative plurality affix, thus being syntactically similar to nouns and pronouns. *Dòlè* ‘how many / much?’ behaves like a numeral, while *déwáázù* ‘why?’ and *bèlèzòwò* ‘when?’ are contracted phrasal units by origins.

Another classification deals with their current syntactic usage: the interrogative pronouns can be grouped according to the argument they are addressing:

- (1) question to the subject and the direct object: *bè(g)* ‘who?’, *dé* ‘what?’;
- (2) question to the attribute: *bè(g)* ‘which?’, *bèdá* ‘whose?’, *dòlègò* ‘how many?’;
- (3) question of reason: *déwáázù* ‘why?’;
- (4) question of time: *bèlèzòwò* ‘when?’;
- (5) question of manner: *yàlé* ‘how?’;
- (6) question of location/direction: *mìnì* ‘where?’.

Finally, the grouping may be made according to their position in the sentence: while *bè(g)*, *dé*, *déwáázù* occupy the slot of the subject NP, pronouns *bèlèzòwò* and *yàlé* are always placed at the end of the sentence, in the indirect object position. *Mìnì* ‘where?’ can be put into both.

The interrogative pronouns of Zialo are listed below with some comments and phrasal examples.

- *bè(g)* ‘who, which?’

This pronoun has nominal origins and can adopt nominal affixes of associative plurality and determination. Syntactically, it may serve as the subject, the nominal predicate, or the attribute to another noun:

(260) *bè ló è vâà-gò?*
 who COP 3SG.DEP come-AOR

‘Who came?’;

(261) *ì-dá bòlá-y wà bè?*
 2SG.POSS-property friend-DEF COP who

‘Who [of them] is your friend?’;

(262) *nú-y bè-gì lè mùnò?*
 REF\person-DEF who-DEF EXI there

‘Which person is that one?’

The plurality is marked with the associative plurality suffix *-ni(g)* (see 6.9.3):

(263) *bè-ní tó té vâà-gò*
 who-PL COP 3PL come-AOR

‘Who (pl.) came?’

Interestingly, *bè-* can mark a human possessor prefixed to the postpositive noun *dá* ‘property’ in a similar way the possessive person markers do:

(264) *bázà-y sì bèdá lé?*
 headdress-DEF this whose EXI

‘Whose headdress is this?’

Bèdá should be treated as the compound interrogative pronoun ‘whose?’

Note that the semantic domain of *bè* mostly encompasses human beings, and the only context where non-humans are allowed is the attributive usage:

(265) *méyã-gì zì bè-gì lè ló yè ()-pó*
 REF\banana-DEF sort which-DEF EXI COP 2SG 3SG.PF-want

‘Which sort of bananas do you like?’

- *bèlézòwò* ‘when?’

This pronoun is a contraction of *bè(g)* ‘which?’, the existential verb *lé* and noun *sòwò* ‘day, time’.

(266) *yè vâà-gò bèlézòwò*
 2SG come-AOR when

‘When did you come?’

- *dé* ‘what, which?’

Different from *bè(g)*, this pronoun is only used with inanimate objects. Serving either as the subject or the direct object, it is always put in the extreme-left position in a sentence, followed by a copula or a predicate. The direct object must be duplicated by a polyfunctional prefix:

(267) *dé lò ì-bòlò-y zù?*
 what COP 2SG.POSS-bag-DEF in

‘What is there in your bag?’

(268) *dé lò yè ()-ké-gò gà bówálévè-y sì?*
 what COP 2SG 3SG.PF-do-AOR with REF\machete-DEF this

‘What did you do with this machete?’ (lit. ‘what is that you did?..’).

When used as an attribute to a noun (meaning ‘which, what kind of?’) the pronoun does not require a copula:

(269) *dé gúlú zì wà sì*
 what REF\tree sort COP this

‘Which tree is this?’

One of the most widespread afternoon greetings in a Zialo village is *dé vá l̩ vè* ‘how are you?’, literally meaning ‘which things are here?’

- *dévàà* ‘what?’

Refers to a direct object and functions the same way as the preceding pronoun (from which this compound form originates):

(270) *dévàà l̩ yè ()-ké-gò*
 what COP 2SG 3SG.PF-do-AOR

‘What did you do?’

- *déváázù* ‘why?’

A combination of *dé* ‘what?’, *fá* ‘thing’ and *zù* ‘inside’, this interrogative pronoun is always placed at the sentence-initial position:

(271) *déváázù yè và ínéné?*
 why 2SG come worry

‘Why are you worrying?’;

(272) *déváázù yè nà yè-gò?*
 why 2SG that do-AOR

‘Why did you do that?’

It is used as a conjunction introducing causal dependent clauses, see 9.2.4.5 below.

- *mìnì* ‘where?’

This pronoun indicates both location and direction, and may be placed either at the initial or the final position in the sentence, which does not modify the meaning. In case it is put initially, it requires a following copula *t̩*, and the interrogative utterance always ends with demonstrative pronouns *nà* or *này* ‘there’:

(273) *mìnì l̩ yè zìyè-gò náy?*
 where COP 2SG return-AOR there

‘Where do you come from?’

(274) *mìnì l̩ ì-kééyè jówó-gì yèyè-gò nà?*
 where COP 2SG.POSS-father REF\cassava-DEF take-AOR there

‘Where did your father took the cassava from?’

The final position of *mìnì* usually appears in shorter sentences:

(275) *yá l̩ mìnì*
 2SG.IPFV go where

‘Where are you going?’

(276) *ì-dá láá zù mìnì?*
 2SG.POSS-property town in where

‘Where is your [native] village?’

Locative suffix *-dà* (see 6.11.3.2) may be attach to the pronoun without any semantic modification:

(277) *nà l̩ mìnì(dà)?*
 1SG.FOC COP where

‘Where am I?’

(278) *mìnìdà l̩ dópò-y nà?*
 where COP REF\child-DEF that

‘Where is that child?’

- *d̩l̩(gò)* ‘how much, how many?’

Acting syntactically as a numeral rather than a pronoun, *d̩l̩* can add the definite affix of numeral *-gò*. It plays the role of an attribute modifying the head noun, and as such it demonstrates initial consonant alternations:

(279) *méyã d̩l̩-gò l̩ yè ()-géyá-gò*
 REF\banana how.many-DEF COP 2SG 3SG.PF-buy-AOR

‘How many bananas did you buy?’;

(280) *jà lólé-gò è kólúvè-y zù?*
water how.much-DEF 3SG.DEP REF\cauldron-DEF in

‘How much water is there in the cauldron?’

- *jàlé* ‘how?’

Always put at the end of the phrase, followed only by a clause:

(281) *yè nà yé-gò jàlé?*
2SG that do-AOR how

‘How did you do it?’

(282) *yè lòvè-gò jàlé yè sì yé-gò*
2SG pass-AOR how 2SG this do-AOR

‘How did you manage to do this?’

8. Verbal system

8.1. General remarks

Describing the highly diversified and complicated verbal system of Zialo, one has to choose between two formal approaches. The first approach is paradigmatic: moving from the meaning to the inventory of constructions which express it. Such an approach allows to make a deep insight into the syntax of the verb, however, it is not quite suitable for describing the Zialo language at this initial stage of its study: the material in hand still contains a number of gaps to be filled by future data collecting, and therefore I decided to take up the syntagmatic approach going from the form to the meanings.

Practically, this approach is realised the following way. All known regular constructions were taken for analysis, and all meanings expressed by them are listed. This examination is in most cases followed by an attempt to unify all meanings of a particular construction and to deduce a single invariant meaning characterising it. Oppositions between the invariant meanings are also examined, thus leading the research to the higher paradigmatic level.

The present chapter is structured in a similar way to the structure of the whole paper: first, classificatory elements of the verbal class of lexemes will be considered, followed by morphological and syntactic classifications. Then, the morphosyntax of the verb and the inventory of finite verb constructions are examined. The analysis is concluded by several sections devoted to the verbal derivation and the structure of the clause.

The system of the verb in Zialo is much more ramified than that of the noun. As discussed above, almost all verbal roots can serve as verbal nouns by simply put into a subject / object position. The distinction between these verbal nouns and the proper verbs lies exclusively in their syntactic position in the sentence, and the (in)ability to form finite verbal constructions and generate derivatives.

Specifically, the verb may:

- perform control over predicative person markers (PPM);
- attach morphological markers of the categories of tense / aspect, polarity and modality;
- form qualitative, stative and passive constructions;
- produce actant derivation;
- generate derivative verbs, nouns, as well as verbal nouns (participles).

Verbs possess both stable and variable grammatical properties. In the sections below, I will analyse the morphonological structures of Zialo verbs (syllabic and tonal patterns) (8.2 – 8.3), subclasses of verbs according to their stable properties (8.4.), and present a general overview of morphological categories and terms used in the description of verbal categories (8.5) and the typology of morphological markers in Zialo (8.6). In section 8.7, the argument structure of the verb is discussed. In 8.8, person and number agreement will be considered, with a variety of TA, modal and polarity constructions expressed by predicative person markers. This is followed by the description of the actant derivation and the phenomenon of lability (8.9). The lexical derivation will be considered in 8.10, verbal nominalisation - in 8.11. The chapter is closed by the analysis of the clause syntax (8.12).

8.2. Syllabic structures

As well as nouns, verbs in Zialo are divided into primary and derived. The former can be called root verbs, while the latter are derivatives constructed by means of affixation, reduplication or compounding.

Syllabic structures of root verbs are presented in the list below.

- (1) CV: *pà* ‘come’;
páá ‘kill’;
bè(g) ‘dry, be dry’.
- (2) CVy: *těy(g)* ‘be black’;
- (3) CVCV: *gãỹ* ‘play’;
pílí(g) ‘throw’;
kóózá ‘be long, high’;
kpíízí(g) ‘be numerous’;
kpóólé(g) ‘be blue, green’.

Such a small number of allowed syllable structures are explained by numerous restrictions.

First, the syllable onset is obligatory, i.e. initial vowels are not allowed. The only verb with a vocal beginning is the reduplicated verb *ínéíné*, dial. *ínáíná* ‘worry’, a loanword from a Manden language.

Second, there is a restriction on the number of syllables: only monosyllabic and disyllabic roots are allowed.

The length and quality of vowels is not restricted in verbal roots.

8.3. Tone classes

The basic syntagmatic constructions that may be selected for the tone representation demonstrate the following tonal behaviour:

- aorist construction: the lexical tone of the verb is preserved after the low-tone PPM, the suffix has a constant low tone;
- prospective construction: the tone of both the prospective marker and the verb are adjusted to the tone of the preceding subject;
- progressive construction: the tone of the verb is always low;
- resultative construction: the tone of the verb root is always high, the suffix has a variable tone. The lexical tone of monosyllabic verbs ending in *-a* is preserved and assimilates the tone of the suffix.

Thus, it is the only aorist construction that may be diagnostic for the definition of the verb’s lexical tone. This context provides the basic initial point for distributing all Zialo verbs into two tonal classes, correlating with the respective nominal classes: low-tone (Class 1), and high-tone (Class 2).

Chart 20

Class	1	2
Underlying tone	<i>dì</i> ‘go’	<i>dáyé</i> ‘eat’
Aorist	<i>gè lî-gò</i>	<i>gè láỹé-gò</i>
Prospective	<i>gà wò lî</i>	<i>gà wò làỹè</i>
Progressive	<i>nã á lî</i>	<i>nã á làỹè</i>
Resultative	<i>gè lí-yà</i>	<i>gè láỹé-yà</i>
Examples	<i>pà</i> ‘come’, <i>dè</i> ‘climb’	<i>pílí(g)</i> ‘throw’, <i>gúyá</i> ‘wash’, <i>těy(g)</i> ‘be black’

Verbs are not actively borrowed into the language, so I did not encounter any primary verbs related to Classes 3-6 in Zialo.

A polyfunctional prefix of the direct object imposes its tone on the verb:
mè ‘eat’ > (*)-mé* ‘eat it’.

All predicative modifiers of Zialo can be divided into two tonal groups: those with their constant tone (no change can be imposed by the tonal environment, except for the

intonational rules, see 4.7.2), and those with a variable tone. The former subclass includes the following morphemes:

- PPMs of all series;
- aorist suffix *-gɔ̀*;
- irrealis marker *bé*;
- auxiliary verbs *lì*, *pà*;
- past habitual marker *légáá*.

Here is the list of examples of variable tone morphemes:

- prospective marker *wɔ̀*;
- copula *tɔ̀*;
- preterite suffix *-ní*;
- resultative suffix *-a / -ya / -wa*;
- habitual marker *ya*.

8.4. Verb classifications

8.4.1. Actional type and lexical aspect

Zialo is a language with an active agreement system.

The core division in the verbal inventory is based on the actional classification and made between dynamic (or active) and statal verbs. This classification is a primary criteria for identifying verb types in the majority of languages around the world [Plungian 2000: 246]. By definition, dynamic or active verbs denote actions leading to the change of the state ('run', 'hit', 'take', 'die'), while statal verbs express quality or state ('sit', 'be red').

The classification of all process verbs into telic and atelic is based on the category of lexical aspect (otherwise called Aktionsart). Verbs denoting processes with a natural endpoint ('catch', 'knock', 'look') are called telic, those which have no visual endpoint ('sit', 'lie') are atelic.

The active agreement system of Zialo presumes that the dynamic and statal verbs are the two primary classes of verbs with different models of conjugation. The subject of a dynamic verb is always expressed by the same PPMs no matter which other properties the verb possesses (e.g., no matter it is transitive or intransitive, it marks a telic or an atelic process). The subject of a statal verb may be expressed by the same person markers as the object of a dynamic verb. Practically, this dichotomy may be illustrated by the following examples:

- (1) *nāgá lì* 'I am leaving' (dynamic, intransitive);
- (2) *nā gá'()-mè* 'I am eating it' (dynamic, transitive);
- (3) *(')-kólé-yáá* 'It is white' (statal).

The suprasegmental marker of the 3sg. marking the direct object of a transitive verb in (2) is the same as the subject marker of the statal verb in (3).

The active agreement system is a common property of the verbal system of the SWM languages. See the discussion on the split ergativity in Looma and beyond in [Vydrin 2010].

Within the class of statal verbs, two subclasses should be singled out: proper stative verbs expressing the state or position of the object (called stative hereinafter), e.g. 'sit', 'lie', 'stand', 'be', and qualitative verbs which denote attributive properties of the object: 'be white', 'be healthy', 'be empty'.

While in many languages this differentiation is supported morphologically or syntactically, in Zialo it is not supported by the entire verbal inventory. Since most verbs are labile (see the description of lability in 8.9 below), they are transcategorial, i.e. capable

of expressing dynamic, stative and qualitative meanings put in a respective syntactic context.

kpòlè ‘drink’ (dynamic), ‘be drunk’ (stative);

kpěyã(g) ‘be red’ (qualitative), ‘become red’ / ‘make smth red’ (dynamic);

séy(g) ‘sit’ (stative), ‘seat’ / ‘sit down’ (dynamic), ‘be seated’ (qualitative).

There are semantic groups of verbs which are not fully transcategorial. Many of them, even though allowing mechanical transposition into a different actional class, are not used in the language, e.g. the verb *gòlè sù* ‘choose’ is not allowed to be put into a passive construction. A group of dynamic verbs (e.g. *sá* ‘die’) are not labile and cannot form causative constructions. Instead, suppletive verbs are used, e.g. *páá* ‘kill’. Some semantic groups of verbs use limited (“defective”) paradigms of constructions, unable to derive verbal nouns and form certain TA constructions. These mostly include modal verbs expressing emotional condition (*pó* ‘want, like’), verbs of intellectual state and ability (*kóló* ‘know’, *nááwóló* ‘be able’, *pílá* ‘be able’), phasal verbs (*tókólàzény* ‘begin’, *pílá* ‘finish’, *kpé(g)* ‘stop’).

8.4.2. Transitivity

Verbs in Zialo are either transitive or intransitive. A number of intransitive verbs with statal meanings may acquire transitive meanings without any morphological modification:

tò ‘stand’, ‘build’;

séy(g) ‘sit’, ‘seat’, ‘set’, ‘be set’;

dà ‘lie’, ‘put’.

There are also derivational means of changing transitivity: i.e., preverb *dá-* (*mè* ‘eat’, *dáýé* ‘meal’, see 8.10.2 below). But most verbs in Zialo are perfectly labile, so they use the same form to change transitivity:

(283) *jé-y* *lò* *né* *kólúvé-y* *zù*
REF\water-DEF 3SG.IPFV boil REF\cauldron-DEF in

‘The water is boiling in the cauldron’, vs.

(284) *Kòlì* *lò* *jé-y* *nè*
Koli 3SG.IPFV REF\water-DEF boil

‘Koli is boiling the water’.

See the analysis of the actant derivation in 8.9 below.

8.5. Morphological categories

The morphological categories of the verb in Zialo include tense, aspect, modality and polarity.

The expression of tense in Zialo encompasses the past, the present and the future. This category, however, seems to be rather marginal for the whole TAM system of the language, for which aspect and mood are much more central than tense is. This relation corresponds well with the situation in many other languages of West Africa [Ameka & Kropp Dakubu 2008: 1], where the interpretation of tense occurs mostly via circumvention.

The expression of all the three verbal categories is quite tightly knit together, again as is typologically common for the languages of the region, see [Fleisch 2000]. Each particular verbal construction expresses a cluster of meanings which includes all the three categories, so there are no morphological markers expressing exclusively the tense or the aspect. As Welmers put it, West African verbal systems “are best described in terms of a uni-dimensional list of “verbal constructions” rather than in terms of a bi-dimensional or multi-dimensional grid with intersecting categories such as tense, aspect, and mode” [Welmers 1973: 343]. For instance, the prospective aspect or the desiderative mood of the

verb presume that the action will take place in the future, while the habitual aspect meaning is not expressed *per se*, but always contains a reference to the past, the present or the future tense.

The terminology used for describing temporal, aspectual and modal meanings in this paper are based on the survey in [Plungian 2000, 2010]. Some terms applied specifically for the SWM languages are also taken from [Sengova 1981: 64-72].

The list of aspectual meanings relevant to the Zialo verbal system includes the following meanings:

- prospective, mostly intentional prospective (the situation predicting the performance of some action at the moment following the speech act, and presuming that the subject wishes it happens: *I will leave; He is going to read*);
- progressive (expresses a dynamic action in progress: *He is writing*);
- durative (expresses equally an action or state in progress: *He is lying*);
- completive (marks a completed action in referring to any tense meaning): *He wrote a book*, meaning *He was in the process of it and then finished it*);
- punctive (expresses a momentary action or, else, the start or the end of a process or state: *The dog bit him*);
- resultative (marks the natural result of a preceding telic process: *He has gone*). A particular case of the resultative aspect is the perfect meaning (a situation preceding to the speech act with certain consequences in the present moment: *John has heard about it*);
- habitual (regularly repeated actions which become characteristic for the subject: *He writes poems*);
- limitative (an action took place for a limited period of time: *He worked for an hour*).

Phasal meanings express the three temporal phases of the process:

- inchoative (marks the temporal phase of the start of an action or state: *I am leaving now*),
- continuative (the action continues), and
- terminative (the action is finished or stopped).

Clusters of both temporal and aspectual meanings include:

- preterite: an action in the past without a particular reference to its aspectual characteristics;
- perfective: includes the aspectual meanings of punctive, limitative and completive and the inchoative phase;
- imperfective: includes the meanings of durative and habitual aspects.
- aorist: the perfective action in the past tense;
- factative: “the most obvious fact about the verb in question, which in the case of active verbs is that the action was observed or took place, but for stative verbs is that the situation obtains at present” [Welmers 1973: 346-347]. As Plungian [2000] puts it, the choice of its semantic interpretation depends on the actional class of verb: events and telic processes express a perfective meaning, while atelic processes and stative verbs express the durative meaning. In Zialo (as well as in the other SWM languages), factative is the least marked of all the verbal TA constructions.

For the modal meanings, the following terms for moods are relevant for the description of Zialo:

- desiderative (the action is desired by the subject: *I wish it were raining*);
- optative (the desire of the speaker usually referred to someone else’s activity in the future: *I want you to bring it*);

- possibilitive¹⁷ (expresses the potential ability to perform an action: *I can swim*);
- debitive (the necessity of an action, often enforced by some incentive: *I should go to school*);
- probabilitive (the epistemic possibility of an uncertain action or situation: *It might rain tonight*);
- imperative (the incentive of the speaker for the audience to perform an action: *Open the door!*);
- prohibitive (the incentive of the speaker for the audience to prevent or stop an action: *Do not open the window!*);
- hortative¹⁸ (the invitation for a common action made to the audience: *Let us sit down there!*);
- conditional (includes situations of the real condition when the action is likely to happen, and the unreal condition - or irrealis - where the action is improbable: *I would never hurt him like that*).

TA and modality constructions of the Zialo verb are discussed in detail in the section devoted to verb conjugation (8.8).

The category of polarity is represented by two grammemes: affirmative and negative. The formation of negation in Zialo is described in 8.12.1.

8.6. Morphological markers

The inventory of verbal modifiers expressing grammatical meanings of the categories listed above encompasses morphemes which may be classified according to their linear syntagmatic properties: separability and relocatability. Subsequently, they are divided into clitic and bound morphemes.

In the present section, we only consider TAM and polarity markers of the verb, but not nominalising morphemes which are examined separately in 8.11 below.

8.6.1. Auxiliary verbs

Auxiliary verbs are used in analytical (complex) constructions expressing various TA meanings. All of the auxiliary verbs may be used as principal verbs:

(285) *nã á* *(-tò* *pélè-y* *lò*
1SG.IPFV 3SG.PF-see REF\house-DEF build

‘I am building the house’ (*tò* is an auxiliary verb in a progressive construction with a 3sg. direct object).

(286) *nã á* *wñní-y-tì* *tò*
1SG.IPFV bird-DEF-PL see

‘I see the birds’ (*tò* is the principal verb).

Syntactically, auxiliary verbs precede the principal predicate of the sentence. Some of them can themselves accept auxiliary morphemes such as verbal TA markers:

(287) *á* *lá* *và* *mà* *balé* *yé* *mà*
3SG.IRR NEG come IPFV work do IPFV

‘He would not be working’.

The following verbs can act as auxiliaries in Zialo:

- *pà* ‘come’ (used in imperfective constructions):
- (288) *wátí* *yè* *và* *wñní* *lò,* *túwó-y* *vìlì* *(-má*
when 2SG come bird see REF\net-DEF throw 3SG.PF-on

¹⁷ Otherwise called potentive.

¹⁸ Its more polite variety is called cohortative.

‘The moment you see a bird, throw the net!’

- *tò* ‘see’ (used in durative constructions):

(289) *gé láyẽ-yà nã á ()-tò là*
 1SG eat-RES 1SG.IPFV 3SG.PF-see lie

‘I have eaten and I am lying’.

The example shows that the auxiliary verb *tò* always requires a polyfunctional marker of the 3sg. on it.

- *dì* ‘go’

Expresses an intentional prospective meaning, similar to the English *I am going to*. The construction in the example below could be in fact a calque from French *je vais diminuer* ‘I am going to decrease (smth)’:

(290) *nãgá lì tàgùlà dápá-y wà*
 1SG.IPFV go decrease REF\bag-DEF PP

‘I am going to make this bag smaller’.

- *ké* ‘be’

The primary usage of this auxiliary verb is the formation of existential clauses in the past tense. The verb *ké* is put into the preterite form:

(291) *té yé-nì wòlù*
 3PL be-PRET together

‘They were together’.

With the resultative affix, the construction acquires the meaning of the change of quality in the past:

(292) *é yé-yá kúdí-gì*
 3SG be-RES REF\chief-DEF

‘He became a chief’.

The inventory of analytical verbal formations with auxiliary verbs is included into the list of finite constructions in 8.8 below.

8.6.2. Clitics

Different from auxiliary verbs, verbal clitic markers are never used as autonomous lexemes. They are often not easy to etymologise, although most of them have most probably been morphologised from originally autonomous verbs.. Their primary function is to build TA, and modality meanings of the principal predicate. Clitics can be positioned as proclitics (preceding the verb) or enclitic (following it). Not being bound to the verb, they may be separated from it by other morphemes or lexemes. Thus, the clitic markers are syntactic intermediaries between fully auxiliary verbs and bound markers (affixes).

Proclitic morphological markers include:

- *wò* (prospective), probably derived from the verb *pó* ‘want’:

(293) *gà wò gúlè-y lò*
 1SG.IRR PROSP REF\song-DEF sing

‘I will sing a song’;

- *bé* (unreal condition)

(294) *ná ténémá-y yé, gèy bé và*
 3SG.COND Sunday-DEF be 1SG.PRNEG IRR come

‘If it were Sunday, I would not have come’;

- *ta* (negation)

(295) *yà lá nálé-y bè*
 2SG.PROH NEG REF\cat-DEF chase

‘Do not chase the cat’;

- *li* (negation of the future and habitual meanings);

(296) *gà lì wò và yéyé mà*
 1SG.IRR NEG PROSP come take IPFV

‘I will not be taken’;

- *yè* (negation of the conditional mood):

(296a) *nì gèy bé yè vàà-nì*
 if 1SG.PRNEG IRR COND.NEG come-PRET

‘If I do not come’.

- *ya* (habitual)

(297) *gè yà bálé yé táá zù*
 1SG HAB work do REF\town in

‘I work in the town’.

- *légáá* (past habitual)

(298) *gè légáá lì làkólì zù*
 1SG HAB.PST go school in

‘I used to go to school’.

- *ya* (conjoint action)

(298a) *nã á ziyà gè yá gúlè-y lò*
 1SG.IPFV walk 1SG JNT REF\song-DEF sing

‘I am walking and singing’.

There are two enclitic TAM modifiers in Zialo:

- *mà* (imperfective)

Expresses a number of imperfective meanings and modifying constructions of the debitive mood:

(299) *nã á và nà yé mà*
 1SG.IPFV come that do IPFV

‘I have to do that’.

- *le* (imperative)

Used optionally to emphasise the incentive expressed by the imperative construction:

(299a) *dápá-y nò (ø) vè lé*
 REF\bag-DEF that 2SG.IMP give IMP

‘Give me that bag!’

8.6.3. Affixes

Verbal suffixes (i.e. morphemes that are strictly bound to the verb and can by no means be separated from it) are not numerous in Zialo. They are mainly used to express aspectual meanings referring to the action in the past:

- *-gò* (aorist)
- *-ni* (preterite)
- *-a* (resultative).

Examples of using the TA constructions modified with these affixes are given in section 8.8.

It would be interesting to conclude that there is a clear correlation between the semantics of the morphological markers of the verb and their syntactic distribution. Markers expressing the irrealis meanings, including those referring to the future tense, are placed before the verb. These include proclitics of prospective, unreal condition, and various markers of negation. At the same time, aspectual meanings presuming some action or state in the past, are mostly expressed by postverbal markers. The actual, ongoing or customary actions are split between habitual (expressed by proclitics) and imperfective (expressed by a proclitic). This variation does not encompass the PPMs which are diachronically fusions with proclitic verbal markers. It would be exciting to undertake a

research in the comparative typology of preverbal / postverbal TAM markers in all SWM languages to see if this distinction is supported by any external data. Some hints for such a study are found, for instance, in [Anyanwu 2010].

8.7. Argument structure of the clause

The clause is an elementary sentence formed by the finite predicate and one or more of its arguments. Since all the aspects of morphosyntax of the finite verb are tightly knit with the clause, the present description precedes the discussion on the verbal conjugation in Zialo.

The following phrasal categories may serve as the finite predicate of the clause:

- Dynamic and statal verbs, whose TA, modal and polarity meanings are marked by either verbal suffixes or clitic modifiers.
- Predicate nominal of the existential clause linked with the subject by an existential verb or a copula. Existential phrases are described in 8.12.4.
- Predicate adjective (adjective phrase or participle) of the existential phrase, again connected with the subject by an existential verb or a copula.

All arguments of the verb can be divided into two categories: actants (or complements) and circonstants. Actants fill the obligatory semantic valencies of the verb, i.e. they explain the meaning of the word which would otherwise remain unclear. E.g., the verb *to give* has three valencies: the agent (who is giving), the patient (what is given) and the recipient (who is accepting). One cannot use the verb *to give* without specifying all the three participants of the action.

As opposed to that, circonstants (or complements) do not fill any semantic valency and are therefore optional in the sentence. E.g., the verb *to give* may be further specified: *I give it to him with pleasure*. For the terminological explanations and some notes on the typology of actants and circonstants see [Testelefs 2001: 179-206].

The basic word order in Zialo is *S O_{dir} V O_{indir}*.

All verbs in Zialo have a semantic valency for the subject, and those which have only one valency are called monovalent (e.g., *pà* ‘come’, *dì* ‘go’, *sá* ‘die’):

(300) *nã á yĩ*
1SG.IPFV sleep

‘I am sleeping’.

The subject argument of the verb in Zialo is marked by the following means.

- NP, containing the noun with or without attributive modifiers. The structure of a NP is described in detail in 6.6 above. Verbal nouns such as the participle in *-go* can also act as the subject:

(301) *sévé yálãbó-gò-y vá-nì*
REF\writing study-NMLZ-DEF be.good-PRET

‘Reading is useful’.

- Pronoun phrase, consisting of the personal pronoun of the focalised or emphatic series, and modified by adverbial intensifiers. The personal pronouns are examined in 7.1 above.
- Subject PPMs (not “true” subjects but subject markers of the verb) which are listed in 8.8.1.

Bivalent verbs can be either transitive or intransitive. Transitive verbs have a semantic valency for a direct object actant which occupies the preverbal positions within a VP (e.g., *páá* ‘kill’, *tò* ‘see’, *méní* ‘hear’):

(302) *gè làkólikàlà-mò-y lò-gò bēgi*
1SG schoolteacher-DEF see-AOR yesterday

‘I saw the teacher yesterday’.

The direct object in Zialo always precedes the predicate. It may be indicated by an object NP, a bound person marker of the polyfunctional series (see the paradigm in 6.10.3 above) or a deictic pronoun substituting the 3sg. person marker. In the first case, no recapitulative person marker is applied to the verb:

(303) *gè nè-làpà-y lè-gò*
1SG 1SG.POSS-bag-DEF see-AOR

‘I saw my bag’.

Two examples with a pronominal direct object:

(304) *gè i-lè-gò*
1SG 2SG.PF-see-AOR

‘I saw you (sg.)’;

(305) *é nà wóló*
3SG that hit

‘She hit her’.

Two direct objects forming a coordinative group are expressed by a normal conjunctive construction (see 6.6.4.2), the principal verb is modified by a generalising plural polyfunctional marker:

(306) *gè yà Kòlì sò Màsà sò tí-ló fólófolò*
1SG HAB Koli CONJ Masa CONJ 3PL.PF-see every.day

‘I see Koli and Masa every day’.

A specific group of bivalent verbs (e.g., *pó* ‘want’, *móní(g)* ‘like’) require a clause sentential actant. A direct object marker coreferential with this actant is obligatorily attached to the verb:

(307) *gè ()-pó*
1SG 3SG.PF-want

‘I love her’;

(308) *gè ()-pó è và này*
1SG 3SG.PF-want 3SG.DEP come there

‘I want him to come there’.

See more on sentential actants in Zialo in Chapter 9.

Intransitive bivalent verbs do not have a valency for the direct object, but one of their actants is indicated by the indirect object instead. These verbs are called postpositional / prepositional (e.g. *gákúlá(g) bà* ‘decide’, *gèlè mà* ‘laugh’, *kòlò bè* ‘obey’, etc.):

(309) *gè máábúlú-yà Kòlì wà*
1SG approach-RES Koli PP

‘I have approached Koli’.

The indirect object in Zialo is expressed by a personal pronoun of the contracted series, described above in 7.1.5, as well as a postposition phrase or a preposition phrase, both placed after the predicate. Both of them may be present in one clause:

(310) *á lè là-nì bété-y zù*
3SG.FOC COP lie-PRET REF\bed-DEF in

‘He is lying in bed’;

(311) *Kòlì fàyò yé-yà gà Màsà fótó-y zù*
Koli REFL do-RES with Masa photo-DEF in

‘Koli showed himself to Masa on the photo’.

A syntactic distinction should be made between the two following groups of verbs according to their indirect object argument structure.

(1) Verbs with indirect object circumstantials.

These verbs demonstrate a loose government of indirect objects and allow a variety of postpositions to form the indirect object phrase, depending mostly on the semantics of the whole clause. Subsequently, the indirect object of such a verb cannot be treated as its actant. An example is the verb *dì* ‘go’:

- yá lì làkólì-y là* ‘you are going to school’;
yá lì pélè-y wù ‘you are going home’;
yá lì dósó-y wã ‘you are going hunting’;
yà lì dóbó-y zù ‘you are going to/from the bush’.

Moreover, the verb *dì*, as well as other verbs of motion, can govern a preposition phrase with the comitative preposition *gà(g)*:

- yá lì gà kpãdà-y* ‘you are bringing the gun’.

(2) Verbs with indirect object actants.

This subclass of verbs requires an obligatory postposition phrase as its actant and governs a concrete postposition. Both transitive and intransitive verbs are included here, so the postposition phrase may appear one of the two actants of the verb (including the subject). In this case, both semantically and syntactically, the postposition forms a fixed construction with the verb where the former loses its primary meaning and only serves to indicate the indirect object of the verb. In the present paper, the postposition forming the phrase which occupies an actant valency is glossed as PP. Verbs having such actants are called postpositional verbs.

The inventory of postpositions is given in section 6.16.3 above and need not be repeated here.

Examples of postpositional verbs are given below:

- (312) *é yá lálí Kòlì wã*
 3SG HAB visit Koli PP
 ‘He visits Koli often’ (*dálí mà* ‘visit smb’);
- (313) *yà bé vílá yè bó ()-bà*
 2SG.IRR COND can 2SG help 1SG.PF-PP
 ‘You would better help me’ (*bó bà* ‘help smb’);
- (314) *Màsà ()-dé-gò ()-mà gà yá lè Àbijàn*
 Masa 3SG.PF-say-AOR 1SG.PF-PP COMP 2SG.FOC COP Abidjan
 ‘Masa told me you live in Abidjan’ (*dé mà* ‘tell’);
- (315) *dóólí-y néé-yáá lè ()-bè*
 REF\game-DEF be.pleasant-RES EXI 1SG.PF-PP
 ‘I like to play’ (*néé bé* ‘be pleasant for’);
- (316) *gè lèwã-gò wálí-y wã*
 1SG forget-AOR money-DEF PP
 ‘I forgot to take the money’ (*dè wã mà* ‘forget smth’);
- (317) *nã á lùwà fúdé-fà-y wà*
 1SG.IPFV be.afraid fall-NMLZ-DEF PP
 ‘I am afraid I can fall down’ (*dùwà bà* ‘be afraid of’).

There is no ditransitive verb government in Zialo: verbs with ditransitive semantics (so called “transfer verbs” [Creissels 2005]: *ké* ‘show’, *fè* ‘give’, etc.) have three semantic valencies: normally the subject (agent), the direct object (patient) and the indirect object (recipient). The last one of them is expressed by a preposition / postposition phrase:

- (318) *nã á gízè-y yè gà yè*
 1SG.IPFV REF\mountain-DEF show with 2SG.COM

‘I am showing you the mountain’.

Circonstants will syntactic valencies of the verb, which do not contribute into the clarification on the verb’s semantic meaning but specify the whole situation:

- (319) *gè vâà-gò kóví-y zù gà Kòlì*
 1SG come-AOR REF\yard-DEF in with Koli
 ‘I came home with Koli’.

Circonstant arguments may be expressed by a NP (in the position of the direct object), a postposition / preposition phrase (in the indirect object position), a non-finite verb form or a clause. In the last two cases, they are called sentential circonstants: see the discussion on sentential arguments of the verb in 9.1 below.

8.8. Conjugation

8.8.1. Dynamic verbs

As well as in many other Niger-Congo languages, the predicative person marking in Zialo is an example of what Welmers [1973] called a “linear verb system”. The temporal, aspectual and modal meanings of the predicate are expressed by means of fused PPMs which, besides, express the meanings of person and number of the subject. PPMs occupy the left-hand position in the sentence and act as clitics: their syntactic nature is described in 7.1.1 above.

The variety of PPMs in Zialo (identical to the other SWM languages, and similar to the situation in a lot of Niger-Congo languages) is diachronically explained by their early merger with clitic predicative modifiers of aspect, tense, modality and polarity, as well as existential, copulative and auxiliary verbs. As a result, PPMs have absorbed clusters of meanings and have become the main carriers of grammatical meanings in a verb phrase, while the verb itself often remains in its basic root form.

Therefore, describing the person marking for a Mande language means hardly less than describing the whole system of the verb conjugation. In the present section, I have gathered most commonly used finite dynamic verb constructions classified according to the PPM series used to express them. Hereinafter I assign nine series of PPMs for Zialo, each of which will be named in both the charts and the examples according to the following list:

- basic (unmarked in examples);
- dependent (DEP)
- irrealis (IRR);
- conditional (COND);
- imperative (IMP);
- prohibitive (PROH);
- prospective negative (PRNEG);
- conditional negative (CONEG);
- imperfective (IPFV).

The examples of this section represent sentences where the subject is marked by a PPM. However, a subject NP can always be placed into the sentence. In this case, as discussed in 7.1.1 above, the PPMs of the 3rd person are preserved in their original position, following the subject NP and thus becoming duplicating (recapitulative) PPMs.

There is only a limited number of finite constructions where the duplicating person marker of the 3sg. or the basic and the dependent series is zero (in both affirmative and negative phrases):

- factative
- (320) *()-máné-yáá lè gà Kòlì (∅) gùlà*
 3SG.PF-be.necessary-RES EXI COMP Koli (3SG) return
kóví-y zù
 REF\yard-DEF in

‘Koli should return home’;

- aorist

(321) *Kòlì* (\emptyset) *vàà-gò* *vè*
Koli (3SG) come-AOR here

‘Koli came here’;

- preterite

(322) *nè-kééyè* (\emptyset) *láyé-nì*
1SG.POSS-father (3SG) eat-PRET

‘My father was eating’;

- resultative

(323) *kúyè-y* (\emptyset) *zéélí-yà*
REF\night-DEF (3SG) arrive-RES

‘The night has come’;

- habitual

(324) *Kòlì* (\emptyset) *lì* *yà* *bòòlò* *yènà*
Koli (3SG) NEG HAB speak so

‘Koli does not speak like that’;

- qualitative

(325) *túfá-y* (\emptyset) *bóóolé-yàà* *lé*
REF\grass-DEF (3SG) be.green-RES EXI

‘The grass is green’.

An explanation to these exceptions is obviously linked with the low degree of markedness of the 3sg. verbal meanings, typologically widespread in quite a number of world’s languages, including some SWM languages (e.g., Bandi or Mende) [Creissels 2005: 21-23]. It is also notable that the TAM meanings in the constructions listed above are indicated on the verb itself (by a suffixed or a clitic marker), and not the PPM. The tense plan of all these construction is also unmarked: it is the past or the actual present. Therefore, the speaker does not necessarily need to insert PPMs and thus emphasise TAM meanings to be understood. This functional explanation needs to be verified on a larger volume of typological data from the languages of the region including the other SWM languages.

Zero recapitulative markers will not be indicated in the present paper.

An important exception from this rule is the behaviour of *gì*-words (i.e. those ending in an original but now extinct **-ŋ*). In case the final constituent of the NP is a *gì*-word in its indefinite (singular) form, the recapitulative marker will always be in place, cf.:

nú (\emptyset) *vàà-gò* ‘a man came’, but

nú yílá gé *vàà-gò* ‘one man came’, where *gílá(g)* ‘one’ is a *-gì* lexeme;

gálági (\emptyset) (*-kóló*) ‘the god knows him’

gálá gé (*-kóló*) ‘a god knows him’.

The nature of *gé* and similar CV duplicating markers is explained further below.

The same particularity is observed in Looma, where Vydrin [2009b] tends to explain it as an ergative case marker, though the data is far too scarce for any definitive explanation of this phenomenon.

In the plural, the 3pl. recapitulative marker is obligatory in all finite constructions including the above listed:

(326) *nú-y-tì* *tá* *wó* *vá*
REF\person-DEF-PL 3PL.IRR PROSP come

‘People [they] will come’.

In existential phrases (either with a copulas or an existential verb as predicate) which require a subject NP or pronoun phrase, recapitulative markers are not used:

(327) *ɲázáló fèlè-gò ló gèyà*
 REF\daughter two-DEF COP 1SG.CNTR

‘I have two daughters’.

The paradigms of PPMs in Zialo, sorted according to the series listed above, are given in the aggregate Chart 21 on the next page. They will be analysed consequently in the following subsections.

Notes:

(1) *gé, yá / gá, géy* are recapitulative PPMs only used following the final **-ŋ* or a nasal vowel of the preceding word:

(328) *nú gá wó vá*
 REF\person 3SG.IRR PROSP come

‘A person will come’;

(329) *másá wòlè(-*ŋ) gá wó lí*
 REF\king-DEF be.white 3SG.IRR PROSP go

‘The white king will go’.

These PPMs have emerged as a result of deglutination: the **-ŋ* of the preceding item has been transferred to the person marker and reinterpreted as its integral element.

(2) The final *-è* may be omitted: *nàtéy*.

(3) *Tí* is in use in the Lawolozu dialect. In the habitual construction (see below) *té* is always dissimilated by the habitual marker *yà* to form *tíyà*.

8.8.1.1. basic series

Chart 22

1sg.	2sg.	3sg.	1du. incl.	1pl. incl.	1pl. excl.	2pl.	3pl.
<i>gè</i>	<i>yè</i>	<i>é, gé</i>	<i>mó</i>	<i>àmó</i>	<i>né</i>	<i>wò</i>	<i>té</i>

The basic series of PPMs is called so in consent with the tradition of the Mande literature. Across the family, similar sets of person markers express the unmarked meaning of the verb often called the factative (see the explanation of this term by Welmers in 8.5 above). In Zialo, it also serves to mark a number of other TA constructions referring to the past and the present tenses, where the verb is modified by bound TA suffixes: preterite, aorist, and resultative, as well as a number of analytical TA constructions.

- **Basic + V: factative**

In Zialo, the factative construction is used in the following syntactic contexts.

(1) Most extensively, in the narrative speech, where it refers to the action or state in the past tense where the narrated story actually took place. Any deviations from the main time reference (e.g., the preceding actions, or a direct speech projecting some future steps) may not be marked by the factative.

(330) *é nà wú-gì wòlò*
 3SG that head-DEF hit

‘She hit her head’;

(331) *té dòbá té dáγá-y nà lèvè*
 3PL TOP 3PL REF\leaf-DEF there cut

‘Then they cut a leaf there’.

Chart 21

	1sg.	2sg.	3sg.	1du. incl.	1pl. incl.	1pl. excl.	2pl.	3pl.
basic	gè	yè	é, gé ¹	mó	àmó	né	wò	té, tí ³
dependent	gè	yè	è	mó	àmó	né	wò	té, tí ³
irrealis	gà	yà	á, yá / gá ¹	má	ámá	ná	wà	tá
conditional	nǎgá	néyà	nà, néyá	námá	ànámá	náná	nàwá	nátá
imperative	-	ø	-	mó	ámó	-	à, wà	-
prohibitive	-	yà	-	mà	àmà	nà	àwà	-
prospective negative	gèy	yèy	éy, géy ¹	méy, mōy	àméy, àmōy	héy	wéy	kéy
conditional negative	(nè-)gèyè	(n-)kèyè	(n-)kèyè	(nà-)mōyè	à(nà-)mōyè	(nà-)méyè	(nà-)wéyè	(nà-)kéyè ²
imperfective	nǎgá	yá	áɓ / ɓ	máaná	ámáaná	náaná	wá	táá

The use of the unmarked verb form in the narrative speech is quite a widespread feature of West African languages (see, for instance, [Anyanwu 2010]). The verb is not marked by any past tense affixes, though both the narrator and the audience know that the action took place somewhere in the past, and that the whole narrated story is in most cases a sequence of punctive actions occurred before the moment of speech. This is why the factative is also often called the aorist [Storch 1999: 195-196]. However, this definition would not be correct for Zialo: here, the usage of the factative is much wider than the narrative speech.

(2) With phasal verbs: inchoative, e.g. *tókólàzény* ‘begin’ and terminative, e.g. *pílá* ‘finish’, *kpé(g)* ‘stop’, requiring a subsequent verbal noun:

(332) *é* (*()-tókólàzény* *gà* *sévé* *yá-lá-gò-y*
3SG 3SG.PF-begin with REF\book read-NMLZ-DEF

‘He starts reading the book’;

(333) *gè* *vílá* *gà* *làyẽ-gò*
1SG finish with eat-NMLZ

‘I finish eating’.

(3) In the contrastive focus construction of the progressive meaning:

(334) *gè* *bàlè*, *yà* *wá*, *yè* *léélébò*
1SG work 2SG.FOC FOC 2SG rest

‘I am working, and you, you are having rest’.

(4) In serialised constructions (see 8.12.2) referring to the past or the present tense plan:

(335) *é* (*()-síyá*, *é* (*()-fúká*.
3SG 3SG.PF-pound 3SG 3SG.PF-grind

‘He pounded and grinded it’.

(5) in existential sentences with the verb *wà* ‘be’ (see details in 8.12.4.3);

(6) the quotative predicator *ké* is used in a construction structurally identical to that of factative, i.e. requires the PPM of the basic series.

- **Basic + *V-ni*: preterite**

Used with dynamic verbs:

gè *vââ-ni* ‘I came’.

In most diagnostic contexts the speaker tends to freely change the preterite construction with the aorist one (below), though this change is in most cases not accepted in the opposite direction. Sometimes, by using the preterite construction the speaker wants to emphasise that the action that took place in the past is no longer relevant to the moment of speech:

(336) *gè* *pélè-y* *ló-ní*
1SG REF\house build-PRET

‘I built a house [long ago, and then sold it]’.

Generally, the speaker would agree that the action indicated by the preterite construction could refer to a more remote event in the past than that of the aorist. This observation corresponds well with the data from Bandi, where *-ni* marks the distant past tense constructions.

Another function of the preterite construction is marking the antecedence of the action to another action or state in the past. Thus, it may be called past perfect:

(337) *pílínání-y* *nú-y* *váá-gò* *sì* *yè* *wálí*
REF\chimpanzee-DEF REF\person-DEF kill-AOR this 2SG money

vè-ni *géyá*
give-PRET 3SG.CNTR

‘The chimpanzee killed the person you had given money to’.

- **Basic + V-gò: aorist**

The aorist construction may be modified by adverbial specifiers of time:

- (338) *gè méyã-gì yéyá-gò bēgì*
 1SG REF\banana-DEF buy-AOR yesterday

‘I bought the bananas yesterday’.

- **Basic + V-a: resultative**

An example of the resultative construction.

- (339) *yè nè-zèvè-y yéyé-yà*
 2SG 1SG.POSS-book-DEF take-RES

‘You have taken my book’.

In case the verb root ends in a front vowel, a prothetic glide -y- is inserted. If the final vowel is a back one, the prothetic glide is -w-:

- gè vá-á* ‘I have come’,
gè lí-yá ‘I have left’,
gè pélè-y ló-wà ‘I have built the house’.

The only exception to this phonetic rule is *kúlá(g)* ‘exit, take out, lose’ which adds -yá:

- (340) *Kòlì gúlá-yá dóbó-y zù*
 Koli lose-RES REF\bush-DEF in

‘Koli is lost in the forest’.

The resultative affix modifies the verb in a few other construction: it marks the passive voice of dynamic verbs (see details in 8.9.1 below) and shapes the stative / qualitative constructions of the present tense (in 8.8.2). This usage of the construction is easily explained by the nature of the resultative aspect: its primary meaning is that of state, not action.

- **Basic + ke-ní + gà(g) + V**
Basic + ke-ní + V(-ní)

The analytical constructions with the auxiliary verb *ké* ‘be’ denote the past perfect and the past habitual aspect. In the former case, the principal verb is modified by another preterite affix as well:

- (341) *gè yé-ní pélè-y lò-nì*
 1SG be-PRET REF\house-DEF build-PRET

‘I had built the house [before something else happened]’;

- (342) *gè yé-ní gà nè-bòlá-y lò*
 1SG be-PRET 1SG.IRR 1SG.POSS-friend-DEF see

‘I used to see my friend [but no longer see him]’.

- **Basic + va + V: progressive / prospective**

The analytical construction with the auxiliary verb *pà* ‘come’ expresses the imperfective meanings of progressive and prospective aspects:

- (343) *gè vâ ()-tó*
 1SG come 3SG.PF-see

‘I am about to see it [now]’;

- (344) *dótóló vādá ló gè vâ ()-kólí dópó-wà-y-tì bè.*
 doctor good COP 1SG come 3SG.PF-search child-PL-DEF-PL for

‘I am looking for a good pediatrician’.

- **Basic + yà + V: habitual**
Basic + vâ yà + V: habitual / imperfective
Basic + légáá + V: past habitual

The basic series of person markers followed by *yà* (in case the action is referred to the present) or *légáá* (in case the action took place in the past) forms the habitual constructions with the root form of the verb.

(345) *é yá vá gà fábwò-y*
3SG HAB come with REF\gift-DEF

‘He brings the gifts [every time]’;

(346) *gè légáá lí làkólì-y zù*
1SG HAB.PST go school-DEF in

‘I used to visit school [every day in the past]’.

The list of TAM constructions presented in this section covers most but not all formations where the PPM of the basic series modifies the verb phrase. Dialectally, it may expand to the constructions which are usually marked by the other PPM series, especially frequently the irrealis series (see below). The existential sentences requiring the subject marking with the PPM of the basic series are also considered further below.

Speaking about the invariant meaning of the basic series, it must be noted that the majority of constructions requiring this set of PPMs uses some other grammatical modifiers to reflect the TA meaning, such as affixes or auxiliary verbs. This is different from most of other series of PPMs which leave the verb in the root form while carrying all the TAM meanings themselves. The factative construction, i.e. the PPM of the basic series with the root form of the predicate, is the most unmarked verb construction in Zialo, which finds typological parallels in a number of West African languages [Welmers 1973]. The syntax of the basic series of PPMs in Zialo also corresponds well with the same set in the other SWM languages [Babaev 2010].

8.8.1.2. dependent

Chart 23

1sg.	2sg.	3sg.	1du. incl.	1pl. incl.	1pl. excl.	2pl.	3pl.
<i>gè</i>	<i>yè</i>	<i>è</i>	<i>mó</i>	<i>àmó</i>	<i>né</i>	<i>wò</i>	<i>té</i>

The dependent series of PPMs should be singled out despite the clear fact that it only differs from the basic series paradigm by its 3sg. marker which has the low tone. However, this difference in tone is found in almost all languages of the SWM group and should be reconstructed for the proto-language [Babaev 2010]. Since the tone difference is not phonetically or intonationally conditioned, it creates a clear syntactic opposition and therefore deserves a special series nomination.

The PPMs of the dependent series are exclusively used in all kinds of subordinate clauses within a complex sentence, most often in relative ones. The general TA meaning of the verb may be defined as the factative, according to Welmers’ term (see in 8.5 above).

(347) *nā á yìsìyà ḡázà-y zù è gúlè-y*
1SG.IPFV think REF\woman-DEF PP 3SG.DEP REF\song-DEF

lò-gò

sing-AOR

‘I am thinking about the woman who sang a song’;

(348) *nà ló ()-pó è vâ*
1SG.FOC COP 3SG.PF-want 3SG.DEP come

‘I want him to come’ (lit. ‘I want that he comes’);

(349) *wátí è wñní lò-gò, é túwó-y vílí-gò*
when 3SG.DEP bird see-AOR 3SG REF\net-DEF throw-AOR

‘The moment he saw a bird, he threw the net’.

(350) *nà gè yé-nì Màsàdà, gè nè-bòlá-y lè-wà*
 when 1SG.DEP be-PRET Macenta 1SG 1SG.POSS-friend-DEF see-RES

‘When I was in Macenta I saw my friend’;

Note that in relative clauses with a prospective meaning, the factative construction is not possible:

(351) *fólò-y yè wò và, gèy wò yè vè*
 REF\day-DEF 2SG IRR come 1SG.PRNEG IRR be here

‘The day you come, I will not be here’.

Existential dependent clauses with postposition phrases often demonstrate the ellipsis of the predicate: in that case the marker of the dependent series precedes the postposition phrase directly:

(352) *pélè-y sì gè ()-bú nè-bòlá-y*
 house-DEF this 1SG.DEP 3SG.PF-under 1SG.POSS-friend-DEF

dé-y lè
 REF\property-DEF EXI

‘The house I am in is my friend’s one’.

A particular case of the dependent clauses where this series is observed are those serving as sentential arguments of the verbs of emotional and intellectual state: *pó* ‘want’, *kóló* ‘know’, and the derivative of the latter, *nááwóló* ‘be able’. These verbs also require an anaphora of their sentential argument expressed by the prefixed person marker of the polyfunctional series:

(353) *gè ()-pó gà gè sì nááwóló*
 1SG want that 1SG.DEP this be.able

‘I want to be able [to do it]’;

(354) *gè ()-kóló sì yà vílá yè ()-ké*
 1SG 3SG.PF-know this 2SG.IRR can 2SG.DEP 3SG.PF-do

‘I know what you can do’.

The verb *pó* ‘want’ may alternatively fill its subject valency with a pronoun of the focalised series, with no modification in meaning:

(355) *nà ló ()-pó gè và*
 1SG.FOC COP 3SG.PF-want 1SG.DEP come

‘I want to come’.

8.8.1.3. *irrealis*

Chart 24

1sg.	2sg.	3sg.	1du. incl.	1pl. incl.	1pl. excl.	2pl.	3pl.
<i>gà</i>	<i>yà</i>	<i>á, yá / gá</i>	<i>má</i>	<i>ámá</i>	<i>ná</i>	<i>wà</i>	<i>tá</i>

The irrealis series of PPMs is well attested in all SMW languages, and even though its meanings vary across the group, the invariant semantics expressing the projected or improbable action in the future is well attested across the group.

Etymologically, the markers of this set are traced back to the combination of older person markers with a non-personal predicative modifier which is usually reconstructed as **ka* / **ya*. Following a subject NP, this form is preserved in Kpelle as *ka*, in Looma as *ya* (see the details on usage of *ya* in Looma in [Vydrin 1987: 59-60]).

In Zialo, the same morpheme is seen in the 3sg. PPM *á* / *yá* / *gá*. The *yá* allophone of the duplicating marker is encountered in Zialo following a final front vowel of the preceding subject NP:

(356) *Kòlì yá vílá è dápá-y sì yéyá*
Koli 3SG.IRR can 3SG.DEF REF\bag-DEF this buy

‘Koli can buy this bag’.

The common SWM predicative modifier **ka* roots from the verb **ka* ‘see’ (Looma *kà*, Loko *ka*, etc.) though its grammaticalisation has obviously occurred in the proto-language already, since the verb itself is not attested in Zialo.

The inventory of syntactic constructions requiring the irrealis paradigm of PPMs is listed below.

- **IRR + V**

This construction is mainly found in dependent clauses (mostly relative or conditional), expressing the prospective aspect meaning with a degree of improbability:

(357) *nì ténémá vòlò-y lé, gà và*
if Sunday day-DEF EXI 1SG.IRR come

‘If it were Sunday, I would have come’;

(358) *nèyà và linà, gà và nà, jà bálá*
2SG.COND come tomorrow 1SG.IRR come there 1SG.FOC too

‘If you come tomorrow, me too, I will [probably] come’.

The same construction indicates the possibilitive modality with the verb *pílá* ‘can’:

(359) *gà vílá gè gúlè-y lò*
1SG.IRR can 1SG REF\song-DEF sing

‘I can sing’.

- **IRR + va + V: prospective**

The auxiliary verb *pa* ‘come’ (the tone depends on the preceding PPM) may serve as an auxiliary verb in the construction with a prospective meaning:

(360) *gà và dótóló lólí wè*
1SG.IRR come doctor call for

‘I will call for the doctor’.

- **IRR + wɔ + V: prospective**

The general meaning of any action predicted or planned to occur at any time following the moment of the speech act is expressed by this construction. The prospective marker *wɔ* (the tone is assimilated by the preceding PPM) is most probably related to the verb *pó* ‘want’, cf. a widespread typological model of building analytical future tense constructions with the auxiliary desiderative verb: e.g., English *I will do*. So, the construction’s primary meaning is probably desiderative.

(361) *gà wɔ nè-jè-y nènè*
1SG.IRR PROSP 1SG.POSS- mother-DEF greet

‘I will greet my mother’.

Dialectally, the basic series of PPMs is sometimes used instead of the irrealis one:

(362) *nèyà pélè-y lò, gè wɔ và*
2SG.COND REF\house-DEF build 1SG IRR come

‘If you build the house I will come’.

This usage was recorded from a speaker residing in the prefecture town of Macenta populated by the Looma, and it is obviously a borrowing from the latter.

A specific note should be made here on the dialectal 3sg. marker *ɔ* marking the prospective aspect. This marker was encountered in my records of the speech of a Bayaŋa dialect speaker:

(363) *ɔ wɔ yé vè*
3SG.IRR PROSP be here

‘He will be here’.

This form of person marker is similar to the irrealis paradigm in Bandi which expresses condition and future action [Heydorn 1940/41: 201].

Whether it is a borrowing from Bandi, an innovation or a dialectal retention of Zialo, is not clear.

- **IRR + *wɔ* + *va* + *V mà*: debitive / desiderative**

This modal construction adds the auxiliary verb *pà* ‘come’ and the principal predicate followed by the enclitic imperfective marker *mà*. The examples demonstrate that the desiderative meaning is mostly expressed in the 1st person, while the 2nd or 3rd person constructions denote obligation:

(364) *gà wɔ vâ jábíbí yè mà*
1SG.IRR PROSP come REF\pineapple eat IPFV

‘I would like to eat a pineapple’;

(365) *wâ wɔ vá pélé-y lò mà*
2PL.IRR PROSP come REF\house-DEF build IPFV

‘You (pl.) have to build the house’.

- **IRR + *bé* + *V(-ní)*: unreal condition**

Irrealis modality is a modality that connotes that the proposition with which it is associated is non-actual or non-factual. Irrealis sentences referring to the action in the past or the present are designated by the predicative marker *bé* preceded by the PPMs of the irrealis series.

(366) *á bé yé gà yè vâà-nì bēgi, gà bé*
3SG.IRR IRR be that 2SG come-PRET yesterday 1SG.IRR IRR

yàni vè yâ
thing give 2SG.CNTR

‘If [it was that] you had come yesterday, I would have given you something’.

(367) *nì wò yé-ní vâà-nì bēgi wâ bé dó*
if 2PL be-PRET come-PRET yesterday 2PL.IRR IRR REF\palm.wine

òðlè
drink

‘If you (pl.) had come yesterday you would have drunk palm wine’.

The conditional conjunction opening the subordinate clause is optional:

(368) *nì Kòlì á bé vâá-ní bēgi*
if Koli 3SG.IRR IRR come-PRET yesterday

‘If Koli had not come yesterday...’

- **IRR + *la* + *V (+ TA affix)*: unmarked negative**

- **IRR + *la* + *légáá* + *V*: past habitual negative**

Negative phrases of almost all TA meanings referring to the action in the past or the present tense use this construction. The stative verbs also require this format in case the predicate is negated (see 8.8.2). The usage of the negative marker *ta* / *la* is described in 8.12.1 below.

gà là lí-ní ‘I did not go’ (preterite);

á lá pélé lò-gò ‘he did not build a house’ (aorist);

wâ là lí mà ‘you (pl.) are not leaving’ (imperfective).

The negation of the past habitual meaning requires the addition of the past habitual marker *légáá*:

(369) *gà là légáá lì làkólì-y zù*
1SG.IRR HAB.PST HAB.NEG go school-DEF in

‘I did not use to go to school’.

Dialectally, the basic series of PPMs may mark the subject of the negative sentence instead of the irrealis one:

gà là tó-ní = gè là tó-ní ‘I did not build it’.

This irregularity must be a borrowing from Guinean Looma or created under its influence.

Another dialectal variation (found in the speech of the same informant) is the merger between the PPM and the negative marker in the 3sg.:

(370) *áá yé-ní vè*
3SG.IRR.NEG be-PRET here

‘He was not here’.

This contraction of *á lá > áá* is not encountered in Looma, but is witnessed in Bandi where the negative series of PPMs is a fusion of the same kind:

(371) *àà lìi-má*
3SG.NEG go-IPFV

‘He is not going’ [Rodewald 1985: 17].

The same type of fusion is observed in Mende and Loko, but I tend to regard this phenomenon as an independent innovation.

- **IRR + *li* + *ya* + *V*: habitual negative**

Li is the negation marker used within the habitual construction. Another habitual clitic marker *ya* immediately precedes the verb phrase:

(372) *á lí yá wówó dóbó-y zù*
3SG.IRR NEG HAB fly REF\bush-DEF in

‘It does not [usually] fly in the bush’.

Summarising the range of meanings of this series of person marking, its invariant semantics is seen as indicating the non-factual action or state, whether absent at all or which is to occur in the future. Indeed, any future action (prospective aspect) or desired action (debitive mood) is unreal at the moment of the speech act. Conditional and subjunctive clauses using this series are unreal by definition, and the usage of this series in negative phrases emphasises the impossibility, inability or unwillingness to perform the action.

8.8.1.4. conditional

Chart 25

1sg.	2sg.	3sg.	1du. incl.	1pl. incl.	1pl. excl.	2pl.	3pl.
<i>nǎgá</i>	<i>néyà</i>	<i>nà, néyá</i>	<i>nàmá</i>	<i>ànàmá</i>	<i>nàná</i>	<i>nàwá</i>	<i>nàtá</i>

COND + *V*

COND + *bé* + *V*

The paradigm reflects a fusion between the conditional conjunction *nè / nì* ‘if’ with the irrealis series of person markers. It is exclusively used in subordinate clauses referring to both real and unreal condition in the present or future tense. The irrealis marker *bé* is used to emphasise the unreal condition:

(373) *néyà bð zàγà yá jáwá-y lð*
2SG.COND REFL hurt 2SG.IPFV REF\blood-DEF see

‘If you hurt yourself, you are going to see the blood’.

(374) *nàwá yé Màsàdà gà wð và*
2PL.COND be Macenta 1SG.IRR PROSP come

‘If you are in Macenta I will come’;

(375) *nãgá* *bé* *yé* *já* *bélà-y,* *gà* *bé* *yé*
 1SG.IPFV IRR be REF\water near-DEF 1SG.IRR IRR be
dóólí-gì *yìlì* *fólófolò*
 REF\rod-DEF bind always

‘If I lived by the river, I would go fishing every day’.

More details on the other types of conditional clauses are given in 9.2.4.1 below.

8.8.1.5. *imperative*

Chart 26

1sg.	2sg.	3sg.	1du. incl.	1pl. incl.	1pl. excl.	2pl.	3pl.
-	∅	-	<i>mó</i>	<i>àmó</i>	-	<i>á, wà</i>	-

IMP + V (Iè)

This series of markers modifies verbal constructions denoting the hortative and imperative moods. The verb itself is not modified, but the clitic morpheme *le* may be placed in the sentence-final position. The marker of the 2sg. does not bear a toneme and therefore does not influence the following lexemes. Throughout this paper, it is shown in some of the glosses to make a special emphasis on its presence in a phrase:

∅ pélè-y lábòlù ‘close the door’;

∅ (-)dábòlù ‘close it’.

Extra emphasis may be made by adding the enclitic *le*:

(376) *dápá-y* *nò* *(∅)* *vè* *gèyà*
 REF\bag-DEF that 2SG.IMP give 1SG.CNTR

‘Give me that bag’;

(377) *dápá-y* *nò* *(∅)* *vè* *lé*
 REF\bag-DEF that 2SG.IMP give IMP

‘Give me that bag!’;

(378) *(∅)* *và* *lé* *ndè!*
 2SG.IMP come IMP my.mother

‘Come here, mom!’

In the 2pl., *wà* is used alternatively to express a strict order, usually directed against the desire of the audience. This form is borrowed from the focalised series of personal pronouns (7.1.2):

(379) *wà* *lì* *làkòlì-y* *zù*
 2PL.IMP go school-DEF in

‘You, go to school [even though you do not want to]’.

In colloquial speech, the cohortative 1du. and 1pl. inclusive markers are usually fused with the verb *dì* ‘go’ to form an inflected form: *móy!* (du.), *àmóy!* (pl.) ‘let us go!’

8.8.1.6. *prohibitive*

Chart 27

1sg.	2sg.	3sg.	1du. incl.	1pl. incl.	1pl. excl.	2pl.	3pl.
-	<i>yà</i>	-	<i>mà</i>	<i>àmà</i>	<i>nà</i>	<i>àwà</i>	-

PROH + la + V

The prohibitive series of PPMs is the negative counterpart of the imperative paradigm given above. Segmentally, most of its forms are identical with the irrealis series, but the tonal picture is different: the prohibitive forms are all low-toned. The 2pl. form is a fusion containing the imperative marker *á-* with a low tone changed according to the whole paradigm.

Prohibitive phrases require the negative marker *la* to be placed between the PPM and the VP:

(380) *yà lá sákpé tèvè dópó-wà-y-tì w̃à*
 2SG.PROH NEG REF\offence cut REF\child-PL-DEF-PL on
 ‘Do not offend the children’.

Note that example (378) may also be translated by an impersonal phrase of prohibition: ‘One should not offend children’.

See the formation of impersonal clauses in 8.12.3 below.

8.8.1.7. *prospective negative*

Chart 28

1sg.	2sg.	3sg.	1du. incl.	1pl. incl.	1pl. excl.	2pl.	3pl.
<i>gèy</i>	<i>yèy</i>	<i>éy, géy</i>	<i>méy, móy</i>	<i>àméy, àmóy</i>	<i>néy</i>	<i>wèy</i>	<i>téy</i>

This negative counterpart of the irrealis series of PPMs obviously appeared as a result of a merger between the basic series and the negative morpheme *-ey*. This construction has genetic cognates in the other SWM languages, cf. Bandi *ngéí* ‘I would not’ or Loko *ngáí* ‘I did not, I will not’. The PRNEG series is mostly used in constructions negating the projected action.

In the 1du. and 1pl., the variants are allomorphs: the back vowel here is obviously borrowed from the basic series markers *mó / àmó*.

- **PRNEG + V**
PRNEG + wɔ + V

This construction may be called predictive: negating the future action or state, it also encompasses a general degree of improbability.

(381) *nú nɔpé éy wɔ ()-dé*
 person all 3SG.PRNEG PROSP 3SG.PF-say
 ‘Nobody will say that [probably]’.

Modal verbs denoting ability or disability do not require the prospective marker *wɔ*:

(382) *gèy vílá gà và dótólól lólí wè*
 1SG.PRNEG can 1SG.IRR come doctor call for
 ‘I cannot call for the doctor’.

In rare cases, the PPM of this series is replaced by the irrealis series accompanied by the negative marker *li*:

(383) *gà li wɔ và yéyé mà*
 1SG.IRR NEG PROSP come take IPFV
 ‘I will not be taken’.

This construction might be the ultimate source of a fusion which created the PPMs of the PRNEG series: *gà li > gàì > gèy*.

The phonetic process of assimilating *a* into *ɛ* before front vowels is frequently encountered in Zialo, and the contraction of *V li > Vy* is also witnessed (cf. the imperative construction mentioned above: *àmó li > àmóy* ‘let’s go’).

• **PRNEG + bé (+ AUX) + V**

This rather rare construction is used in both the main and the subordinate clauses of a negative sentence. Its primary meaning is the unreal condition in the future: the action would never take place at some moment following the speech act unless some events cause it:

- (384) *éy bé yé bówà-y yéyá-nì, éy bé*
 3SG.PRNEG IRR be REF\knife-DEF buy-PRET 3SG.PRNEG IRR
kólí vâà
 REF\panther kill
 ‘If he does not buy the knife he will never kill a panther’.

8.8.1.8. *conditional negative*

CONEG + V-ni

Chart 29

1sg.	2sg.	3sg.	1du. incl.	1pl. incl.	1pl. excl.	2pl.	3pl.
(nè-)gèyè	(n-)èyè	(n-)éyè	(nà-)móyè	à(nà-)móyè	(nà-)néyè	(nà-)wèyè	(nà-)téyè

The conditional conjunction *nà / nè* ‘if’ merged with the PPMs of the prospective negative series here, with the addition of *yè*, the negation marker used in conditional clauses. The original construction thus should be schemed as

***ni PRNEG ye V-ni.**

The fusion between the three elements – the conjunction, the clitic negation marker and the PPM – is still optional in the language:

néyè vâà-ní = ni éyè vâà-ní ‘if he does not come’;

The irrealis marker *bé* can be inserted between the PPM and the negation morpheme:

- (385) *nì gèy bé yè vâà-nì*
 if 1SG.PRNEG IRR COND.NEG come-PRET
 ‘If I do not come’.

The fusion never happens in case the subject is expressed by a NP:

- (386) *nì Kòlì éyè vâà-ní mó ló vè*
 if Koli 3SG.PRNEG come-PRET 1DU.INCL stay here
 ‘If Koli does not come, we will stay here’.

See more detail on conditional clauses in 9.2.4.1 below.

8.8.1.9. *imperfective*

Chart 30

1sg.	2sg.	3sg.	1du. incl.	1pl. incl.	1pl. excl.	2pl.	3pl.
<i>nãgá</i>	<i>yá</i>	<i>álò / lò</i>	<i>mámà</i>	<i>ámámà</i>	<i>nánà</i>	<i>wá</i>	<i>tátá</i>

This series (except 3sg.) is a clear fusion of PPMs with a predicative modifier which I would identify as the adverb *ná* ‘now’. Typologically, such an interpretation would be natural for the PPM expressing the incomplete (progressive) action which is under way at the moment of the speech act.

The 3sg. form is derived from the focalised pronoun merged with copula *tɔ / lɔ*:

- (387) *álò* *li* *dóbó-y* *zù*
3SG.IPFV go REF\bush-DEF in

‘He is going to the bush’.

This example is structurally similar to the focalised pronominal construction, cf.:

- (388) *á* *lò* *é* *lí-gò* *dóbó-y* *zù*
3SG.FOC COP 3SG go-AOR REF\bush-DEF in

‘He [not me] went to the bush’.

However, a copula in the latter case is always followed by a clause, and in example (386) the verb’s subject valency is filled by *álò*, so the element phonetically identical to the copula must be treated as an integral part of the PPM. With a subject NP, the reduced allomorph of this PPM is used:

- (387) *Kòli* *lɔ* *wálí* *wàkè*
Koli 3SG.IPFV money keep

‘Koli spares each penny’.

- **IPFV + V**

The primary meaning of this construction is progressive:

- (388) *kólá-y-tì* *tátá* *wè* *fólò-y* *yà*
REF\clothes-DEF-PL 3PL.IPFV dry REF\sun-DEF at

‘The clothes are getting dry in the sun’.

In addition to this usage, the same construction may express the inchoative phase of a dynamic action and the immediate prospective aspect:

- (388a) *nã á* *li* *dósó-y* *wà*
1SG.IPFV go REF\hunt-DEF on

‘I am leaving for a hunt’.

- (389) *yá* *bélékóózà-y-tì* *gúyá* *bà* *mámà* *li*
2SG.IPFV REF\trousers-DEF-PL wash or 1DU.IPFV go

dóówò-y *zù?*

REF\market-DEF in

‘Are you going to wash the pants or we are going to the market?’

An example of the stative construction:

- (390) *nã á* *ỹĩ*
1SG.IPFV sleep

‘I am sleeping’.

- **IPFV + ya + V: habitual process**

The habitual or iterative action is designated by this construction in case an emphasis is made on the process: the action is ongoing periodically in the present tense plan.

- (391) *nã á* *yà* *ì-bòbè* *fólófólò*
1SG.IPFV HAB 2SG.PF-work every.day

‘Every day I am making you work!’

- (392) *wátí-y* *sì* *nánà* *yà* *bá* *ỹẽ* *vè*
time-DEF this 1PL.EXCL HAB REF\rice eat here

‘At this time, we are usually eating rice here’.

- **IPFV + va + V mà: intentional prospective**

The analytical construction with the auxiliary verb *và* ‘to come’ and the main verb modified by the imperfective marker *mà* denotes intention:

- (393) *nãgá* *và* *pélè-y* *lò* *mà*
1SG.IPFV come REF\house-DEF build IPFV

‘I am coming to build the house’ (or ‘I am going to build’).

- **IPFV + tɔ + V: progressive**

The verb *tò* ‘see’ is used as an auxiliary here, and, as already mentioned above, it is preceded by the polyfunctional marker coreferential with the direct object:

(394) *nã á* *()-tò* *lê* *pélè-y* *wù*
 1SG.IPFV 3SG.PF-see climb REF\house-DEF under

‘I am entering the house’.

The invariant semantics of this series of person markers is the imperfective cluster of TA meanings: it mostly describes the incomplete or repeating atelic process.

8.8.2. *Statal verbs*

For the sake of comprehensibility, finite constructions with statal verbs are extracted from the previous section for a separate survey. As it was mentioned above, almost all dynamic verbs in Zialo may be used in a statal meaning, when placed into a passive or qualitative construction. Semantically, this change of diathesis leads to the transfer of the verb into a different actional class.

The pattern of conjugation of statal verbs is different from that of dynamic verbs, in that the former may only build a limited number of TA constructions. This is, however, not true for a number of verbs with statal semantics which denote emotive or intellectual condition or atelic processes. Such verbs in Zialo (e.g., *kóló* ‘know’, *dùwà* ‘be afraid’, *ínéiné* ‘worry’ etc.) are referred to the actional class of dynamic verbs, even though they show some peculiarities in conjugation (see 8.8.1 above). Only those statal verbs which cannot be used in dynamic verb constructions will be examined in this section.

The predicative usage of statal verbs is substantially based on the category of taxis. The expression of the actual state or quality of the subject can be referred to one of the three tenses: the present (actual state), the unmarked past (preterite) and the future (prospective).

The schemes reflecting the structure of TA constructions used in this section is the same as in the Subject marking section above. The series of the PPM is indicated, which is followed by verbal modifieres (where applicable), the statal predicate (V.STAT) and its TA markers. A subject NP may always be placed to the extreme-left position of the construction, so it is not indicated in the models.

The following syntactic constructions express the present tense meanings:

- **Basic + V.STAT-ni: actual state**

Statal verbs in this construction denote the situation actual for the moment of the speech act or the actual quality of the subject. The preterite affix here has a resultative meaning: it actually indicates the action led to the present situation.

(395) *dápá-yà* *bíízí* *té* *láá-ní* *này*
 REF\bag-PL be.numerous 3PL lie-PRET there

‘Many bags are lying there’.

With qualitative verbs:

(396) *kólá-y* *sì* *vá-ní* *gòlà-wò*
 REF\clothes-DEF this be.good-PRET big-ADV

‘These clothes are very nice’.

- **FOC + *lo* + V.STAT-ni: actual state**

The process or the state in progress is the primary meaning of this construction which can be used with both stative and qualitative verbs.

(397) *kúyè-y,* *nà* *ló* *láá-ní* *gè-wètè-y* *zù*
 REF\night-DEF 1SG.FOC COP lie-PRET 1SG.POSS-bed-DEF in

‘At night, I am lying in my bed’.

With a subject NP instead of the personal pronoun:

(398) *síyě tó láá-ní gé-wété-y zù*
 REF\man COP lie-PRET 3SG.POSS-bed-DEF in

‘A man is lying in his bed’.

- **IRR + *la* + V.STAT-ní: negation of actual state / quality**

The absence of the quality or the state is expressed by adding the negative marker *ta* / *la* to the construction with the PPM of the irrealis series:

(399) *gà là lěy-ní*
 1SG.IRR NEG be.black-PRET

‘I am not black’;

(400) *má lá zéy-ní*
 1DU.INCL.IRR NEG sit-PRET

‘We two (incl.) are not sitting’.

Literally, the last example may be translated as ‘We did not sit down’ which is a good explanation for the presence of the preterite marker in the stative constructions.

- **PF- V.QUAL-a (+ *le*)**

The BPMs of the polyfunctional series mark the subject which is sometimes the only actant of the qualitative verb. The verb is modified by the resultative affix, and the existential verb *le* may be optionally added:

(401) *()-səlè-yàà lè*
 1SG.PF-be.right-RES EXI

‘I am right’;

(402) *ì-wòòzà-à lè*
 2SG.PF-be.long-RES EXI

‘You are tall’.

Many qualitative verbs have a valency for the indirect object expressed by a postposition phrase or a verbal noun in *-fá*:

(403) *nè-yàzà-y wóní-yàà lé jálé-y wà*
 1SG.POSS-wife-DEF like-RES EXI REF\cat-DEF PP

‘My wife likes cats’.

The same construction with stative verbs will have a passive meaning: the passive diathese formation is described in 8.9.1 below.

- **Basic + V.STAT-a: resultative**

Different from the previous construction, this one is primarily focused on the quality or state at the moment of the speech act as the result of some action completed prior to that, thus fully corresponding to the resultative aspect of dynamic verbs. Actually, the predicate here may indeed be regarded as a dynamic verb with the meaning of change of quality:

gè zèy-à ‘I am sitting’ or ‘I have sat down’;

yè wòòzà-à ‘You (sg.) are tall’ or ‘You have become tall’.

The same meaning may also be expressed by a construction with the auxiliary verb *ké* ‘be’ in the resultative form (see below).

The past and the future meanings of statal verbs are expressed by the following models:

- **Basic + *yé-ní* + V.STAT-ní: preterite**

- **IRR + *la* + *yé-ní* + V.STAT-ní: negative preterite**

These two constructions include the preterite form of the auxiliary verb and correspond to the past perfect construction of dynamic verbs (see 8.8.1):

(404) *yè sákpá-gì tà bātè-nì è yé-ní*
 2SG REF\sauce-DEF some prepare-PRET 3SG.DEP be-PRET

vá-ní

be.good-PRET

‘You prepared some sauce which was good’;

(405) *nà yè vàà-ní bēgi, gà là yè-nì*
 when 2SG come-PRET yesterday 1SG.IRR NEG be-PRET

yēdē-nì

be.healthy-PRET

‘When you came yesterday, I was ill’.

• **Basic + yē-ya + V.STAT-ni: past perfect**

The situation described in a dependent clause which preceded the action / state of the main clause is expressed by means of the resultative form of the auxiliary verb *ké* ‘be’:

(406) *gè yé-yà zéy-ní sání é vàà-gò*
 1SG be-RES sit-PRET before 3SG come-AOR

‘I had been sitting before he came’.

• **IRR + wɔ + V.STAT: prospective**

The state or quality of the object in the future tense is designated by this construction:

(407) *kpálé-y sɪ á wɔ bá*
 REF\work-DEF this 3SG.IRR PROSP be.hard

‘This work will be hard’.

Finally, the expression of the imperative mood of statal verbs does not differ from that of dynamic verbs:

(408) *àmó w̃é táá zù, àmó zéy, àmó*
 1PL.INCL meet REF\town in 1PL.INCL.IMP sit 1PL.INCL.IMP

kpóóló lé

REF\word say

‘Let’s meet in town, sit and talk’.

8.9. Diathesis and actant derivation

Zialo verbs demonstrate a high degree of lability. Very often this term was only applied to refer to a class of verbs (or verb forms) which can be used both transitively and intransitively; some scholars use other, less widely accepted terms in this sense, such as “ambitransitive” [Dixon 1994]. In this paper, the term “labile” refers to verbs which can show valency alternation of its actants, i.e. changes in syntactic pattern, with no formal change in the form of the verb. The actants of the original clause change or exchange their positions and, consequently, semantic roles.

The typology of lability is well described in the recent thesis by Letuchiy [2006], who listed the following derivational types of lability, in the order of decreasing frequency in the world’s languages:

- (1) causative;
- (2) reflexive;
- (3) reciprocal;
- (4) decausative (conversive);
- (5) passive.

Of these types, passive, reflexive and reciprocal are usually called diatheses [Testelefs 2001: 412]. The passive voice moves the subject of the original clause to a non-subject (e.g., indirect object position). The general meaning of the passive voice presumes the shift of semantic roles between the actor and the patient: the former is moved into the background of the situation, while the latter may be emphasised. The passive voice is used

also in order to demonstrate that the actual agent of the action is unknown: *I made a change* > *A change was made* (by whom?).

The reflexive (*He praised me* > *He praised himself*) and reciprocal (*She kissed him* > *They kissed each other*) diatheses are semantically close, since they both point at two coinciding participants of the same action. The reflexive diathesis in Zialo is expressed by means of the reflexive pronoun and is examined in 7.2.1 above.

A grammatical conversion which creates a secondary actor for the same predicate in a phrase, or, vice versa, removes one of the original actors, is called the actant derivation (or actant derivation) [Testelets 2001: 432]. Causative and decausative are the most widespread types of the actant derivation: the former (usually called “raising derivation”) creates a secondary subject with the agentive meaning (*I ran* > *He made me run*), while the latter (the “reducing derivation”) removes the agentive participant of the action at all putting a direct object into the subject position (*He hurts my leg* > *My leg hurts*).

The Zialo language demonstrates the evidence confirming the typological observations by Letuchiy: the verbal lability is mostly observed in constructing the causative meaning. The problem arises with treating decausative constructions: since the verb is not modified at all, it is impossible to make a conclusion about the direction of the derivation: of the two phrases

- (1) *He hurt my leg*, and
(2) *My leg hurt*

each may appear to be the original one, and the direction (1) > (2) would signify the decausative conversion, while (2) > (1) would mean the causative derivation.

8.9.1. Passive

The passive diathesis in Zialo is produced from dynamic verbs using the verbal constructions, identical to the statal verb formations described in 8.8.2 above. This parallel is logical since the semantics of the passive construction usually presumes the statal situation as a result of the preceding action.

The TA varieties of the passive diathesis are given in the chart below, followed by examples.

Chart 31

	affirmative	negative
actual (resultative)	<i>Basic + V-a (+ le)</i>	<i>IRR + la + V-ni</i>
past (preterite)	<i>Basic + yé-ní + V-ni</i>	<i>IRR + la + yé-ní + V-ni</i>
future (prospective)	<i>IRR + wɔ (+ va) + V (mà)</i>	<i>IRR + lí + wɔ (+ va) + V (mà)</i>

The actual situation denotes the result of a preceding (and terminated) action and is expressed by the verb with a resultative marker optionally followed by the existential verb. The patient of the original transitive verb occupies the subject valency of the passive verb, while the original agent is omitted:

- (409) *dápá-y yéyé-yàà lè*
REF\bag-DEF take-RES EXI

‘The bag is taken’.

In the negative, the verb is modified by the preterite affix:

- (410) *dápá-y lá yéyé-nì*
REF\bag-DEF NEG take-PRET

‘The bag is not taken’.

The auxiliary verb is added to mark the situation in the past which is no longer relevant for the moment of speech:

(411) *dápá-y lá yé-ní yéyé-nì*
REF\bag-DEF NEG be-PRET take-PRET

‘The bag was taken’;

(412) *dápá-y lá yé-ní yéyé-nì*
REF\bag-DEF NEG be-PRET take-PRET

‘The bag was not taken’.

The projected situation requires the prospective markers:

(413) *dápá-y lí wó vá yéyé mà*
REF\bag-DEF NEG PROSP come take IPFV

‘The bag will not be taken’.

An alternative method of building passive meanings is the usage of participles in *-go-*:

(414) *dápá-y sì fě-gó lè*
REF\bag-DEF this REF\give-NMLZ EXI

‘This is the given bag’.

The peculiarity of this construction is the presence of the obligatory referentiality marker, see more on the usage of the participle in 8.11.2 below.

8.9.2. Causative

The majority of verbs is labile and may express the causative meaning by means of actant derivation, moving a secondary argument to the subject valency of the verb while transferring the original agent of the action to the direct object position.

Here are some semantic groups of verbs demonstrating causative lability:

- phasal verbs

(415) *mḡbílí-y ló-wá*
car-DEF stop-RES

‘A car has stopped’;

(416) *sófělé-y mḡbílí-y ló-wá*
driver-DEF car-DEF stop-RES

‘The driver has stopped the car’.

- verbs of motion:

(417) *dópò-y wúwé-yà*
REF\child-DEF wake.up-RES

‘The child has woken up’;

(418) *dó-y jé-y gé-ló-y wúwé-yà*
REF\son-DEF REF\mother-DEF 3SG.POSS-son-DEF wake-RES

‘The mother has woken her son up’.

- verbs of changing quality:

(419) *jé-y lò né kólúvè-y zù*
REF\water-DEF 3SG.IPFV boil REF\cauldron-DEF in

‘The water is boiling in the cauldron’;

(420) *Kòlì ló jé-y né*
Koli 3SG.IPFV REF\water-DEF boil

‘Koli is boiling the water’.

- prototypically transitive verbs:

(421) *nè-vèlè-y ÿíyáníyá-á*
1SG.POSS-house-DEF destroy-RES

‘My house has crashed’.

- (422) *Kòlì pélé-y yíyáńíyá-á*
 Koli REF\house-DEF destroy-RES

‘Koli has crashed the house’.

With pronominal objects, the suprasegmental polyfunctional prefix is attached to the verb in the causative meaning:

- (423) *nè-kééyè yà ì-bõ b*
 1SG.POSS-father HAB 2SG.PF-work

‘My father makes you work’.

A group of intransitive verbs cannot be converted into a causative meaning since it would have required an introduction of a direct object on them. Instead, they form a polypredicative sentence where the agent of the original sentence is expressed by the direct object of the auxiliary verb *ké* ‘do’ coreferential with the subject of the subsequent factative clause:

- (424) *gè ()-ké-yá Màsà láyě*
 1SG 3SG.PF-do-RES Masa eat

‘I have made Masa eat’.

The literal reading of the sentence thus should be ‘I have made him, so that Masa eats’.

The third, rarer type of causative constructions represents the replacement of the original verb by a suppletive one. Such suppletive pairs mostly correspond to the typological parallels widespread in the world’s languages: e.g., *sá* ‘die’ and *páá* ‘kill, extinguish’:

- góbí-y zá-á* ‘the fire has died out’;
Kòlì góbí-y vâ-à ‘Koli extinguished the fire’.

8.9.3. Decausative

A morphological method of decausativisation is applied for a group of compound verbs which add the referential prefix **ŋ-* to the originally transitive verb. Cf. the example with the verb *tókólàzény* ‘begin’, originally a composition of the noun *tókó* ‘hand’, the postposition *dà* ‘with’ and the verb *séy*, used here in its transitive meaning ‘set, put’:

- (425) *kálámó-y sévé-y lókòlàzény-á*
 REF\teacher-DEF REF\lesson-DEF begin-RES

‘The teacher has started the lesson’;

- (426) *sévé-y ()-tókólàzény-á*
 REF\lesson-DEF 3SG.PF-begin-RES

‘The lesson has started’.

In fact, in the latter example the speaker does not see a habitual direct object for the originally transitive verb ‘begin’ and reinterprets the first component of this compound verb as a noun which would logically require a referential article.

Another instrument of verbal decausativisation is the prefix *dá-* (see details in 8.10.2 below).

- (427) *Kòlì tááyá-y vílá-á*
 Koli REF\calabash-DEF fill-RES

‘Koli has filled the calabash’;

- (428) *táyá-y ()-dávílá-á gâ jé-y*
 REF\calabash-DEF 3SG.PF-get.filled-RES with REF\water-DEF

‘The calabash is filled with water’.

8.10. Word formation

Among the instruments of the verbal word formation, the following will be considered in this section: reduplication, affixation and compounding. In the section devoted to verbal affixes, only prefixes are listed, since the verbal affixation is not witnessed in Zialo.

8.10.1. Reduplication

Verbal reduplication does not play any grammatical role in Zialo and may only be regarded as an instrument of the verbal derivation. It possesses the following morphosyntactic properties:

- (1) verbal reduplication is always full, i.e. the root is repeated with no reduction.
- (2) Prefixed verbs do not reduplicate their preverbs;
- (3) reduplicated lexemes do not change their terminal category, i.e. verbs can only generate other verbs, but not nominals;
- (4) cases of unmotivated reduplication are extremely rare;
- (5) the meanings of reduplicated verbs are predominately connected with the multiple actions through time or location (iterative, multiplicative, dispersive etc.) or intense action.

Semantically, reduplicated verbs may be classified into several distinct groups. The majority of them are verbs expressing manual labour:

gìlì(g) ‘attach, stick’ – *gìlìgìlì(g)* ‘attach everywhere’ (multiplicative);
gòlò(g) ‘hit’ – *gòlògòlò(g)* ‘hit completely’ (intensive);
kpòlò(g) ‘click’ – *kpòlòkpòlò(g)* ‘click for a long time’ (iterative);
tèvè ‘cut’ – *tèvèlèvè* ‘cut into pieces’ (distributive).

Another small group of verbs denote various types of physical motion:

fúdé(g) ‘fall’ – *fúdéfúdé(g)* ‘fall all the time’ (iterative);
síyá(g) ‘walk’ – *síyásíyá(g)* ‘move here and there’ (frequentative);
niya(g) ‘break’ – *niyaniya(g)* ‘destroy completely’ (intensive).

Examples of unmotivated reduplication (i.e. when the original verb is not witnessed in the language and often even not traceable) include just a few verbs:

tòwòlòwò ‘tease’;

kpòkpò ‘crawl’;

ínéiné ‘worry, doubt’ (possibly a loanword from a Manden language: cf. Mandinka *yilanyilan* ‘hesitate, be troubled’, Bambara *yírányírán* ‘be afraid, hesitate’).

A separate note should be made on the verbs of quality. A few examples of reduplication are listed here:

kpà(g) ‘be hard, solid’ – *kpàkpà(g)* ‘to nail, attach’;

kílíyílí ‘roll, revolve, be round’;

gádéyé ‘be fragile’ – *gádéyédéyé* ‘be quite fragile’;

kèlèyèlè ‘be clever’.

8.10.2. Prefixation

Verb prefixation is a common and productive means of category-preserving derivation in Zialo. Most verbal prefixes are grammaticalised nouns with locative semantics which are cognates to postpositions (see 6.16). The difference between the two types of items lies exclusively in their syntactic properties. Postpositions build phrases occupying the indirect object position and following the predicate. They are modified by NPs or person markers of the polyfunctional series. Verbal prefixes, on the contrary, precede the predicate and are bound to it, being thus an integral part of the verb form.

The difference between a postposition phrase and a prefixed verb may be illustrated by the following examples:

(429) *á lè zéy-ní b̀̀t̀̀t̀̀ mà*
3SG.FOC COP sit-PRET box on

‘He is sitting on a box’ (the postposition *m̀̀* ‘on’ forms the postposition phrase indicating the indirect object of the verb);

(430) *á lè b̀̀t̀̀t̀̀ mááwúyá*
3SG.FOC COP box wash.over

‘He is washing the surface of the box’ (the prefix *máá-* follows the direct object of the verb).

Locative prefixes may only be attached to transitive verbs, and are mostly used with verb with the meanings of physical labour. The tone of the prefix is always high, reflecting the referential prefix of the original noun. The most common of them are listed below:

- *bú-* ‘beneath, underneath’

Designates the action affecting the lower part of the object, its bottom or the space underneath it, or directed upwards from the bottom. The original noun is *b̀̀* ‘bottom, loins’.

(431) *dó-y jé-y gé-ló-y wúwé-yà*
REF\son-DEF REF\mother-DEF 3SG.POSS-son-DEF wake-RES

‘The mother has woken up her son’.

- *dá- / dáá-* ‘over’

The original noun is obviously *dà* ‘mouth’, so the preverb depicts the action directed towards the upper part of the object (e.g., the mouth of a vessel) or the space above the surface of an object:

(432) *nã á nè-và-y-tì dáwùyà*
1SG.IPFV 1SG.POSS-thing-DEF-PL wash

‘I am washing my things over [a basin]’.

Cf. a homonymous non-locative prefix below.

- *kóózú-* ‘inside’

The action is performed in the middle part or inside the object (*kóó* ‘belly’, *s̀̀* ‘in’):

(433) *nã á dómã-gì wóózú-ỹifò*
1SG.IPFV REF\shirt-DEF abrade.inside

‘I am abrading the shirt’.

- *máá-, máázú-* ‘towards, on, upon’

The action is directed towards the plain surface of an object or towards its vicinity:

(434) *nã á ()-máázúvèlè*
1SG.IPFV 3SG.PF-cover.on

‘I am covering it’;

(435) *yá tábálí-y s̀̀ máá-wàsà*
2SG.IPFV REF\table-DEF this scratch.upon

‘I am scratching this table’.

Other verbs with this prefix include *máábúlú(g)* ‘approach, be close’ < *kpúlú(g)* ‘be short’), *mááyílí* ‘get dressed’ (*g̀̀l̀̀* ‘tie’), etc.

A great number of verbs with this prefix are derived from primary verbs which are no longer used in the language, even though their cognates are found in related SWM tongues. In such cases, the meaning of *máá-* is sometimes not easy to define:

máálélélé ‘wait’, cf. Bandi *ndεεle* ‘slowly’;

máálévé ‘wake smb up’, cf. *tèvè* ‘cut’;

máálóví ‘change’;

máávélé ‘bend, bow’;
máávílá ‘move quickly’, cf. *pílá* ‘finish; be able’;
máánóǔǔ ‘suffer’.

Qualitative verbs may use this prefix to indicate an insignificant change in the quality of the subject:

kpéyã(g) ‘be red’ – *máábéyã(g)* ‘be orange’, lit. ‘nearly red’.

- *sú-*

The original meaning of the postposition *sù* ‘inside’ is sometimes distorted in prefixed verbs:

kpà(g) ‘be hard, solid’ – *súbá(g)* ‘be very hard’ (intensive);

kúlá(g) ‘take out’ – *súgúlá* ‘tell’;

bè(g) ‘be dry’ – *súwé(g)* with the same meaning;

kóózá ‘be long’ – *súwóózá* ‘be deep’.

Non-locative prefixes are not numerous in Zialo. Some of them are listed below:

- *dá-*

The primary meaning of this prefix is detransitive (in other terms, indicating agent-preserving lability) and decausative:

dáávè(g) ‘get filled’ < *fè* ‘give’;

dáábólú ‘close, get closed’ < *kpólú* ‘cover’;

dáávíli(g) ‘push’ < *píli(g)* ‘throw’;

dáwó(g) ‘get open’, cf. Bandi *mbo* ‘open’;

mè ‘eat smth’ – *dáwé* / *dáǔé* ‘eat (ingest food)’.

- *gà(g)-*

Genetically related to the comitative / instrumental preposition *gà(g)*, this preverb forms derived verbs with a change or intensification of a process or quality. Some of derivatives starting in *gà(g)-* are based on the verbs no longer in use in Zialo but traceable from the neighbouring SWM languages. The low tone of the prefix modifies the tone picture of the whole verb. The verbs modified by this prefix include:

gàfè ‘blow’, cf. Bandi *fè* ‘blow’;

gàkè ‘explain’, cf. *ké* ‘say’;

gàkùlà(g) ‘decide’, cf. *kúlá(g)* ‘take out’;

gàkpà(g) ‘be strong, industrious’, cf. *kpà(g)* ‘be hard, solid’;

gàǔǔ ‘be greedy’, cf. *ǔǔ* ‘be bad’;

gàpóté(g) ‘respond’, cf. *póté(g)* ‘turn’;

gàpòpò ‘console (e.g., a child)’, cf. *pòpò* ‘carry [a child] on the back’;

gàtò ‘understand’, cf. *tò* ‘see’.

- *náá-*

The verb *nááwóló mà* ‘know how’ is the only example of this preverb in my records, so the prefix does not seem to be productive in the language. The primary verb root is *kóló* ‘know’ with which it still shares syntactic properties of conjugation (see 8.8.1.1 above). Compared with a few adverbs obviously containing the same prefix (*nááwólù* ‘later’, *náágòlò* ‘soon’) a suggestion can be made that the prefix is originally the demonstrative pronoun *nà* ‘that’. However, the following example shows that it can no longer be treated as a pronoun since in that case one would expect a subsequent relative clause:

(436) *yè náàwóló lásé-mà*
 2SG know.how swim-NMLZ

‘You can swim’.

- *tà-*

The meaning of prefixed verbs with *tà-* is usually personalised or reflexive:

wé ‘meet, gather’ – *tàwé* ‘gather for oneself’;

tò ‘leave’ – *tàlò* ‘leave, keep for oneself’;
kúló ‘small’ – *tàgùlà* / *tàwùlà* ‘decrease, diminish’.

See also the discussion on the possible preverbal nature of the reflexive marker *β̂* in 7.2.1 above.

8.10.3. Compounding

Compound verbs usually combine nominal and verbal roots together, thus representing grammaticalised verb phrases, sometimes including a postposition phrase as well. Nouns are attached preverbally, occupying the position of a direct object or, within a postposition phrase, of an indirect object of the verb.

Several criteria allow distinguishing between verb phrases with a nominal object and compound verbs.

(1) Compound verbs may themselves form verb phrases with object NPs. Since double direct objects are prohibited in verb clauses (not to be missed with a coordinative group) the predicate should be regarded as a single lexeme:

(437) *kálámó-y* *sévé-y* *lòkòzèy-gò* *wù*
 REF\teacher-DEF REF\book-DEF accept-AOR under

‘The teacher takes the book [from someone giving it to him]’.

(2) The subject marker of the qualitative verb always precedes it (as a prefix), with an indirect object to occupy the final position in the clause. In constructions with compound verbs, a completely different order of elements is observed:

(438) *(-gólízùbólo-wáá* *lè*
 3SG.PF-be.deaf-RES EXI

‘He is deaf’.

(3) Compound verbs act according to the rules of initial consonant alternations (see 5.3): a transitive verb always demonstrates a “weak” initial phoneme while a direct object starts with a “strong” consonant cause by the referentiality marker. In case a compound verb is treated as a verb phrase, one would have expected a “strong” initial consonant, but cf. the following example:

(439) *nà* *gè* *vàà-gò* *Màsàdà,* *gè* *kpálé* *lòkòlàzèy-gò*
 when 1SG come-AOR Macenta 1SG REF\work begin-AOR

‘When I came to Macenta, I started my job’;

(440) *nā á* *wólílo* *nè-bòlà* *yèpèwò-y* *wà*
 1SG.IPFV listen 1SG.POSS-friend story-DEF PP

‘I am listening to my friend’s tale’.

An objection to this treatment is the tonal picture of some compound verbs. In the previous example, a low tone would be expected on the whole verb, but the high tone of the original noun *gólí* ‘ear’ is preserved. This makes me conclude that the grammaticalisation of verb phrases into compound verbs has not been completed at times, and is still under way, cf. the correct treatment of a compound verb in the other example:

(441) *wátí* *gè* *(-nàzàzèy-gò* *lá*
 when 1SG 3SG.PF-marry-AOR DEP

‘When I married her...’

The semantic classification of compound verbs demonstrates that the majority of them are combined with nouns denoting body parts:

tókòlàzèy ‘begin’ < *tókó* ‘hand’, *dà* ‘at’, *séy(g)* ‘seat, put’;

tókózèy(g) bù ‘accept’;

gólílo ‘listen’ < *gólí* ‘ear’, *tó* ‘stand, set’.

Verbs with qualitative meanings also use the same scheme:

gólízùbóóló ‘be deaf’ < *gólí* ‘ear’, *zù* ‘in’, *kpóóló* ‘be empty’;
gààzùwòlè(g) ‘be blind’ < *gààzù* ‘eye’, *kólé(g)* ‘be white’;
dìlòlò(g) ‘be brave’ < *dì* ‘heart’, *dòlò(g)* ‘seek’ (?).

Verbal compounds may seldom incorporate other semantic groups of nouns:
kònòkùlà(g) ‘feed’, cf. Looma *kònò(g)* ‘food’, Zialo *kúlá(g)* ‘take out’;
ṅàzàzèy(g) ‘marry’ < *ṅàzà* ‘woman, wife’, *séy(g)* ‘sit, seat’.

8.11. Nominalisation

Nominalisation is a conversion of a verb into a noun. By nature of this definition, nominalisation should be regarded as a particular case of word formation. I decided to extract it into a separate section because of the grammatical value nominalisation possesses in the language. For the sake of logical sequence, all verbal nominals, both acting in grammatical constructions and lexical derivatives, are listed in this section.

There are two ways nouns are derived from verbs: (proper) conversion, i.e. the categorial shift of the lexeme without any modification, and affixation. The first subsection below will be devoted to conversion leading to the formation of basic verbal nouns in Zialo. The rest of the section deals with verbal nouns of various types produced by means of affixation.

8.11.1. Basic verbal noun

As it was noted earlier, there are no morphological criteria according to which verbs may be strictly separated from nouns (but, naturally, not vice versa: not all nouns can act as verbs in Zialo). The absolute majority of verbal lexemes may be converted to act as subject or object NPs of a sentence without any modification. When occupying a position of a NP, these lexemes will be labeled the basic verbal nouns hereinafter. They are glossed by the respective English nominal forms: *dì* (verb) ‘go’ - *dì* (noun) ‘going, departure’. Verbal nouns derived from qualitative verbs are glossed the same as the verbs themselves, to avoid exorbitant glosses.

Basic verbal nouns demonstrate all nominal morphosyntactic properties. Morphologically, they use categories of determination and plurality:

méní(g) ‘hear’ – *méní-gì* ‘the [process of] hearing’;
mááyé(g) ‘sell’ – *mááyé-gì-tì* ‘the sales’;
pà ‘come’ – *Kòlì và-y* ‘Koli’s arrival’.

Syntactically, basic verbal nouns may be placed in all syntactic positions of a normal NP.

(1) Isolated subject / object position:

(442) *dí-y* *lò* *gè* *(-sù)*
REF\going-DEF COP 1SG 3SG.PF-in
‘I am leaving’ (lit. ‘the departure is what I am in’).

(443) *gà* *wò* *vilà* *kpóóbé-gì* *sì* *wà* *linálòvè*
1SG.IRR PROSP finish REF\work-DEF this PP after.tomorrow
‘I will finish this work the day after tomorrow’.

(2) Possessor within a possessive syntagma:

mááloví(g) ‘change’ – *nè-wàáloví-gì* ‘my change’.

(3) Attribute within a NP:

(444) *bówá* *yàdì-gì* *lè*
REF\knife-DEF sharpening-DEF EXI
‘This is the sharpened knife’ (or ‘This is the knife sharpening’);

- (445) *vè báálá wólé-gì lè*
 here REF\sheep be.white-DEF EXI
 ‘Here is the white sheep’.

At least some of the verbs may generate homonymous verbal nouns ending in a vowel and in the reflex of the proto-language syllabic nasal **-ŋ*. The two verbal nouns demonstrate a difference in meaning, cf. the conversion of *kpãdí* ‘be hot’:

- (I) *já bǎdí-y* ‘the hot water’, but
 (II) *já bǎdí-gì* ‘the heated water’.

The speaker sees the semantic difference between the two in the aspectual characteristics: example (II) has a resultative meaning, while (I) only states a fact without giving a reference to the preceding action of heating the water. The *gì*-noun might be labeled as a passive participle, syntactically similar to the participle in *-go* (see below).

It is not clear so far whether or not all Zialo verbs can have both *-y* and *-gì* verbal nouns. Testing a limited questionnaire of verbs, I would rather suggest that some of them cannot. Indeed, the classification of lexemes into two classes according to their historical phonological structure is definitely a stable category in Zialo. A few nouns which demonstrate homonymous roots with different final phonemes (like *pélé-y* ‘the road’ - *pélé-gì* ‘the way, method’) are not systematic and should be treated as exceptions. The variability in the verbal system may only be explained if one suggests the existence of a participle, built with the *-gì* suffix and thus homonymous to the determination affix of nouns.

A similar pattern of constructing verbal nouns is found in Loko, another SWM language, which builds its passive construction according to the following two templates:

- (446) *'kéndé-ŋó*
 3SG\be.healthy-STAT1

‘He is healed’;

- (447) *'kéndé-ó*
 3SG\be.healthy-STAT2

‘He is healthy’ [Kimball 1983: 32].

The former of them is a passive construction with the patient in the subject position, expressing the result of the preceding action, while the latter describes the “pure quality”, and the subject equals to the agent of the clause. The phonological difference between the two lies solely in the form of the suffix.

(4) Basic verbal nouns may serve as predicates shaped by the determinative marker in a rarely used verbal construction expressing the resultative aspect with the basic (in the affirmative sentence) or irrealis (in the negative sentence) series of PPMs:

- (448) *gè nè-bòlà-y lò-y*
 1SG 1SG.POSS-friend-DEF seeing-DEF

‘I have seen my friend’;

- (449) *zàwàzà gà là nè lì-y*
 until.now 1SG.IRR NEG yet departure-DEF

‘I still have not left’.

The semantics and usage of this construction require further clarification.

(5) Basic verbal nouns formed from intransitive verbs may be used in the indirect object position with postposition *sù* to express the actual state in progress:

- (450) *nà ló ní-y zù*
 1SG.FOC COP REF\sleeping-DEF in

‘I am sleeping’.

This model was obviously grammaticalised to build the progressive construction in Looma where verbs can directly attach *-su / -zu* as the TA affix: *dá liì-sú* ‘we (incl.) are going’.

8.11.2. *Verbal noun / participle in -go*

This verbal derivative exercises two different functions and, depending on its position in the sentence, may be called either the verbal noun of action or the participle.

(1) The action noun expresses the process or state, depending on the actional class of the original verb. As every noun, it may serve as both the subject and the object of the verb forming NPs with dependent attributes:

(460) *síkélétí b̀̀lè-gò-y yà k̀̀édéyá-gì ÿiyà-nì*
cigarette drink-NMLZ-DEF HAB REF\health-DEF harm-PRET

‘Smoking harms one’s health’;

(461) *àmámà bá lévé-gò-y lókólàzéy nà*
1PL.INCL.IPFV REF\rice cut-NMLZ-DEF begin already

‘We are already starting the harvest of rice’.

(462) *sévé yálãbó-gò-y vá-nì*
REF\writing study-NMLZ-DEF be.good-PRET

‘Studying reading is useful’;

(463) *gè vílá-á gà làÿẽ-gò-y*
1SG finish-RES with eat-NMLZ-DEF

‘I have finished eating’.

The determinative marker may be omitted:

(464) *é vílá gà làÿẽ-gò*
3SG finish with eat-NMLZ

‘He finishes eating’.

(2) The participle is used in the appositive or predicative position. In the former case, the person marker of the polyfunctional series is to be prefixed to the participle making its initial consonant “strong”. This person marker is coreferential with the noun to which the participle is related, so in fact the whole construction is a polypredicative sentence with a relative clause:

(465) *nã á nè-kééÿè ló ()-séy-gò-y*
1SG.IPFV 1SG.POSS-father see 3SG.PF-sit-NMLZ-DEF

‘I see my father [who is] seated/sitting’.

(466) *wálí-y ()-fè-gò-y gèyà, é ÿélé-yà*
money 3SG.PF-give-NMLZ-DEF 1SG.CNTR 3SG disappear-RES

‘The money [which was] given to me, it has vanished’;

(467) *dómã-gì lé ()-sóló-gò-y*
REF\shirt-DEF EXI 3SG.PF-make-NMLZ-DEF

‘This is the sewn shirt’ (lit. ‘This is the shirt which is sewn’).

In the predicative position, the person marker is not attached, because the participle is placed into the same clause with the subject and serves as its predicate:

(468) *dápá-y sì ẁ̀lò-gò lè*
REF\bag-DEF this be.big-NMLZ EXI

‘This bag is big’, cf. the appositive construction

(469) *dápáy ()-bóló-gò-y*
REF\bag-DEF 3SG.PF-be.big-NMLZ-DEF

‘The bag [which is] big’;

- (470) *é súwá-y váá-gò sí gé-yáwò-y*
 3SG REF\animal-DEF kill-AOR this 3SG.POSS-value-DEF

bà-gò-y
 hard-NMLZ-DEF

‘He killed this animal whose value is high’.

Statal verbs may also generate participles which serve to express precisely the same meaning as the normal qualitative construction (see 8.8.2 above):

- (471) *(-)máné-gò-y gà nú (-)géyé*
 3SG.PF-be.necessary-NMLZ-DEF that REF\person 3SG.PF-take

‘It is necessary that someone takes it’.

8.11.3. Verbal noun in *-fà*

Identical with the abstract nominal suffix described in 6.10.3.1 above, the verbal suffix *-fà* indicates the process or a single occurrence of the action and is used mostly with verbs of emotional condition (e.g., *dùwà* ‘be afraid’, *ínéiné* ‘worry’, etc.) which require a non-clause sentential actant:

- (472) *nã á inèinè gà dópò-y fúdé-fà-y*
 1SG.IPFV worry COMP REF\child-DEF fall-NMLZ-DEF

‘I am worrying about the child not to fall’.

8.11.4. Supine in *-ma*

The primary syntactic usage of the verbal noun shaped by this suffix is identical to the supine in classical Indo-European languages: the verbal noun modifying verbs of motion and expressing the purpose of the motion. The NP containing the supine occupies the position of the indirect object, following the predicate of the clause:

- (473) *nã á lì dólí pìlì-mà-y*
 1SG.IPFV go rod throw-NMLZ-DEF

‘I am going fishing’;

- (474) *nè-díyá á wó lí gálá fèlí-mà-y*
 1SG.POSS-elder.sibling 3SG.IRR PROSP go REF\god pray-NMLZ-DEF

‘My elder brother will go praying’.

Occasionally, the same verbal noun may accompany verbs with a different semantics, functioning as a verbal noun of action. This usage is restricted by particular verbs, and the resulting verbal nouns are already quite lexicalised:

- (475) *sání è yé fūdè-mà-y yé é gáázù-y*
 before 3SG.DEP be REF\rob-NMLZ-DEF do 3SG REF\face-DEF

ṽáávèlè-nì
 cover-PRET

‘Before robbing, he had covered his face’.

8.11.5. Process noun in *-pélé*

The noun *pélé* / *pélé(g)* in its abstract meaning ‘way, method’ conjoined with a verb creates a verbal noun with a meaning of process or method of performing the action:

- (476) *pá-vélé lò è (-)sù*
 REF\go-NMLZ COP 3SG.DEP 3SG.PF-in

‘He is leaving’ (lit. ‘Leaving is what he is in’).

Within a genitive syntagma:

- (477) *pélé lò-pèlè ló gè (-)mà*
 REF\house build-NMLZ COP 1SG 3SG.PF-on

‘I am building a house’ (lit. ‘House building is what I am on’).

8.11.6. *Agentive noun in -mo / -bela*

The singular agentive suffix *-mo* and its plural counterpart *-bela* are built on the base of verbs denoting physical activities and processes. The resulting verbal human nouns of agent denoting occupation or affiliation:

kàlà(g) ‘read’ – *kálámó* ‘teacher’;

kpõbè(g) ‘work’ – *kpõbèmò-y* ‘the worker’, *kpõbèbèlà-y-tì(g)* ‘the workers’;

muyã ‘steal’ – *mùyãwò* ‘thief’.

These suffixes may generate compound nouns from verb phrases:

kólá ‘clothes’, *sóló(g)* ‘make’ – *kólázólómò* ‘dressmaker’.

8.11.7. *Agentive noun in -ɲání*

The suffix is a grammaticalisation of the free abstract noun *ɲání / yání / ání* (dialectal variant) with the meaning ‘thing, something’. It generates non-human agentive nouns from dynamic verbs:

pílí(g) ‘jump’ – *píliɲání* ‘chimpanzee’ (lit. ‘jumping one’);

píliyẽ ‘run’ – *píliyeyání* ‘bicycle’ (‘running one’).

8.12. Clause types

The argument structure of the elementary verbal sentence (clause) was discussed in 8.7 above. In the present section, various types of monopredicative clauses will be examined, including existential sentences, serialised constructions, impersonal clauses and means of expressing negation on the phrasal level.

8.12.1. *Negation*

The verbal category of polarity is expressed by means of negative PPMs (of PRNEG, CONEG and PROH series, see 8.8.1 above) and / or clitic negation markers placed before the predicate. Negation markers are not bound to the verb: a direct object and adverbial modifiers may be inserted between them. Therefore, they should be treated as modifiers of the whole verb phrase.

Negation markers differ according to the TA meaning of the predicate.

- *ta / la*

Used in most verbal TA constructions of Zialo referring to the action or state in the past or present tense. The rules of its coordination with PPMs are described in 8.8.1.

(478) *yà* *là* *ɲálé-y* *ɓè*
2SG.PROH NEG REF\cat-DEF chase

‘Do not chase the cat’;

(479) *á* *lá* *zólé-nì*
3SG.IRR NEG be.right-PRET

‘He is not honest’;

(480) *yà* *lá* *pélé* *lò-nì*
2SG.IRR NEG REF\house build-PRET

‘You did not build a house’.

Negative marker *ta* replaces the copula verb *bà* ‘be’ and the medial copula *tò* in existential phrases:

(481) *gà* *là* *gà* *kálámó* *tá* *dótóló*
1SG.IRR NEG with REF\teacher CONJ doctor

‘I am neither a teacher nor a doctor’;

The usage of *ta / la* in existential clauses allows to treat it as a negative copula, see more about this in 8.12.4.5 below.

- *li*

This marker negates prospective and habitual constructions, the latter require the subsequent habitual marker:

(482) *nú lí yá zéy dápá-y wòmà*
REF\person NEG HAB sit REF\bag-DEF astride

‘One should not sit on the bag’;

(483) *gà lì wò và yéyé mà*
1SG.IRR NEG PROSP come take IPFV

‘I will not be taken’;

(484) *nú lí vílá è và gúlè-y lò vè*
REF\person NEG can 3SG come REF\song-DEF sing here

‘It is prohibited to sing here’.

- *ye*

This marker is only utilised in conditional clauses, see its usage in 8.8.1 above and 9.2.4.1 below.

Negative markers are obligatory in phrases expressing negation and cannot be replaced by negative adverbial modifiers or quantifiers. Such adverbial polarity markers usually have dual meanings, depending on the presence or absence of the negation marker in the sentence. They include:

nòpé ‘some, none’;

ḡání ‘something, nothing’;

ílá ‘one, some, once, no, never, no one’;

nú nòpé, nú yílá ‘somebody, nobody’;

nàpá ‘ever, never’.

(485) *nú-y sì nàpá lá káyẽ-gì lò-nì*
REF\person-DEF this never NEG REF\pangolin-DEF see-PRET

‘This person never saw the pangolin’.

Besides the direct object NP, the negative marker can be accompanied by the adverbial intensifier *mó / mǔ* ‘no more, no longer’:

(486) *wálí lá mǔ gèyà*
money NEG no.more 1SG.CNTR

‘I have no more money’.

8.12.2. Serialisation

Serialisation is a common means of expressing multiple actions performed by a single actor, within one sentence. There is no consensus in the literature as to how to distinguish serialised constructions from coordinative verb phrases, so one has to be cautious about the definition put forward in the present section. The following criteria might be applied for a serialised construction:

(1) the construction should represent a chain of two or more verb phrases sharing the grammatical form of the verb (exclusive of such meanings as polarity which may mark only one VP, usually the first or the last one);

(2) no conjunctions are inserted in between the constituent VPs;

(3) all verbs should be autonomous, and not auxiliary, i.e. they should be able to function as principal predicates in a clause;

(4) usually, one of the verbs within the chain is undergoing a semantic reduction.

In case all the four criteria are applied, serialised constructions might be called prototypical; in case one of them (usually the fourth one) is absent or questionable, such constructions will be called non-prototypical.

While coordinative construction of nominal or attributive conjuncts may use special conjunctions (see 6.6.4 above), verbs build chains of actions by means of (largely non-prototypical) serialised constructions which require PPMs to precede each verb in the series:

(487) *àmó kpě, àmó lí, àmó ()-mé, àmóy*
 1PL.INCL all, 1PL.INCL.IMP go 1PL.INCL 3SG.PF-eat 1PL.INCL.go
tábálí-y yà!
 REF\table-DEF to

‘All of us, let’s go eat it, everyone to the table!’

Hortative constructions similar to this example are the most frequent cases of serialisation. In the indicative mood, serialised constructions require the verb in its factative form, with the PPM of the basic series:

(488) *gè vâ-à gè zèyè dóówà-y zù*
 1SG come-RES 1SG return REF\market-DEF in

‘I have come, I returned from the market’.

Cases of verb serialisation in the indicative mood are very often encountered in narrative speech, cf. the examples from the texts given as Appendices to the present paper:

(489) *é ()-síyá, é ()-fúká.*
 3SG 3SG.PF-pound 3SG 3SG.PF-grind

‘He pounded and grinded it’;

(490) *é nà wòlò, é nà wú-gì wòlò, ()-gólò bólóólò*
 3SG that hit 3SG that head-DEF hit 3SG.PF-hit much

‘She hit her, hit her head, hit her completely’.

8.12.3. Impersonal clauses

Most impersonal verb constructions are utilised to express modal meaning, most often that of obligation.

A specific impersonal marker is the quotative predicator *ké*. Called this way because of its function of introducing reported speech (see 9.2.3), this invariable predicator is derived from the polysemic verb *ké* ‘be, do, say’ and forms impersonal clauses expressing obligation. It requires a polyfunctional prefix of the 3sg. as its argument coreferential with the subsequent relative clause:

(491) *()-ké yè níká yèyà*
 3SG.PF-QUOT 2SG REF\cow buy

‘You should buy a cow’.

The 3rd person marker is a frequent means of constructing impersonal clauses. Even in case the subject is meant as impersonal, the PPM of the basic series may be employed to build a canonical factative clause as such:

(492) *sákpá kpàtè-fâ-y zù, é súwá-y yèyà*
 REF\sauce prepare-NMLZ-DEF PP 3SG REF\meat-DEF buy

‘To prepare the sauce, one should buy meat’ (lit. ‘one buys meat’).

Apart from the 3rd person markers, another means of indicating impersonality is the cataphoric pronoun *má* ‘that’ acting as the subject of the main clause and referring to the subsequent dependent clause:

(493) *má lá néé-nì Kòlì lì táá zù*
 this NEG be.pleasant-PRET Koli go REF\town in

‘It is not appropriate if Koli goes to town’.

In constructions with the indirect speech attributed to a participant who is not mentioned, a participle in *-go-* (see 8.11.2 above) is used:

- (494) *(-dè-gò) lé gà Kòlì (-nàzàzèy-gò)*
 3SG.PF-say-NMLZ EXI that Koli 3SG.PF- marry-AOR

‘It is said that Koli got married’.

Finally, the impersonal meaning may be expressed by the usage of the noun *nú* ‘person’ as the “empty” subject referred to any human object (this usage might have been influenced by the identical impersonal construction in French), and its counterpart *nání* ‘thing’ for non-humans.

- (495) *nú lí yá zéy dápá-y wòmà*
 REF\person NEG HAB sit REF\bag-DEF astride

‘One should not sit on the bag’;

- (496) *nú lí vílá é và gúlèy lò vè*
 REF\person NEG can 3SG come REF\song-DEF sing here

‘It is prohibited to sing here’.

8.12.4. Existential clauses

In Zialo, existential clauses are built with a limited set of existential predicators, representing different phases of the process of grammaticalisation into copulas. Existential sentences possess a number of peculiarities which make them different from normal clauses, mainly the restrictions imposed on verbal conjugation and expressing grammatical categories. I will now analyse existential constructions successively.

8.12.4.1. zero-predicate existential constructions

In complex clauses, there is an opportunity to form relative clauses consisting of a subject person marker (usually a PPM) and a postposition phrase or a locative adverb. Such clauses usually serve to denote deixis. In such cases, the existential verb is zero, and there is no copula present:

- (497) *ì-vàvèlè ló yè (-sù)*
 2SG.PF-coming COP 2SG 3SG.PF-in

‘You are coming’ (lit. ‘the process of coming is what you are in’);

- (498) *gè yání yéyá-gò nè-dèyè-y wè è*
 1SG thing buy-AOR 1SG.POSS-younger.sibling-DEF for 3SG.DEP

né-láá zù
 1PL.EXCL.POSS-village in

‘I bought a gift to my younger brother living in our village’;

- (499) *nú-y sí è vè*
 REF\person-DEF this 3SG.DEP here

‘The person who is here’.

A similar construction is possible with the preposition *gà(g)* expressing comitative, presentative and instrumental meanings:

- (500) *bè ló è gà kúdíyì-y?*
 who COP 3SG.DEP with REF\chief-DEF

‘Who is the chief?’

Existential phrases with a zero predicate are a normal grammar construction in the SM languages [Khachatryan 2010a]. However, in the SM languages, the PPM used in such phrases is diachronically a merger between a personal pronoun and a copulative verb. The

use of PPMs of the basic series with a zero verb in Zialo is a feature never noted for either the SWM or SM languages, and it definitely deserves a closer look in the future.

8.12.4.2. *existential verb ké*

As a full-fledged verb (as noted earlier, it can also serve as a predicator), *ké* possesses a number of semantic meanings one of which is ‘to be’ expressing both existence and localisation.

As such, it has only got one serious syntactic restriction: it is unable to construct clauses referring to the actual situation. Subsequently, existential sentences with *ké* denote the state in the past of the future tense, as well as the resultative aspect. The basic existential constructions with *ké* are listed below. The subject (marked by *S* in the following schemes) may be expressed by a NP or a PPM of the basic series.

• ***S ké-TA NP/ADV: location in the past***

The TA markers on the verb are limited by the aorist and the preterite suffixes.

(501) *té yé Kòlì yé-gò Màsàdà*
3PL QUOT Koli be-AOR Macenta

‘They told Koli was in Macenta’;

(502) *nà gè yè-nì Màsàdà, gè nè-bòlà-y lè-gò*
when 1SG be-PRET Macenta 1SG 1SG.POSS-friend-DEF see-AOR

‘When I was in Macenta, I saw my friend’;

(503) *é yé-ní nòvè bēgì?*
3SG be-PRET there yesterday

‘Was he there yesterday?’

• ***S ké-ni V.STAT(-ni): state in the past*** (not relevant to the moment of speech)

(504) *é yé-ní wóózà(-nì)*
3SG be-PRET be.long(-PRET)

‘He was tall’.

• ***S ké-ni gà NP / COM: identification in the past***

(505) *kónábá gè yè-nì gà dópó-y*
REF\last.year 1SG be-PRET with REF\child-DEF

‘Last year I was a child’.

• ***S ké-ya gà NP / COM: transformation***

The construction marks the resultative aspect, i.e. it reflects both that the transformation took place in the past, and the actual state at the moment of speech:

(506) *nè-diyà yé-yá gà mäsá-gì*
1SG.POSS-uncle be-RES with REF\king-DEF

‘My uncle has become the king’ (an is still there);

(507) *gè yé-yà gà kkdíyì-y*
1SG be-RES with REF\chief-DEF

‘I became the chief’.

• ***S ké-ya V.STAT-ni: state in the past, preceding to another action or state in the past (past perfect)***

(508) *gè yé-yà zéy-ní sání è vā-à*
1SG be-RES sit-PRET before 3SG.DEP come-RES

‘I had been sitting before he came’.

• ***S wò yé NP/ADV/ADJ: identification / location in the future***

(509) *yè wò yè Màsàdà linà*
2SG PROSP be Macenta tomorrow

‘You will be in Macenta tomorrow’;

• **(nì) S kɛ: conditional mood**

(510) *ná* *ténémá-y* *yé, gèy* *bé* *và*
 3SG.COND Sunday-DEF be 1SG.PRNEG IRR come

‘If it were Sunday, I would not come’.

Negation is marked by placing the negation marker *ta / la* before the verb:

(511) *fólò-y* *yè* *vàà-ní* *gà* *là* *yè-nì* *vè*
 REF\day-DEF 2SG come-PRET 1SG.IRR NEG be-PRET here

‘The day you came I was not here’.

8.12.4.3. *copula bà*

The copula which bears the function of constructing existential phrases referring to the present situation is *bà* ‘be’. It cannot be considered a full-fledged verb since it cannot be modified by any TA affixes, modal modifiers, and cannot be used in negative sentences either.

The main usage of this copula is to build existential phrases with the identification and presentative semantics, optionally followed by preposition *gà(g)* ‘with’. The subject may be represented by a NP or a personal pronoun of the focalised series.

S bà (gà) NP / COM

(512) *nè-kééyè* *wà* *dótóló-y*
 1SG.POSS-father COP doctor-DEF

‘My father is a doctor’;

(513) *ziðlò-y* *wà* *(gà)* *gè*
 Zialo-DEF COP (with) 1SG.COM

‘I am a Zialo’;

(514) *ì-dá* *òdálá-y* *wà* *bé?*
 2SG.POSS-property friend-DEF COP who

‘Who (of them) is your friend?’

The corresponding negative clauses are built with the negative copula *ta / la* (below).

8.12.4.4. *affirmative copula tɔ*

The primary semantics of *tɔ* denotes the actual situation in the moment of speech. It is genetically related to the 3sg. PPM of the imperfective series *álò / lò* (see 8.8.1). Within a stative construction expressing the actual state, it separates the subject from the stative predicate.

Its possible origin from the verb *tò* ‘see’ is typologically a well-attested phenomenon in the languages of Africa (cf. a similar parallel in the SWM language of Kpelle) and elsewhere.

Personal pronouns of the focalised series and NPs are placed into the subject position in copulative constructions with *tɔ*. The inventory of these constructions includes the following ones.

S tɔ NP / PP / ADV: location

The construction points at the location of the subject at the moment of speech. It may optionally also express the existence in general.

(515) *nà* *lɔ* *ní-y* *zù*
 1SG.FOC COP REF\sleeping-DEF in

‘I am sleeping’ (lit. ‘I am in the sleeping’);

(516) *nà* *lɔ* *Màsàdà*
 1SG.FOC COP Macenta

‘I am in Macenta’;

(517) *gálá tò nà̀y*
REF\god COP there

‘The god exists’.

S tɔ CL: focalisation

(518) *dápá-y s̀ì ló gè̀ (̀)-géyá-g̀*
REF\bag-DEF this COP 1SG 3SG.PF-buy-AOR

‘It is this bag I bought’;

(519) *sévé-y ló é yé-ní g̀à (̀)-ké*
REF\writing-DEF COP 3SG be-PRET with 3SG.PF-do

‘It is the letters he wrote’.

This is the most widely used focus construction in Zialo. It may be specified as expressing the contrastive focus, cf. the following example where the focus is made in order to answer an interrogative sentence:

(520) *Màsà v̀àà-g̀ g̀à sóovàlé-g̀ì? b̀à, g̀ìlè-y ló Màsà*
Masa come-AOR with REF\donkey-DEF no REF\dog-DEF COP Masa
v̀àà-g̀ l̀à
come-AOR with.3SG

‘Did Masa bring the donkey? No, it’s the dog he brought’.

Both the direct and the indirect direct object of the original clause are moved to the extreme-left position in the sentence. It is necessary to note that the remaining (topic) part of the sentence represents a full clause, because the focalised object is obligatorily substituted by a coreferential person marker: of the polyfunctional series (for the direct object) or the comitative or contractive series (for the indirect object).

Some interrogative pronouns require the same focus construction, separated from the topic of the sentence by *tɔ*:

(521) *m̀ìni ló ì-kééyè jówó-g̀ì yéyè-g̀*
where COP 2SG.POSS-father REF\cassava-DEF take-AOR

‘Where did your father take cassava?’

S tɔ (g̀à) NP/PP: identification

(522) *g̀álú-g̀ì l̀ò g̀élé-y ỳà*
REF\moon-DEF COP REF\sky-DEF on

‘The moon is on the sky’;

(523) *nú-y s̀ì ló g̀à nú v̀áđá*
REF\person-DEF this COP with person good

‘This man is a good man’.

In the last example, the usage of the copula seems identical to the construction with the copula *b̀à*. The difference between the two lies in semantics: *b̀à* is used to affiliate a person with a profession, social position, ethnicity or clan (i.e. limited groups of people), while *tɔ* marks the identification with general categories of people, and is used with non-human objects.

8.12.4.5. *negative copula ta*

Homonymous with and related to the basic predicative negative modifier *ta / lá*, the copula serves to mark negation in any existential clauses of identification, presentation and location. It occupies exactly the same position in the sentence as the copulas *b̀à* and *tɔ*. The subject is expressed by a pronoun of the focalised series or a NP, while the predicate is completed by a pronoun of one of the indirect object series (comitative or contracted), a NP, or a locative adverb.

- (524) *gálá tá nà*
REF\god NEG there
‘The god does not exist’;
- (525) *Gíláwó tá tíyé*
Guilavogui NEG 3PL.COM
‘They are not Guilavogui’;
- (526) *wálí lá gèyà*
money NEG 1SG.CNTR
‘I have no money’ (lit. ‘There is no money at me’).

8.12.4.6. *existential verb le*

The major syntactic differences of this existential verb from the copulas described above include its position at the end of the clause, where the normal predicate is usually placed. Moreover, it is able to build analytical TA constructions with the auxiliary verb *ké*, as well as be modified by the negation marker. All of that allows treating it not as a copula linking the subject with the nominal predicate, but a special “defective” verb. Throughout this paper, the verb *le* is glossed as EXI in all examples, to emphasise its particular status.

This existential verb builds sentences with the meanings of possession, quality, and presentation, which makes them different from those examined in the previous subsections.

Clauses of this type have the nominal part of the predicate immediately following the subject, without being linked with it. The subject may be expressed by a personal pronoun (of the focalised series), a NP, and an adverb of time or location. The nominal part of the predicate may be represented by a qualitative verb, a NP, an adverb or a pronoun.

Since the existential verb *le* can form clauses with various TA meanings, they will be considered one by one, starting from the constructions denoting the actual state at the moment of speech.

- ***S le*: presentative**
- ***S V le*: identification**

- (527) *nà lé*
1SG.FOC EXI
‘It is me’;
- (528) *vè báálá wólé-gì lè*
here REF\sheep be.white-DEF EXI
‘This is the white sheep’;
- (529) *báálá-y sì wólé-yáá lè*
REF\sheep-DEF this be.white-RES EXI
‘This sheep is white’;
- (530) *báálá-y sì nè-dé-y lè*
REF\sheep-DEF this 1SG.POSS-property-DEF EXI
‘This sheep is mine’.

The negation is expressed by the negation marker *ta*:

- ***S (V) ta le***

- (531) *nà lá lé*
1SG.FOC NEG EXI
‘It is not me’.

In case the situation refers to the past tense, the analytical verb construction with the auxiliary verb is used:

- ***S (V) yé-ni lè*** (affirmative)
- ***S (V) ta yé-ni lè*** (negative).

(532) *ɲà yé-ní lè*
1SG.FOC be-PRET EXI

‘It was me’.

The only construction where the existential verb is not placed at the very end of the clause is that of comparison: this construction requires the subsequent postposition phrase with *bà*:

- ***NP / PF-V.QUAL le NP / PF-bà***

(533) *(-)-kòòzà-à lè (-)-bá*
1SG.PF-be.long-RES EXI 3SG.PF-PP

‘I am higher than him’.

In complex sentences, the existential verb *le* may be followed by a dependent clause. This is the method of clefting: the focus is centered on the message which is put into the main clause, while the topic, i.e. the information probably already known to both participants of the speech act, is moved to the dependent clause.

- ***Focus le CL.REL***

(534) *gílá-gò lè è vâà-gò*
REF\one-DEF EXI 3SG.DEP come-AOR

‘It is alone that he came’.

(535) *ɲázà-y lé è vâ-à*
REF\woman-DEF EXI 3SG.DEP come-RES

‘It is the woman who has come’.

The pseudo-cleft construction is formed in a similar way, but the topic and the focus exchange places:

- ***Topic CL.REL Focus le***

(536) *ɲázà-y è lì-gò nè-zèèlà-y lè*
REF\woman-DEF 3SG.DEP go-AOR 1SG.POSS-sibling-DEF EXI

‘The woman who came is my sister’.

The participle in *-go-* forms a specific type of this construction placed into the predicative position: it should also be treated as dependent clauses, where the participle is modified by the person marker of the polyfunctional series:

(537) *bówà-y lé (-)-gádí-gò-y*
REF\knife-DEF EXI 3SG.PF-sharpen-NMLZ-DEF

‘The knife, it is sharpened’ (or ‘This is the knife which is sharpened’).

For the impersonal construction introducing indirect speech with *le*, see 8.12.4 above.

8.12.5. *Adverbs and intensifiers*

In Zialo, adverbial modifiers of the clause may be classified according to the source of their origin, their syntactic position in the sentence, and their semantics.

By origin, adverbs have been derived from:

- nouns, by means of reduplication, prefixation, suffixation or conversion: *gélédá* ‘in the morning’, *kpókóðkpókó* ‘every evening’ (< *kpókó* ‘evening’), *fólófóló* ‘always, every day’ (< *fòlò* ‘day’), *nááwòlù* ‘later’ (< *pòlù* ‘back’), *kónábá* ‘last year’ (< *kànà* ‘year’), *pólú* ‘again’.
- adjectives, by means of suffixation or conversion: *gòlàwò* ‘very, much’ (< *gòlà* ‘big’), *gúló* ‘a little’ (< *kúló* ‘small’). Adjectives may also express adverbial meanings by means of a prepositional construction noted above in 6.12.3:

(538) *é gúlè-y lò gà pǎdá*
3SG REF\song-DEF sing with good

‘He sings well’.

- verbs, mostly with qualitative semantics: *súwóózà* ‘long ago’ (< *súwóózà* ‘be deep’)
- numerals: *ílá* ‘once, ever, never’
- other adverbs and quantifiers: *távéká* ‘other way’ (< *péká* ‘other’), *gàmàgàmà* ‘at once’ (< *gàmà* ‘at once’).
- primary adverbs are either loanwords, or their origin is unclear: *linà* ‘tomorrow’, *tètè* ‘fully’, *běgì* ‘yesterday’, *zà* ‘today’, *mó* ‘no more, no longer’.

Clause modifiers are usually put at the left end of the phrase:

(539) *gè vílá nè-bõ b-gì wà vâlâfâlâ*
1SG finish 1SG.POSS-work-DEF PP quickly

‘I finished my work quickly’;

(540) *gè pílinání-y váá-gð bẽ g*
1SG REF\chimpanzee-DEF kill-AOR yesterday

‘I killed an ape yesterday’.

In an existential sentence, adverbs of time may serve as subjects, and in this case will be placed in the initial position:

(541) *zà wà fětí-y*
today COP REF\festivity-DEF

‘Today is the festivity’.

Other adverbs may be transferred to the beginning of the sentence in case the focus of the utterance is made on them:

(542) *fólófóló nè-jè-y á vílá bàtè*
every.day 1SG.POSS-mother-DEF 3SG.IRR finish cook
gé-vélè-y wù wùyà-gð é yá dáwúyání
3SG.POSS-house-DEF under wash-AOR 3SG HAB REF\dinner

‘Every day after she finishes cleaning the house, my mother cooks a dinner’.

Adverb *mó* / *mõ* ‘no more, longer’ is the only one which occupies a position immediately before the verb phrase:

(543) *gè là mó yì mà*
1SG NEG no.more sleep IPFV

‘I am no longer sleeping’.

According to the semantic criteria, clause modifying adverbs should be divided into the following groups:

- of manner (including adverbs which are usually called intensifiers): *fâlâfâlâ* ‘quickly’, *kpékpé* ‘strongly’, *pólú* ‘again’, *távéká* ‘other way’, *nàpé* ‘fully’;
- of time: *nàpá* ‘never’, *gélédá* ‘in the morning’, *fólófóló* ‘always, usually’, *tólè* ‘next year’, *ténísú* / *tánísú* ‘sometimes’, *běgì* ‘yesterday’, *féyá* ‘just’, *nè* ‘yet’;
- of place: *này* ‘there’, *vè* ‘here’, *bélé* ‘here’, *mùnò* ‘up there’, *fððð* ‘close by’;
- of estimation: *fõõ* ‘well’, *nàtó* ‘almost’, *yézéyézé* ‘certainly, truly’.

9. Sentence-level syntax

9.1. Non-clause sentential actants

In case the argument of the verb (whether an actant or a circonstant) is expressed by a verbal nominal or a clause, this latter is called the sentential argument. Sentential actants in Zialo may be expressed by one of the verbal nouns (NP), including the supine and the participle, as well as dependent clauses of various types. The clauses will be discussed in the next sections of this chapter, while here I summarise the non-clause sentential actants.

(1) The supine / verbal noun in *-ma* is used in serial constructions with verbs of motion to denote the purpose of the motion:

(544) *nã á li dóólí pílí-mà-y*
 1SG.IPFV go REF\rod throw-NMLZ-DEF

‘I am going fishing’.

(2) The verbal noun / participle in *-go* is mostly used in polypredicative constructions with phasal verbs and verbs of sense perception:

(545) *é vílá-á gà dáỹẽ-gò*
 3SG finish-RES with REF\eat-NMLZ

‘He has finished eating’;

(546) *nã á nè-kééyè lò séy-gò-y*
 1SG.IPFV 1SG.POSS-father see REF\sit-NMLZ-DEF

‘I see my father [who is] seated/sitting’.

(3) The verbal noun in *-fà* in most cases accompanies verbs expressing intellectual or emotional condition:

(547) *nã á yìsìyà gà pá-vá-y zù linà*
 1SG.IPFV think COMP REF\come-NMLZ-DEF PP tomorrow

‘I am thinking of coming tomorrow’;

(548) *nã á lùwà fúǎ-ǎ-y wà*
 1SG.IPFV be.afraid REF\fall-NMLZ-DEF PP

‘I am afraid I can fall down’.

Its other meaning is to express the purpose. The construction is supplemented by a postposition phrase with the verbal noun in *-fà*. Both left-hand and right-hand positioning of the sentential actant is allowed:

(549) *sákpá kpàtè-fà-y zù, é súwá-y yèyà*
 REF\sauce REF\cook-NMLZ-DEF PP 3SG REF\meat-DEF buy

‘In order to prepare a sauce, one should buy meat’;

(550) *gè vâà-gò vè, ()-kpóǎ-ǎ-fà-y wà*
 1SG come-AOR here 3SG.PF-work-NMLZ-DEF PP

‘I came here to work’.

(4) Verbs of sense perception may require a sentential actant in a construction which reminds the *Accusativus cum infinitivo* of West European languages. It is notable that the argument is expressed by the finite form of the verb modified by the preterite suffix *-ni*, but does not require a PPM. The finiteness of the whole construction is therefore questionable.

(551) *gè nè-bòlà-y lò-gò zéy-nì*
 1SG 1SG.POSS-friend-DEF see-AOR sit-PRET

‘I saw my friend sitting’.

9.2. Clause sentential actants

Certain groups of verbs in Zialo have a valency for the sentential actant which is filled by a dependent clause.

The following groups of verbs require a sentential actant clause:

- verbs of intellectual condition: *kóló* ‘know’, *gísíyá* ‘think’:

(552) *jé-y lò (‘)-gísíyá gà nè-kééyè và*
 REF\mother-DEF 3SG.IPFV 3SG.PF-think COMP 1SG.POSS-father come
lìnà táá zù
 tomorrow REF\village in

‘My mother thinks father will come to the village tomorrow’.

- verbs of ability: *nááwóló* ‘be able’, *pílá* ‘can’:

(553) *yà vilà yè sì wònè gà távéká*
 2SG.IRR can 2SG this write with else

‘Can you write this otherwise?’

- desiderative verbs: *pó* ‘want, like’, *móóní(g)* ‘like, ask’;

(554) *gè (‘)-pó gè lì này*
 1SG 3SG.PF-want 1SG go there

‘I want to go there’.

- verbs of obligation: *sóló(g)* ‘be right, appropriate’, *máné(g)* ‘be necessary’.

(555) *(‘)-sóló-wàà lè né vá ì-yàtò*
 3SG.PF-correct-RES EXI 1PL.EXCL come 2SG.PF-understand

‘It’s good that we understand you’.

Note that, except *pílá* ‘can’, all of these verbs duplicate their sentential argument by means of the direct object marker of the polyfunctional series:

(556) *gè (‘)-kóló sì yà vilá yè yè*
 1SG 3SG.PF-know this 2SG.IRR can 2SG do

‘I know [it] what you can do’.

The typology of clause constructions within a polypredicative sentence is given in the subsections below.

9.2.1. Juxtaposed and conjoined clauses

9.2.1.1. conjunctive

Coordination on the clausal level is made by means of juxtaposition. This presumes that two participating clauses may be regarded as independent sentences, for there is no formal link between the two. However, the coordinative connection is duly expressed in the syntax of at least one of the conjunct clauses.

Two syntactic types of coordinative clauses can be distinguished in Zialo. The first of them describes the sequence of actions in two clauses, and in this case the second clause predicate requires the factative construction if the action or state of the sentence refers to the present or the past tense, cf. the following example:

(557) *Kòlì vàà-gò Màsà bá-y vè géyá*
 Koli come-AOR Masa REF\rice-DEF give 3SG.CNTR

‘Koli came, and Zan gave him food’.

The same with coreferential subjects:

(558) *gè láyěgò gè wùyà*
 1SG eat-AOR 1SG wash

‘I ate, and I washed’.

When the action refers to the future, the prospective construction is used in both clauses:

(559) *Kòlì á wó vá, Màsà á wó bá-y*
 Koli 3SG.IRR PROSP come Masa 3SG.IRR PROSP REF\rice-DEF
vè géyá
 give 3SG.CNTR

‘Koli will come and Zan will give him food’.

The second type deals with simultaneous actions. These are expressed by the complex sentence where the first clause predicate can bear any TA marking, while the second clause one requires the factative construction accompanied by the habitual marker *ya*:

(560) *Kòlì ló gúlè-y ló, Màsà yá wòlè ()-bà*
 Koli 3SG.IPFV REF\song-DEF sing Masa JNT look 3SG.PF-PP

‘Koli is singing, and Masa is watching him’.

Typologically, it is not easy to explain the presence of the habitual marker in this kind of coordinative clauses. However, formally their syntax seems to fully coincide. It may be noted that the phonetically identical clitic marker *ya* may also serve as a focus marker, following a NP or a personal pronoun of the focalised series. In case we treat *ya* of coordinative sentences as a focus marker, it could be concluded that the second conjunct is opposed to the first one by means of contrastive focalisation. However, this explanation does not stand the facts, namely the following example, where the construction remains the same even with two coreferential subjects:

(561) *nã á zìyà gè yá gúlè-y lò*
 1SG.IPFV walk 1SG JNT REF\song-DEF sing

‘I am walking and singing’.

Therefore, we have to postulate a different *ya* as the conjoint action marker (JNT).

9.2.1.2. *disjunctive*

Disjunction *bà* ‘or’ separates two syntactically equal parts of the disjunctive sentence.

The structure does not depend of whether the two disjunct arguments are coreferential or not:

(562) *yá jé-y bòlè bà dó-y lò*
 2SG.IPFV REF\water-DEF drink or REF\palm.wine-DEF COP
yè ()-pó
 2SG 3SG.PF-want

‘Will you drink water or it’s wine you want?’

(563) *gà là ()-kóló nì álò và bà á lá*
 1SG.IRR NEG 3SG.PF-know if 3SG.IPFV come or 3SG.IRR NEG
vá mà
 come IPFV

‘I don’t know whether he is coming or not’.

In this latter example, the disjunctive construction is itself included into a complex sentence containing the conditional conjunction *nì* ‘if’: it seems a bit unnatural for the Zialo syntax, so I would suggest it is a calque from French, which was the original language of this particular sentence. Cf. the example of a similar type with no conditional conjunction present:

(564) *é váá-ní, á lá váá-ní, gà là ()-kóló*
 3SG come- 3SG.IRR NEG come- 1SG.IRR NEG 3SG.PF-
 PRET PRET know

‘I don’t know whether he came or not’.

This example demonstrates the second method of building disjunctive sentences: the juxtaposition of two clauses, especially widely used in interrogative sentences, with a clear tonal separation of two clauses:

(565) *dé lò lé? Síyě-gì lé, ɲázà-y lé?*
 what child EXI REF\man-DEF EXI REF\woman-DEF EXI
 ‘Who is the baby, a boy or a girl?’

Conjunction *ɓà* here is also possible but most often omitted in fast colloquial speech:

(566) *ɓè ló kúdíyì-y wò-làà zù? Síyě-gì lé*
 who COP REF\chief-DEF 2PL.POSS-village in REF\man-DEF EXI
ɓà ɲázà-y lé?
 DISJ REF\woman-DEF EXI
 ‘Who is the chief in your village, a man or a woman?’

9.2.1.3. *contrastive*

The contrast relationship within a polypredicative sentence is closely connected with the expression of focus. Structurally, the focalisation of a phrasal category presumes its separation into a certain part of the sentence: this separation is exactly the instrument creating the contrastive opposition. The present section discusses contrastive relations between two full-fledged clauses. One of them, naturally, may well contain a separated focalised constituent, e.g., a NP.

The basic formal means of conjoining coordinative clauses of contrast include the usage of the conjunction *kélé* ‘but, however’ (its initial consonant does not lenite). In most cases, however, the conjunction is omitted creating juxtaposition between the two parts of the sentence.

The contrast may spread to the whole contrastive clause or just link coreferential members of both parts of the sentence.

The following types of contrastive sentences may thus be classified.

- Non-coreferential subjects with the same predicate

(567) *nè-kééyè ló é và và gà jówó-gì,*
 1SG.POSS-father COP 3SG come come with REF\cassava-DEF
nè-lò-y lá lè
 1SG.POSS-son-DEF NEG EXI

‘My father should bring the cassava, not my son’.

The second clause is marked by the existential verb *le* to avoid duplicating the predicate of the main clause.

- Coreferential subjects with different predicates

(568) *gè dómã-gì-tì sóló-gò, gà là tí-yéyá-gò*
 1SG REF\shirt-DEF-PL sew-AOR 1SG.IRR NEG 3PL.PF-buy-AOR

‘I sewed the shirts and not bought them’;

(569) *kólá-y sù é yá wólé-ní kélé é ɓɔ-wà*
 REF\clothes-DEF this 3SG HAB white-PRET but 3SG be.dirty-RES

‘These clothes were white but they’ve become dirty’;

(570) *nè-kééyè ló é và và gà jówó-gì, kélé*
 1SG.POSS-father COP 3SG come come with REF\cassava-DEF but

á lá vá mà bálé yé mà
 3SG.IRR NEG come IPFV REF\awale do IPFV

‘My father should bring the cassava and not play awale’.

- Coreferential direct objects with the same predicate

(571) *nè-jè-y* *ló* *ánísígà-y* *bàtè*, *kélé* *céké-y*
 1SG.POSS-mother-DEF COP foutou-DEF cook but atieke-DEF
là *lè*
 NEG EXI

‘My mother is cooking foutou, not atieke’.

- Clausal scope of contrast

The clausal focus of contrast may be expressed by juxtaposition of clauses with the topicaliser *bá*:

(572) *gè* *bàlè*, *yá* *wá*, *yè* *léélébò*
 1SG work 2SG.FOC FOC 2SG rest

‘I am working, and you, you are having rest’.

Indefinite pronouns *zó* ‘some’, *tànìgàà(nì)* ‘some’ may be used as contrastive markers: they are placed in both juxtaposed clauses. The former of them forms a NP, while *tànìgàà(nì)* requires a head noun in the first clause of the chain:

(573) *zó-y-tì* *té* *vàà-gò*, *zó-y-tì* *tá* *lá* *vàà-gò*
 some-DEF-PL 3PL come-AOR some-DEF-PL 3PL.IRR NEG come-AOR

‘Some [people] came, some did not’;

(574) *nú-y* *tànìgàà-ní* *vàà-gò* *tànìgàà* *tá* *lá*
 REF\person-DEF some-PL come-AOR some 3PL.IRR NEG

vàà-gò

come-AOR

‘Some people came, some did not’.

9.2.2. Relative clauses

“A relative clause is a subordinate clause which delimits the reference of an NP by specifying the role of the referent of that NP in the situation described by the relative clause” [Andrews 2007].

Relative clauses are classified here according to their functions equal to the functions of the arguments of the main clause which serve as their antecedents. After the classical paper by Comrie [1981: 156-163], relative clauses are usually posited into the “accessibility hierarchy”:

- subject (*He who broke the lamp ran away*);
- direct object (*This is the tree which I saw yesterday*);
- indirect object (*The man to whom I have written*);
- adpositional (oblique) object (*This is the house where I was born*);
- genitive noun (attribute) (*The woman whose daughter is ill*).

A great number of languages of the world show various restrictions to this classification, e.g., in left-branching relative clauses. This is, however, not the case with Zialo, whose relative clauses are always right-branching and should always follow the antecedent:

(575) *jé-y* *gè* *và* *bòðlò* *gélé*, *á* *lò* *này*
 REF\river-DEF 1SG come speak about 3SG.FOC COP there

‘The river I am telling about is there’;

(576) *dótóló-y* *è* *và* *yà* *bàlè* *yè* *káví* *é* *fá*
 doctor-DEF 3SG.DEP come HAB work do long.time 3SG REF\thing

bólóbóló *kóló*

many know

‘The doctor who works here for long knows a lot’.

The majority of relative clauses in Zialo are juxtaposed to the main clause, having its subject or direct object as their antecedent. The main and the subordinate clauses may be easily considered as two independent sentences, because even in case both clauses of the sentence indicate coreferential subject or object NPs, it is obligatory this coreferential argument is indicated in both clauses:

(577) *nà ló yè ()-tò-gò*
1SG.FOC COP 2SG 1SG.PF-see-AOR

‘It is me you saw’ (coreferential direct objects, lit. ‘It is me, you saw me’).

However, two circumstances allow considering relative clauses as components of complex sentences and not independent sentence units. First, copula *tò* which separates them can never be placed at the very end of the sentence (see its syntax in 8.12.4). Second, in case the subject NP is the antecedent of the dependent clause, the latter breaks up the main clause and precedes its predicate.

(578) *síyě-gì è vàà-gò nè-dèyè-y lè*
REF\man-DEF 3SG.DEP come-AOR 1SG.POSS-younger.sibling-DEF EXI

‘The man who came is my younger brother’.

Oblique objects and dependent nouns of a genitive syntagma may require deictic pronominal complementisers introducing the relative clause. These include: *vè* ‘where’ (originally ‘here’), *nà* and *sì* ‘which, what’ (originally ‘that’ and ‘this’, respectively):

(579) *nā á dóbó-y lò vé pílíjání*
1SG.IPFV REF\bush-DEF see where REF\chimpanzee

bíízí-gò-y này
be.numerous-NMLZ-DEF there

‘I see the forest where many apes live’;

(580) *nè-kééyè kpóóló lé-gò ñázà-y wà sí*
1SG.POSS-father REF\word say-AOR REF\woman-DEF PP which

téé wúyá-nì
REF\hen steal-PRET

‘My father spoke with the woman whose hen was stolen’.

In the last example, *sì* is coreferential to the indirect object of the main clause. See another example of this conjunction:

(581) *ñázà-y sákpá fè-gò néyá sí*
REF\woman-DEF REF\sauce give-AOR 1PL.EXCL.CNTR which

táwólà-y-tì kpě té yá ()-mé gà dílé-gì
REF\villager-DEF-PL all 3PL HAB 3SG.PF-eat with REF\pleasure-DEF

‘The woman gives us the sauce which all the villagers eat with pleasure’.

Relative clauses may optionally use the postposition *dà* placed into the final position in the dependent clause. This is also one of the methods of marking the indirect object antecedent in the dependent clause: it also serves as the 3sg. personal pronoun of the comitative series, and here it seems coreferential to the subject of the main clause:

(582) *fólò-y yè vàà-gò lá*
REF\day-DEF 2SG come-AOR PP

‘The day you came...’ (lit. ‘The day you came with’).

See also the impersonal constructions requiring a relative clause in 8.12.3 above.

9.2.3. Reported speech and quotative indexes

The SWM languages, as well as generally the languages of the Mande family, do not usually exercise morphological agreement. The categories of person and number of the

verb are marked by means of independent personal pronouns and PPMs: both of these categories of lexemes are not bound with the verb.

One of the few exceptions is the presence of a specific type of fusion agreement, the quotative markers, whose primary function is to introduce reported speech, cf. in Bandi:

(583) *ŋgè má bá*
1SG.QUOT PP no

‘I say no!’ [Bandi, ms.: II, 19].

The typology of quotative markers (also called quotative indexes) on the basis of the data from a number of African languages was recently presented by Güldemann [2008] who defined a quotative index as a “segmentally discrete linguistic expression which is used by the reporter for the orientation of the audience to signal in his/her discourse the occurrence of an adjacent representation of reported discourse” [2008: 11].

According to Güldemann, quotative indexes may be divided in four subcategories basing on the level of grammaticalisation of the independent verbs of speech. Of them, (1) quotative verbs still preserve their independent syntactic status as predicates, their “utterance meaning is partially or completely absent in other predicative contexts or because they have no use at all outside a quotative index”. (2) Quotative predicators are “elements similar to quotative verbs which... cannot be classified as verbs in a given language”, being more of invariable (frozen) verb forms which still act the role of the predicate. (3) Quotative markers represent the next step of the grammaticalisation process and do not show any predicative properties, losing therefore any control over the subject. Finally, (4) quotative complementisers are conjunctions introducing the reported speech.

Etymologically, everywhere in SWM languages (Bandi, Mende, Loko, and Kpelle) quotative indexes originate from the quotative verb *ké* in its meanings ‘say’. In the four mentioned languages, quotative markers do not possess any predicative properties and, what makes them quite unusual for the morphemes of this kind, they have personal inflection on them¹⁹, cf. in Kpelle:

(584) *è m̀ò ǰēē ŋā pā-ī līī*
3SG tell 3SG.QUOT 1SG.PROSP come-PROG go

‘He said “I will go”’ [Leidenfrost & McKay 2005].

Kpelle and Looma have expanded the range of meanings for quotative markers. In Kpelle, they are used to express modal meanings of intention or desire:

yε lé? ‘what do you want?’;

(585) *gε ŋó ba mi*
1SG.QUOT 1SG rice eat

‘I am going to eat’ [Casthelain 1952: 45].

In the Liberian dialects of Looma (probably, under the Kpelle influence) a special paradigm of inflected quotative markers is used with verbs of sense perception or expresses evidentiality:

(586) *yīε wélè té vá*
2SG.QUOT see 3SG come

‘You see them coming’;

(587) *gè yε-ní ŋī-zú yīε tíí yε*
1SG be-AOR sleep-PROG 2SG.QUOT work do

‘I was sleeping while you were working’ [Sadler 1951: 174-175].

Different from these languages, Zialo is one of the few members of the SWM group (together with some dialects of Mende and Looma) where the process of transformation of

¹⁹ See [Idiatov 2009, 2010] for more details on personal agreement on non-predicative quotative indexes in Mande languages beyond SWM.

quotative verbs into auxiliary invariable markers has not yet been completed. The Zialo verb *ké* ‘say’ introducing the direct speech should be called a quotative predicator in Güldemann’s terms: as any predicate, it fills the respective valency in the sentence and requires an obligatory PPM (but does not merge with it, as in Kpelle or Bandi). The predicator is unable to attach any TA affixes and may only be used with the basic (i.e., neutral to TA) series of PPMs:

(588) *té yé: “A!” Té yé: “Gílè-y sìnè-y é*
3PL QUOT ITJ 3PL QUOT REF\dog-DEF this-DEF 3SG

lòvè-gò yálè?”

pass-AOR how

They said: “A! How did this dog reach there?”

This construction is mostly used in narrative speech with the subsequent reported speech which exercises no agreement with the predicator. At the same time, the verb *ké* may be used as a full-fledged quotative verb when preceding the indirect speech:

(589) *é yé-gò yá và*
3SG say-AOR 2SG.IPFV come

‘He said you were coming’.

The indirect speech may also be introduced by the synonymous verbs *dé* ‘say’, *súgúlá* ‘tell’, etc.:

(590) *kèkè ()-dé-gò á wó lí lìnà*
my.father 3SG.PF-say-AOR 3SG.IRR PROSP go tomorrow

dóbó-y zù

REF\bush-DEF in

‘My father said he would go to the bush the following day’.

See the impersonal participial construction indicating the indirect speech in 8.12.3.

9.2.4. Adverbial clauses

9.2.4.1. condition

In complex conditional sentences, the apodosis clause (or main clause) does not restrict the form of the predicate, Subordinate protasis clauses may be introduced by the following means:

- PPMs of the two conditional series (affirmative COND and negative CONEG) which are historical mergers between the conditional conjunction and the person markers. The PPMs of these series are described in 8.8.1 above:

(591) *ná ténémá-y yé, gà và*
3SG.COND REF\Sunday-DEF be 1SG.IRR come

‘If it were Sunday I would come’

- conditional conjunctions: *nì / ènì* ‘if’, *nìmó* ‘if only’ preceding the subject NP. These conjunctions may precede any finite predicate constructions:

(592) *nì bá-y vílá, àmó lí mùndò àmó*
if REF\rice-DEF finish 1PL.INCL.IMP go there 1PL.INCL.IMP

()-mé

3SG.PF-eat

‘If the food is ready, let’s go eat it’;

(593) *ènì nè-bòlá-y yé-ní Màsàdà*
if 1SG.POSS-friend-DEF be-PRET Macenta

‘If my friend were in Macenta...’

(594) *nìmó méyã tò này*
if.only REF\banana COP there

‘If only there are bananas there...’

Additional grammatical markers may be added to the clause. These include the irrealis marker *bé* and the negation marker *ye*:

(595) *nì Kòlì éy bé yé bówà-y yéyá-nì, vaa*
3SG.PRNEG Koli 3SG.PRNEG IRR be REF\knife-DEF buy-PRET kill
éy bé kólí
3SG.PRNEG IRR REF\panther

‘If Masa does not buy the knife, he will not kill a panther’.

(596) *nì Kòlì éy yè và mó ló vè*
if Koli 3SG.PRNEG COND.NEG come 1DU.INCL stay here

‘If Koli will not come, we will stay here’.

The conditional clause is usually put to the left of the main clause in the sentence. When it serves a sentential actant of the main predicate, however, it follows the latter:

(597) *gà là ()-kóló nì álò vá bà á lá*
1SG.IRR NEG 3SG.PF-know if 3SG.IPFV come or 3SG.IRR NEG
vá mà
come IPFV

‘I do not know if he is coming or not’.

9.2.4.2. time

Conjunctions introducing time clauses in Zialo include the following ones:

- *nà, nàzù* ‘when’

The conjunction may equally refer to a particular moment or a period, to both the past and the future tenses. It expresses a comparatively low degree of explicitness, as opposed from *wáté / wátí* (below).

(598) *nà gè gúlá-gò dóbó-y zù nè-lẽ-gà-y-tì*
when 1SG return-AOR REF\bush-DEF in 1SG.POSS-son-PL-DEF-PL

té yé-ní pélê-y wù
3PL be-PRET REF\house-DEF under

‘When I returned from the bush my children were at home’.

The same conjunction is used to mark the sequence of actions, translated as ‘after’:

(599) *nà gè vaa-gò Māsàdà, gè kpálé lókólàzèy-gò*
when 1SG come-AOR Macenta 1SG REF\work begin-AOR

‘After I came to Macenta I started working’.

- *wáté / wátí, wátízù* ‘when, during’

The degree of explicitness is high, and the reference is in most cases made to a particular moment or a short period of time.

(600) *wátí māsá-gi légàà và ãdá nòpé*
when REF\king-DEF HAB.PST come place any
nũ-gà-y-tì kpẽ này té légàà và
REF\person-PL-DEF-PL all there 3PL HAB.PST come

‘When the king used to come to a place, all people came there’;

(601) *wátí yè và wǎní ló, túwó-y vili ()-má*
when 2SG come bird see REF\net-DEF throw 3SG.PF-on

‘The moment you see a bird, throw the net!’

(602) *wátí né yé-ní táá zù, Kòlì légáá lálí*
 when 1PL.EXCL be-PRET REF\|village in Koli HAB.PST visit
né-ŵà
 1PL.EXCL-on

‘During our stay in the village, Koli used to visit us’.

- *sání, ánízá / áysá* ‘before’

The primary meaning is the immediate anteriority. The clause introduced by *sání, ánízá / áysá* may be placed equally to the left or right of the main clause, depending on the focus of the utterance:

(603) *gè yé-yà zéy-ní sání è vâà-gò*
 1SG be-RES sit-PRET before 3SG.DEP come-AOR

‘I was sitting before he came’;

(604) *(-)-ké yè yísíyá sání yè òòòò*
 3SG.PF-do 2SG think before 2SG speak

‘You should think before you speak’;

(605) *sání è yé fũdè-mà-y yé é gáázù-y*
 before 3SG.DEP be REF\|rob-NMLZ-DEF do 3SG REF\|face-DEF

ŵáávélè-nì
 cover-PRET

‘Before robbing, he had covered his face’.

- *hã* ‘until’

This conjunction, widely spread in West African languages and most probably borrowed from a Manden language, is more of exclamatory nature. In Zialo, it is the only word bearing a very high tone. From a subsequent clause, this conjunction is separated by a pause.

(606) *lò vè hã gè và*
 stay here until 1SG come

‘Stay here until I come’.

- nouns of time duration

The word *wáté / wátí* serving as a conjunction in the examples above, is originally a noun with the primary meaning ‘time’. Its nominal nature is still seen in its ability to add the determinative affix and intensifiers. A temporal clause containing *wáté / wátí* should be followed by a PPM of the conditional series:

(607) *wátí-y nòpé nè-kééyè ná pílíyání vâà,*
 time-DEF any 1SG.POSS-father 3SG.COND REF\|chimpanzee kill

dóólí-y lò néyá
 REF\|game-DEF COP 1PL.EXCL.CNTR

‘Every time my father killed an ape, we had a festivity’.

A few other nouns denoting time duration can perform the same function introducing temporal clauses. These include *sòwò* ‘day, daytime’, *kpĩdì* ‘night’, etc.:

(608) *sòwò-y nòpé ná vá táá zù,*
 REF\|day-DEF any 3SG.COND come REF\|town in

gé-yázà-y yá jĩ-gì bàtè
 3SG.POSS-wifè-DEF HAB REF\|maize-DEF cook

‘Every day when he came in town his wife cooked maize’.

9.2.4.3. concession

The temporal conjunction *nà* ‘when’ may introduce concession clauses as well:

(609) *nà jé-y và wú, dópó-wà-y-tì*
 though REF\water-DEF come pour REF\child-PL-DEF-PL
tátá wùyà
 3PL.IPFV wash

‘Though it is raining, the children are washing’.

The alternative conjunction is *ání* ‘even though’ introducing the initial dependent clause:

(610) *ání yè lì zòwò-y yélé-gì, yèy wò*
 even.though 2SG.IRR go fetisheer-DEF at-DEF 2SG.PRNeg PROSP
yèdè
 be.healthy

‘Even though you go to the fetisheer, you will not recover’.

An interesting construction which is probably a semi-calque from the French concession conjunction *bien que* ‘although’ was encountered in my records a few times:

(611) *(-sóló-wáá lè gà nà ló vè kélé wà*
 3SG.PF-gain-RES EXI that 1SG.FOC COP here but 2PL.FOC
là vè
 NEG here

‘Even though I am here you (pl.) are not here’.

9.2.4.4. purpose

Clauses of this type are often called subjunctive. They function as sentential actants of the main predicate expressing various modal meanings (wish, incentive, request, obligation).

The relative conjunction *gà(g)* is also used to introduce subjunctives following modal verbs or clauses:

(612) *(-máné-yàà lè gà, àmó vá linà*
 3SG.PF-be.necessary-RES EXI that 1PL.INCL come tomorrow

‘He should come tomorrow’;

(613) *gè vílá-á nè-bõ b-gì wà vâlâfâlâ gà té*
 1SG finish-RES 1SG.POSS-work-DEF PP quickly that 3PL

wálí-y vè gèyà
 money-DEF give 1SG.CNTR

‘I finished my work quickly so that they give me the money’;

(614) *názà-y ló bá-y vè gé-ló-y*
 REF\woman-DEF 3SG.IPFV REF\rice-DEF give 3SG.POSS-son-DEF

yà gà è (-mé
 to that 3SG.DEP 3SG.PF-eat

‘The woman is giving the food to her son to eat’ (lit. ‘so that he eats it’).

See the subjunctive clauses of obligation expressed by impersonal constructions in 8.12.3 above.

9.2.4.5. cause

The conventional means of introducing causal clauses is the conjunction *déváázù* ‘because’ which also serves as an interrogative adverb (see 7.2.2 above).

(615) *móy wó vílá kpóóbé-gì sì wà déváázù Kòlì*
 1DU.PRNeg PROSP finish REF\work-DEF this PP because Koli

là nè vâà-nì
 NEG yet come-PRET

‘We cannot finish the work because Koli did not come yet’.

The conjunction may be replaced by a focalised NP with the causal postposition *vààzù* ‘because of’.

(616) *dúyé-gì* *vààzú,* *né* *ló-wá* *pélè-y* *wù*
REF\heat-DEF because 1PL.EXCL stay-RES REF\house-DEF under

‘Because of the heat, we stayed at home’.

9.2.4.6. replacement

The temporal conjunction *sání* ‘before’ has a different meaning here ‘instead of’ which is used in replacement clauses:

(617) *sání* *yè* *yà* *wòlè* *mèlèmèlè-y* *wá,* *yà* *bé* *vílá*
instead.of 2SG HAB look mirror-DEF PP 2SG.IRR IRR can
yè *ò* *(-)-bà*
2SG help 1SG.PF-PP

‘Instead of looking at yourself in the mirror, you would rather help me’.

9.3. Interrogative sentences

General questions (also called “yes/no questions”) are not usually marked syntactically or morphologically; the word order is not changed, and the only sense-differentiating signal is the intonation which modifies the tone at the end of the interrogative sentence:

(618) *é* *yé-ní* *nòvè* *běgí?* *Yéy,* *é* *yé-ní* *nòvè* *běgí*
3SG be-PRET there yesterday yes 3SG be-PRET there yesterday

‘Was he there yesterday? Yes, he was there yesterday’.

The optional interrogative morpheme *ney* may be placed to the very end of the sentence or focalise a certain part of the utterance:

(619) *jà* *wà* *lákòlìlòpò-y* *ney?*
1SG.FOC COP schoolchild-DEF INT

‘Am I a schoolchild?’

(620) *jà* *wà* *ney* *lákòlìlòpò-y?*
1SG.FOC COP INT schoolchild-DEF

‘Am I a schoolchild [not him or her]?’

Alternative questions do not differ in structure from affirmative disjunctive sentences analysed in 9.2.1.2 above, while examples of adverbial questions (or “*wh*-questions”) are listed in the section discussing interrogative pronouns and adverbs (7.2.2).

An interesting phenomenon is concerned interrogative sentences requesting the name of a person or object: this is probably the only type of sentence in Zialo which does not require a verb at all. The interrogative pronoun is also omitted:

(621) *gùlì-y* *sì* *làsè-gì?*
REF\tree-DEF this name-DEF

‘What is the name of this tree?’ (lit. ‘The name of the tree?’)

9.4. Epistemic modality indicators

Parenthetical nouns, adverbs and phrases are commonly used in Zialo to express various degrees of probability. The sphere of language studying discourse parenthesis is probably among the least studied in the languages of West Africa, and this naturally complicates any typological analysis of this domain of the Zialo language. I have gathered a small collection of phrasal examples of epistemic modality into the present section. All phrases are given in the 1sg.

- *gààzù* ‘as far as I know’
Literally translated as ‘my eye’:
(622) ()-*gààzù*, *Kòlì* *vàà-gò* *gà* *sóóválé-gì*
1SG.PF-eye Koli come-AOR with REF\horse-DEF
‘As far as I know, Koli brought a horse’.
- *kí-gì zílé-yà* ‘as far as I remember’
Literally ‘the idea is put’:
(623) *kí-gì* *zílé-yà* *nà* *gà* *Kòlì* *lì* *dóbó-y*
REF\idea-DEF put-RES there that Koli go REF\bush-DEF
zù *běgì*
in yesterday
‘As far as I remember, Koli went to the bush yesterday’.
- *bà fǝǝ* ‘no doubt’
A combination of *bà* ‘no’ and *fǝǝ* ‘well’:
(624) *bà fǝǝ*; *tíyá* *lò* *ná* *Màsàdà*
no well 3PL.FOC COP there Macenta
‘No doubt, they are in Macenta’
- *èyà yéy wá* ‘certainly’
(625) *èyà yéy wá tá* *lá* *nè* *zèèlì-ní* *Màsàdà*
? ? PP 2PL.IRR NEG yet return-PRET Macenta
‘Certainly, they did not yet return from Macenta’.
- *gà là lá-nì dá* ‘it is improbable, unlikely’
Literally means ‘I do not agree’:
(626) *gà* *là* *lá-nì* ()-*dá* *gà* *té* *zéélí-gò*
1SG.IRR NEG lie-PRET 3SG.PF-PP COMP 3PL return-AOR
táá *zù*
REF\village in
‘It is unlikely they returned to the village’.
- *de* ‘really, true’
(627) *zábé-y* *yé* ()-*má:* *ì-bòlò-wàà* *lè* *dè!*
hare-DEF say 3SG.PF-on 2SG.PF-be.crazy-RES EXI true
‘The hare said: “You are really crazy!”’
- *kéyá wòlá-y* ‘most probably, certainly’
Literally ‘big chance’:
(628) *kpĩdì-y* *yé-yà.* *Kéyá* *wòlá-y,* *kèkè* *gúlá-gò*
REF\night-DEF fall-RES REF-chance big-DEF my.father return-AOR
kpáálá-y *zù*
REF\field-DEF in
‘The night has come. Most probably, my father has returned from the field’.

9.5. Phrasal idioms

To conclude the syntactic survey, here are the most widespread Zialo salutations and polite expressions which should be the first to be learned by heart by any researcher in order to socialise in a Zialo community.

- yúgà* ‘good morning!’ (to a single person);
- wúgà* ‘good morning!’ (to several people);
- yè yĩ-gò fǝ* ‘did you sleep well?’ (asked before 10 a.m.);
- gálá sálà* or *gálá māmá* ‘thanks god’ (in response to the previous question);
- ì-sé* ‘good afternoon!’ (lit. ‘your blessing’, said to a single person);

wò-sé ‘good afternoon!’ (to several people);
ì-sé yàà ‘good afternoon to you too!’ (to a single person, in response to a greeting);
dé vá lè vè ‘how are you?’ (lit. ‘what is it here?’, said by a person arriving into a place);
dé vá lè ná ‘how are there?’ (lit. ‘what is it there?’, said by a person meeting someone arriving);
ì-yēde-go lé? ‘are you healthy?’;
kēde-go lé ‘I am all right’;
ì-màamá ‘thank you!’;
mámá yàà ‘thank you too!’;
àwá ‘never mind’ (in response to a thanks);
àmó lè sè-y ‘goodbye’ (lit. ‘we are blessing it’);
áwá, né-yáázù lè ì-wà ‘goodbye to you too’ (lit. ‘OK, our eyes are on you’).

Abbreviations

1	1st person
2	2nd person
3	3rd person
ADJ	adjective
ADV	adverb, adverbialiser
AOR	aorist
C	consonant
CNTR	contracted series
COMP	complementiser
COND	conditional mood
CONJ	conjunction
COP	copula
DEF	definite form
DEM	demonstrative
DISJ	disjunction
DU, du.	dual
DYN	dynamic verb
EMPH	emphatic series / marker
EXCL	exclusive person marker
EXI	existential verb
FOC	focalised series / marker
FUT	future tense
H	high level tone
HAB	habitual series / marker
ID	ideophone
IMP	imperative mood
INCL	inclusive person marker
INT	interrogative
IPFV	imperfective aspect
IRR	irrealis series
ITJ	interjection
JNT	conjoint action marker
L	low level tone
NEG	negative
NP	noun phrase
O	object
PART	particle
PF	polyfunctional prefix
PL, pl.	plural
POSS	possessive prefix
PP	postposition
PPM	predicative person marker
PREP	preposition
PRET	preterite
PROH	prohibitive mood
PRES	present tense
PST	past tense

QUAL	qualitative
QUOT	quotative
REF	referentiality marker
REFL	reflexive pronoun
RES	resultative aspect
S	subject
SG, sg.	singular
SM	South Mande languages
SWM	South-West Mande languages
TA	tense / aspect
TAM	tense / aspect / modality
TOP	topicaliser
V	vowel; verb
VN	verbal noun
VP	verb phrase

Literature

- Aginsky 1935 – Aginsky, Ethel. *A Grammar of the Mende Language*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania.
- Ameka & Kropp Dakubu 2008 – Ameka, Felix & M.E. Kropp Dakubu. *Aspect and Modality in Kwa Languages*. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Andrews 2007 - Andrews, A. D. Relative clauses. T. Shopen (Ed.), *Language Typology and Syntactic Description*, vol 2: Complex Constructions. CUP, 2nd edition. Pp. 206–235.
- Anyanwu 2010 – Anyanwu, Rose-Juliet. *Tense, aspect and mood in Benue-Congo languages*. Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe.
- Babaev 2008 – Babaev, Kirill. Reconstructing Niger-Congo Personal Pronouns I: Proto-Bantoid. *Journal of West African Languages*, XXXV: 1-2. Pp. 131-183. [<http://www.nostratic.ru/benue-congo1.pdf>]
- Babaev 2010 - Babaev, Kirill. Person marking in South-Western Mande: a tentative reconstruction. *Mandenkan*, 46, pp. 3-48.
- Bandi, ms. – (*A Bandi Grammar*). Unpublished Manuscript. Monrovia: The Institute for Liberian languages. Vols. I-II.
- Bangali 2002 – Bangali, Yeani. *Structural Variations in the Mende Language from a Cross Dialectal Perspective; a Close Case Study of the Kpaa, Kɔɔ, Sewama and Wanjama Mende Dialects*. Bachelor's Dissertation. Freetown: FBC.
- Bird 1971 – Bird, C. Some Observation on Initial Consonant Change in Southwestern Mande. *Papers in African Linguistics*. Edmonton – Champain: Linguistic Research. Pp. 153-174.
- Braconnier 1989 – Braconnier, Cassian. *Dioula d'Odiénne (Parler de Samatiguila): Dictionnaire et études de linguistique descriptive*. Thèse pour le doctorat d'état. Grenoble: Université de Grenoble III.
- Brown 1958 – Brown, S. *A Mende grammar with tones*. Bo (Sierra Leone): Protectorate Literature Bureau.
- Casthelain 1952 – Casthelain, J. *La langue guerzé: Grammaire et dictionnaire*. Dakar: Mémoires de l'IFAN, 20. Pp.1-302.
- Clarke 1941 – Clarke, W.R.E. *Mende phrase book*. Bunubu (Sierra Leone).
- Comrie 1981 – Comrie, Bernard. *Language Universals and Linguistic Typology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Conteh & al. 1983 – Conteh, Patrick, Elizabeth Cowper, Deborah James, Keren Rice & Michael Szamosi. A Reanalysis of Tone in Mende. Koopman, Kaye (ed.). *Current Approaches to African Linguistics*, vol. 2. Dordrecht: Foris.
- Conteh & al. 1986 – Conteh, Patrick, Elizabeth Cowper & Keren Rice. The Environment for Consonant Mutation in Mende. Dimmendaal, Gerrit (ed.). *Current Approaches to African Linguistics*, vol. 3. Dordrecht: Foris.
- Cowper & Rice 1987 – Cowper, Elizabeth & Keren Rice. The status of *hu* and *maa* in Mende. Odden, David (ed.). *Current Approaches to African Linguistics*, vol. 4. Dordrecht: Foris. Pp. 123-135.
- Creissels 2005 – Creissels, Denis. A typology of subject and object markers in African languages. E.K.E. Voeltz (ed.). *Studies in African languages typology*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: Benjamins. Pp. 445-459.
- Crosby 1939 – Crosby, K.H. *A study of the Mende language*. University of London (PhD thesis).

- Crosby 1944 – Crosby, K.H. *An introduction to the study of Mende*. Cambridge: William Heffer & Sons.
- DeZeeuw 1979 – DeZeeuw, Peter. *Western Mande Compound Tone Rules*. Ann Arbor: Michigan State Univ.
- Dixon 1994 – Dixon, R. M. W. *Ergativity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dwyer 1971 – Dwyer, David J. Mende tone. *Studies in African Linguistics* (Los Angeles), 2, 1971. Pp. 117-130.
- Dwyer 1973 – Dwyer, David J. *The comparative tonology of Southwestern Mande nominals*. Michigan State University, Ph.D.
- Dwyer 1974 – Dwyer, David J. The historical development of Southwestern Mande Consonants. *Studies in African Linguistics*, 5 (1), 1974. Pp. 59-94.
- Dwyer 1978a – Dwyer, David J. What sort of tone language is Mende? *Studies in African Linguistics* (Los Angeles), 9 (2). Pp. 167-208.
- Dwyer 1978b – Dwyer, David J. Idiosyncratic, suprasegmental processes in Mende. *Studies in African Linguistics* (Los Angeles), 9 (3). Pp. 333-343.
- Dwyer 1981 – Dwyer, David J. Loma, a Language with Inverted Tones. *Anthropological Linguistics*, no. 23. Pp. 436-442.
- Dwyer 1985 – Dwyer, David J. A segmental, autmelodic view of Mende tone. *Studies in African linguistics*, supplement 9. Pp. 90-94.
- Dwyer 1986 – Dwyer, David J. Evolutionary morphology of definite articles in Southwestern Mende. G. J. Dimmendaal (ed.). *Current Approaches to African Linguistics*, Vol. 3, 1986. Pp. 149-170.
- Dwyer 1989 – Dwyer, David J. 1989. Mende. J. Bendor-Samuel (ed.), *Niger-Congo languages*. Pp. 47-65. Latham: University Press of America.
- Dwyer 2005 – Dwyer, David J. The Mende Problem. Koen Bostoen & Jacky Maniacky (eds.). *Studies in African comparative linguistics*. Tervuren: Royal Museum for Central Africa, 2005. Pp. 29-42.
- Dwyer & al. 1981a – Dwyer, David, P.Bodegie & J.Baque. *Lorma, a reference handbook of phonetics, grammar, lexicon and learning procedures*.
- Dwyer & al. 1981b – Dwyer, David, P.Bodegie & J.Baque. *A Learner Directed Approach to Lorma*. East Lansing: African Studies Center, Michigan State University.
- Eaton 1890(?) – Eaton, M. *A Dictionary of the Mende Language*. Freetown: Albert Academy Press. No date.
- Eberl-Elber 1937 – Eberl-Elber, Ralph. Der konsonantische Anlautwechsel in der Sprachengruppe Gbande-Loma-Mende. *Mitteilungen der Ausland-Hochschule an der Universität zu Berlin*, no. 40, S. 128-143.
- Erman 2006 – Эрман, А.В. Формант -gā в языке дан-блово // *Труды Института лингвистических исследований*. Т. 2, Ч. 2. СПб: Наука. [Erman, A. -Gā formant in Dan-Blowo. *Papers of the Institute of Linguistic Research*. Vol. 2, part 2. St.-Petersburg: Nauka.] Pp. 253-295.
- Fleisch 2000 – Fleisch, A. *Lucazi Grammar: a morphosemantic analysis*. Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag.
- Grégoire & de Halleux 1994 –Grégoire, Claire & Bernard de Halleux. Etude lexicostatistique de quarante-trois langues et dialectes mande. *Africana Linguistica XI, Annales du Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, Sciences Humaines*, vol. 142. Tervuren, pp. 53-71.
- Grossmann 1992 – Grossmann, Rebecca. *Discourse grammar of Bandi*. Univ. of Texas at Arlington, 1992.
- Grossmann & al. 1991 – Grossmann, Rebecca & others. *Bandi Dictionary*. Manuscript.

- Guilavogui 1975 – Guilavogui, André. *Étude morphosyntaxique du Lõghõmagoi*. Mémoire de fin d'études. Kankan: Institut Polytechnique.
- Guilavogui 1976 – Guilavogui, Catherine. *Étude du système nominal du Lõma*. Mémoire de diplôme de fin d'études supérieures. Conakry: Institut Polytechnique.
- Güldemann 2008 – Güldemann, Tom. *Quotative indexes in African languages: A synchronic and diachronic survey*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Heydorn 1935 – Heydorn, Richard. *Grammar of the Loma language as spoken in Wubomai and Bode*. Bolahun (Liberia).
- Heydorn 1940/41 – Heydorn, Richard. Die Sprache der Bandi im nordwestlichen Liberia. *Zeitschrift für Eingeborenen-Sprachen*. Vol. 2. Pp.81-114, 188-217.
- Heydorn 1970/71 – Heydorn, Richard. The Vai language in Liberia. *Afrika und Übersee*, Band 54. Pp. 149-205.
- Heydorn 1971 – Heydorn, Richard. Grammar of the Loma Language. *Afrika und Übersee*, Band 54, Heft 1/2. Pp. 77-99.
- Hintze 1948 – Hintze, Fritz. Zum konsonantischen Anlautwechsel in einigen westafrikanischen Sprachen. *Zeitschrift für Phonetik, Sprachwissenschaft und Kommunikationsforschung*, Bd. 2, H. 3/4, Berlin. Pp. 164-182.
- Hunter & Sengova 1979 – Hunter, Linda & Matthew Sengova. *Spoken Mende: conversations and paradigms*. Madison: African Studies Program, University of Wisconsin.
- Idiatov 2002 – Идиатов, Д.И. Взаимодействие «интенсификаторов» и числительных в тура. // *Южные манде: Лингвистика в африканских ритмах. Материалы петербургской экспедиции в Кот д'Ивуар*. СПб: «Европейский Дом», 2002. [Idiatov, Dmitry. Correlation between “intensifiers” and numerals in Tura. In: The South Mande. *Linguistics in African Rhythms. Materials of the St.-Petersburg Expedition to Cote d'Ivoire*. St.-Petersburg: “Evropeyskij Dom”, 2002.] Pp. 84-105.
- Idiatov 2009 – Idiatov, Dmitry. *Quotative markers in Western Mande*. Societas Linguistica Europaea 2009. University of Lisbon, 9-12 September 2009. Handout.
- Idiatov 2010 – Idiatov, Dmitry. *Person-number agreement on complementizers in Mande*. Manuscript.
- Innes 1962 – Innes, Gordon. *A Mende Grammar*. London: Macmillan.
- Innes 1963 – Innes, Gordon. *The structure of sentences in Mende*. London: School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London.
- Innes 1964a – Innes, Gordon. An outline grammar of Loko with texts. *African Language Studies*, V. Pp. 115-178.
- Innes 1964b – Innes, Gordon. Consonant mutation in Loko. *Mitteilungen des Institut für Orientforschung* (Berlin), 10 (2/3), SS. 217-226.
- Innes 1966 – Innes, Gordon (1966). A note on Mende and Kono personal names. *Sierra Leone language review* 5. Pp. 34-38.
- Innes 1967 – Innes, Gordon. Mende in the ‘Polyglotta Africana’. *African Language Review*, no. 6. Pp. 120-127.
- Innes 1969 – Innes, Gordon. *A Mende-English Dictionary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Innes 1971 – Innes, Gordon. *A Practical Introduction to Mende*. London: School of Oriental and Classical Studies.
- Innes 1980 [1975] – Innes, Gordon. Mende. Kropp Dakubu, M. E. (Ed), *West African language data sheets* 2, Legon & Leiden: West African Linguistic Society (WALS); African Studies Centre (ASC).
- Kastenholz 1996 – Kastenholz, Raimund. *Sprachgeschichte in West-Mande. Methoden und Rekonstruktionen*. Köln: Rüdiger Köppe.

Khachaturyan 2010a – Хачатурьян М.Л. *Очерк грамматики гвинейского варианта языка ману (полевое исследование)*. Дипломная работа. М.: МГУ. [Khachaturyan, Maria. *A Grammar Sketch of Guinean Mano (Field Research)*. Moscow: Moscow State University.]

Khachaturyan 2010b - Khachaturyan, Maria. *The syntactic approach to pronominal systems in South and South-Western Mande languages*. Report at the International conference on Niger-Congo pronouns (St.-Petersburg, 13-15 September 2010). [Тезисы к Международной конференции по местоимениям в языках семьи нигер-конго (13-15 сентября 2010 года, Санкт-Петербург).]

Kimball 1983 – Kimball, Les. *A Description of the Grammar of Loko*. Freetown: Institute for Sierra Leonean Languages.

Kimball 1984 – Kimball, Les. *Collected Notes Toward a Phonological Description of Loko*. Manuscript.

Koly 1970 – Koly, Dominique. *Étude phonologique du Loma avec application au parler du sud de Macenta*. Conakry: Institut Polytechnique.

Konoshenko 2008a – Konoshenko, Maria. *Towards the problem of long vowels in Guinean Kpelle*. Handout presented at the MANSA conference, Lisbon, June 24-27, 2008.

Konoshenko 2008b – Konoshenko, Maria. Tonal systems in three dialects of the Kpelle language. *Mandenkan*, 44. Pp. 21-42.

Konoshenko 2009 – Коношенко М.Б. *Тональные системы диалектов языка кпелле*. Выпускная квалификационная работа. СПб: СПбГУ. [Konoshenko, Maria. *The Phonological System of Gbali (a Northern Dialect of Kpelle)*. St. Petersburg: St. Petersburg University.]

Kovac & Kovac 1985 – Kovac, Don & Dini Kovac. *Bandi Verbal Construction*. Manuscript.

Kovac 1978 – Kovac, Don. *A Preliminary Phonology of Bandi*. Manuscript.

Kovac 1984a – Kovac, Don. *Non-verbal Clause Roots*. Manuscript.

Kovac 1984b – Kovac, Don. *Topicalization*. Manuscript.

Lassort 1952 – Lassort. Pp. *Grammaire guerzé*. Dakar: Mémoires de l'IFAN, 20. Pp. 304-426.

Leger 1975 – Leger, Jean. *Dictionnaire guerzé (kpele.wo)*. Nzerékoré.

Leidenfrost & McKay 1973-1975 – Leidenfrost, Theodore & John McKay. *Kpelle – English Dictionary*. Part 1, book 181. Totota: Kpelle Literacy Center, Lutheran Church in Liberia.

Leidenfrost & McKay 2005 – Leidenfrost, Theodore & John McKay. *Kpelle–English Dictionary with a Grammar Sketch and English-Kpelle Finderlist*. Moscow (USA): Palaverhut Press.

Letuchiy 2006 – Летучий, А.Б. *Типология лабильных глаголов: семантические и морфологические аспекты*. Диссертация на соискание... М.: РГГУ. [Letuchiy, A. *A typology of labile verbs: semantic and morphosyntactic aspects*. Ph.D. Thesis. Moscow: Russian State University for Humanities.]

Lewis 2009 – Lewis, M. Paul (ed.). *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*, 16th edition. Dallas: SIL International. [<http://www.ethnologue.com/>]

Manessy 1964a – Manessy, Gabriel. *Remarques sur la formation de pluriel en bandi, loma, mende, et kpelle*. BIFAN, Sér. B.T. 26, no. 1-2.

Manessy 1964b – Manessy, Gabriel. L'alternance consonantique initiale en Manya, Kpelle, Loma, Bandi et Mende. *Journal of African Languages*, 3 (2). Pp. 162-178.

Manessy 1964c – Manessy, Gabriel. Détermination et prédication en kpelle. *Bulletin de la Société de Linguistique de Paris*, no. 59-1. Pp. 110-129.

Meeussen 1963 – Meeussen A.E. *Notes on Loko*. Manuscript.

- Meeussen 1965 – Meeussen A.E. A note on permutation in Kpelle–Mende. *African Language Studies*, 6. Pp. 212–116.
- Michell 1927 – Michell, H. Notes on the Mende language and customs. *Sierra Leone studies* 3. Pp. 13ff.
- Migeod 1908 – Migeod, F.W.H. *The Mende Language*. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co.
- Migeod 1913 – Migeod F.W.H. *Mende Natural History Vocabulary*. London.
- Mishchenko 2009a – Mishchenko, Daria. Tonal System of Looma Language: The Woi-Balagha Dialect. *Mandenkan*, no. 45. Pp. 3-16.
- Mishchenko 2009b – Мищенко Д.Ф. *Тональная система лоома (диалект воу-балага)*. Курсовая работа. СПб: СПбГУ. [Mishchenko, Daria. *The Tonal System of Looma (the Dialect of Woi-Balagha)*. St. Petersburg: St. Petersburg University.]
- Mishchenko 2010 – Мищенко Д.Ф. *Маркирование категории лица в лоома (диалект воу-балага)*. Дипломная работа. СПб: СПбГУ. [Mishchenko, Daria. *Person Marking in Looma (the Dialect of Woi-Balagha)*. В.А. Thesis. St. Petersburg: St. Petersburg University.]
- Morozova 2006 – Морозова М. *Очерк грамматики языка локо*. Курсовая работа. СПб: СПбГУ. [Morozova, Maria. *The Grammar Sketch of Loko*. St. Petersburg: St. Petersburg University.]
- Mugele & Rodewald 1991 – Mugele, Robert & Michael Rodewald. Aspects of Bandi tonology. *Studies in African Linguistics* 22: 103-134.
- Musa & Pemagbi 1987 – Musa, Allieu & Joe Pemagbi. *Mende Language Manual*. Freetown: Peace Corps.
- Odden 1996 – Odden, D. Tone: African Languages. In John A. Goldsmith (ed.), *The Handbook of Phonological Theory*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 1996. Pp. 444-475.
- Parker & Rodewald 1988 – Parker, Steve & Michael Rodewald. *An Overview of Bandi Tone Structure*. Manuscript.
- Plungian 2000 – Плунгян В.А. *Общая морфология: введение в проблематику*. М., УРСС. [Plungian, Vladimir. *General Morphology: an Introduction*. Moscow: URSS.]
- Plungian 2010 – Плунгян В.А. *Введение в грамматическую семантику*. М., РГГУ. [Plungian, Vladimir. *The Introduction to Grammatical Semantics*. Moscow: RSUH.]
- Pozdniakov 1987 – Поздняков К.И. Развитие систем консонантных чередований в языках манде и в атлантических языках. // *Африканское историческое языкознание*. М.: Наука, с. 357-457. [Pozdniakov, Konstantin. The Development of Consonant Alternation Systems in Mande and Atlantic Languages. *African Historical Linguistics*. Pp. 357-457. Moscow: Nauka.]
- Prost 1967 – Prost, André. *Le loghoma, esquisse grammaticale suivie de textes et d'un glossaire*. Documents linguistiques, no. 13. Dakar: Institut fondamental de l'Afrique Noire.
- Rodewald 1983a – Rodewald, Michael. *Manifestations of a Historical Bandi Nasal*. Manuscript.
- Rodewald 1983b – Rodewald, Michael. *Initial Consonant Change in Bandi*. Manuscript.
- Rodewald 1985 – Rodewald, Michael. *From Morpheme to Clause in Bandi: a Language Learning Grammar*. Manuscript.
- Rodewald 1989 – Rodewald, Michael. *A Grammar of Bandi and Mende Tone*. Arlington: Univ. of Texas.
- Rodewald & Kawala 1984 – Rodewald, Michael & Ngaima Kawala. *Some Observations on Vowel Lengthening in Bandi*. Manuscript.

Rozhansky, ms. – Рожанский, Ф.И. *Редупликация: опыт типологического исследования*. [Rozhansky, Fedor. *Reduplication: a Tentative Typological Research*. Manuscript.]

Rude 1983 – Rude, Noel. Ergativity, and the Active-Stativ Typology in Loma. *Studies in African Linguistics* (Los Angeles), 14:3. Pp. 265-283.

Sadler 1949/2006 – Sadler, Wesley. A complete analysis of the Looma language. *Mandenkan*, no. 42, 2006 [1949]. Pp. 5-109.

Sadler 1951 – Sadler, Wesley. *Untangled Loma*. Baltimore: United Lutheran Board.

Schön 1884 – Schön J.F. *Vocabulary of the Mende Language*. London.

Schön & Reichardt 1882 – Schön J.F. & C.L.Reichardt. *Grammar of the Mende Language*. London.

Segerer, Guillaume. 2008. Les langues Niger-Congo. // Желтов А.Ю. (ред.), *Языки нигер-конго: структурно-динамическая типология*. СПб: Издательство Санкт-Петербургского университета.

Sengova 1981 – Sengova, Matthew Joko. *A classification of tense, aspect and time specification in the verb system of Mende*. PhD thesis. Madison: University of Wisconsin.

Sinclair & al. 1968 – Sinclair, William C. & others. *Beginning Kpelle: a course for speakers of English*. San Francisco: State College.

Sindlinger & Thompson 1975 – Sindlinger, Dan & Richard Thompson. *A Survey of the Gbande Language*. Manuscript.

Spears 1967a – Spears, Richard. *Basic Course in Mende*. Evanston: Northwestern University.

Spears 1967b – Spears, Richard. Tone in Mende. *Journal of African languages* 6-3. Pp. 231-244.

Spears 1971 – Spears, Richard. Mende, Loko and Maninka tonal correspondences. Kim-Chin-Wu & Herbert Stahlke (eds.). *Papers in African Linguistics*. Edmonton (Canada) Linguistic Research Institute. Pp. 229–238.

Storch 1999 – Storch, Anne. *Das Hone und seine Stellung im Zentral-Jukunoid*. Köln: Rüdiger Köppe.

Sumner 1917 – Sumner, A.T. *A Handbook of the Mende Language*. Freetown.

Tateishi 1990 – Tateishi, Koichi. A morphological analysis of Mende consonant mutation. *Current Approaches to African Linguistics*. Vol. 7 (11). Pp. 99-110.

Testeleets 2001 – Тестелец Я.Г. *Введение в общий синтаксис*. М., РГГУ [Testeleets Y.G. The introduction to general syntax. Moscow: RSUH].

Thach & Dwyer 1981 – Thach, Sharon & David Dwyer. *Kpelle: a reference handbook of phonetics, grammar, lexicon, and learning procedures*. East Lansing: African Studies Center, Michigan State University.

Thach & al. 1981 – Thach, Sharon & others. *A learner directed approach to Kpelle: a handbook on communication and culture with dialogs, texts, cultural notes, exercises, drills, and instructions*. East Lansing: African Studies Center, Michigan State University.

Thomas 1916 – Thomas, Northcote Whitridge. *Specimens of languages of Sierra Leone*. London: Harrison & Sons.

Vydrin 1987 – Выдрин В.Ф. *Язык лоома*. Москва: Наука. [Vydrin, Valentin. *The Looma Language*. Moscow: Nauka.]

Vydrin 1989 – Vydrin, Valentin. Tonal system of the Looma language. *Mandenkan*, no. 18. Pp. 81-96.

Vydrin 2001 – Выдрин, В.Ф. Языки манде и теория языков слогового строя. VI международная конференция по языкам Дальнего Востока, Юго-Восточной Азии и Западной Африки (25-28 сентября 2001 г.): материалы и тезисы докладов. СПб: Восточный факультет СПбГУ. Стр. 25-53. [Vydrin, Valentin. *The Mende Languages*

and the Syllabic Structure Language Theory. *VI International conference on the languages of the Far East, South-Western Asia and West Africa (25-28 Sep, 2001)*. S.-Petersburg: S.-Petersburg University. Pp. 25-53.]

Vydrin 2002 – Выдрин, В.Ф. Методические рекомендации по описанию языка южной группы манде. // Южные манде: Лингвистика в африканских ритмах. Материалы петербургской экспедиции в Кот д'Ивуар. СПб: «Европейский Дом», 2002. [Vydrin, Valentin. Methodic recommendations to the description of a South Mande languages. In: *The South Mande. Linguistics in African Rhythms. Materials of the St.-Petersburg Expedition to Cote d'Ivoire*. St.-Petersburg: “Evropeyskij Dom”, 2002.] Pp.9-38.

Vydrin 2003 – Выдрин В.Ф. Тональные системы языков манде: Краткий обзор // *Вопросы языкознания*, № 2, с.95-113. [Vydrin, Valentin. Tonal Systems in Mande Languages: a Brief Survey. *Voprosy yazykoznaviia*, no. 2, 2003. Pp. 95-113.]

Vydrin 2006a – Выдрин В.Ф. К реконструкции фонологического типа и именной морфологии пра-манде // *Труды Института лингвистических исследований*. Т. II, ч. 2. СПб., 2006. с. 9-252. [Vydrin, Valentin. On the Reconstruction of the Phonological Type and Nominal Morphology of Proto-Mande. *Works of the Institute of Linguistic Research*, vol. 2, no. 2. Pp. 9-252. St. Petersburg: Nauka.]

Vydrin 2006b – Выдрин В.Ф. Личные местоимения в южных языках манде // *Труды Института лингвистических исследований*. Т. 2, ч. 2. СПб: Наука. С. 327-413. [Vydrin, Valentin. Personal Pronouns in South Mande. *Works of the Institute of Linguistic Research*, vol. 2, no. 2. Pp. 327-413. St. Petersburg: Nauka.]

Vydrin 2009a – Vydrin, Valentin. On the Problem of the Proto-Mande Homeland. *Journal of Language Relationship*, vol. 1. Pp. 107-142.

Vydrin 2009b – Vydrin, Valentin. *Ergativity in Sub-Saharan Africa: the Southwestern Mande case*. Manuscript.

Vydrin 2010 – Выдрин В.Ф. *Ещё раз о «субъектных местоимениях» в южных манде: местоимения или предикативные показатели?* Рукопись. [Vydrin, Valentin. *Once again on the 'subject pronouns' in South Mande: pronouns or predicative markers?* Manuscript.]

Welmers 1948 – Welmers, William. *Spoken Kpelle*. Sanoyea and Monrovia: Lutheran Mission in Liberia.

Welmers 1950 – Welmers, William. New Light on the Consonant Change in Kpelle. *Sonderdruck. Aus Zeitschrift “Phonetik”*. 4 Jahrg. Heft 1/2. Pp. 105-118.

Welmers 1959 – Welmers, William. *Analyze or flounder: A study in Kpelle syntax*. Monograph Series of Language and Linguistics. Washington: Georgetown University, Institute of Languages and Linguistics, no. 12. Pp. 17-24.

Welmers 1961 – Welmers, William. Internal Evidence of Borrowing in Kpelle. *General Linguistics*, vol. 5. Pp. 27-57.

Welmers 1962 – Welmers, William. The Phonology of Kpelle. *Journal of African Languages*, 1(1). Pp.69-93.

Welmers 1964 – Welmers, William. The syntax of emphasis in Kpelle. *The Journal of West African Languages*, 1 (1). Pp. 13-26.

Welmers 1969 – Welmers, William. The Morphology of Kpelle Nominals. *Journal of African Languages*, London, 8 (2). Pp. 73-101.

Welmers 1971a – Welmers, William. Niger-Congo, Mande. Sebeok, Thomas (ed.), *Current Trends in Linguistics*, vol. 7: Linguistics in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Hague: Mouton. Pp. 113-140.

Welmers 1971b – Welmers, William. A First Course in Kpelle. J. Gay, W. Welmers (eds.). *Mathematics and Logic in the Kpelle Language*. Ibadan: University of Ibadan.

Welmers 1973 – Welmers, William. *African Language Structures*. Berkeley – Los Angeles – London: University of California.

Westermann 1921 – Westermann, Diedrich. *Die Kpelle, ein Negerstamm in Liberia*. Göttingen – Leipzig: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, XVI.

Westermann 1923/24 – Westermann, Diedrich. Drei Erzählungen in der Kpelle-Sprache; Wörterverzeichnis Deutsch-Kpelle. *Mitteilungen des Seminars für orientalische Sprachen* 26/27-III. Abt. Pp. 37-83.

Westermann 1924 – Westermann, Diedrich. Die Kpelle-Sprache in Liberia. *Zeitschrift für Eingeborenen Sprachen*, Beiheft 6. Berlin-Hamburg: Reimer.

Westermann & Melzian 1930 – Westermann, Diedrich & H.J.Melzian. *Die Kpelle-Sprache in Liberia: Grammatische Einführung, Texte und Wörterbuch*. Berlin: Reimer.

Wilhoit 1999 – Wilhoit, Laura. *A Principles and Parameters Approach to Loma Grammar*. M.A. Thesis. Arlington: Univ. of Texas.

Winkler 1997 – Winkler, E. *Kpelle-English Dictionary, with English-Kpelle Glossary*. Bloomington: Indiana University.

Yip 2007 – Yip, M. Tone. In: Paul de Lacy (ed.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Phonology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2007.

ZheltoV 2005 – Желтов А.Ю. Нумеративные классификаторы в гбан (юго-восточные манде): предварительные замечания // *10 конференция африканистов. Безопасность Африки. Внутренние и внешние аспекты*. [ZheltoV, A. Numerative classifiers in Gban: introductory notes. *10 Conference of African scholars. Security of Africa. Internal and external aspects*.] St.-Petersburg. Pp. 154-155.

Appendix 1. 100-item Swadesh List for Zialo

	English	French	Zialo
1.	all	tout	pé
			kpě
2.	ash	cendre	dúwó
3.	bark (of a tree)	écorce	kòlò(g)
4.	belly	ventre	kóó / kóó(g)
5.	big	grand	gòlà
6.	bird	oiseau	wǒní
7.	bite	mordre	ɲì
8.	black	noir	těy(g)
9.	blood	sang	ɲáwá
10.	bone	os	kààlè
11.	breast	poitrine	ɲĩ
			káká
12.	burn	brûler	mɔ̃
13.	claw	serre de l'oiseau	sáwónú(g)
14.	cloud	nuage	jábílì
15.	cold	froid	děy(g)
			kòlè
16.	come	venir	pà
17.	die	mourir	sá
18.	dog	chien	ɓòykó
			gìlà
19.	drink	boire	kpòlè
20.	dry	sec	bè(g)
21.	ear	oreille	gólí
22.	earth	terre	dòwòlò
23.	eat	manger	mè
24.	egg	œuf	gàlù
25.	eye	œil	gààzù
26.	fat	graisse жир	gùlò
27.	feather	plume	kpèlè(g)
28.	fire	feu	góbú
29.	fish	poisson	ɲè

30.	flesh	viande	súwá
31.	fly	voler	pówó(g)
32.	foot	ped	kòwò
33.	full	plein	dáávé(g)
34.	give	donner	fè
35.	good	bon	pã
			pã d
36.	green	vert	kpóólé(g)
37.	hair	cheveux	dèγà
38.	hand	main	tókó
39.	head	tête	gũ(g)
40.	hear	entendre	méní
41.	heart	cœur	dì
42.	horn	corne	mìnè
43.	I	je	jà
			gè / gà
44.	kill	tuer	páá
45.	knee	genou	gĩbì
46.	know	savoir	kóló
47.	leaf	feuille	dàγà
48.	lie (as in a bed)	s'étendre, être étendu	dà
49.	liver	foie	fuwa(g)
50.	long	long	kóózà
51.	louse	pou	gáví
52.	man (male)	homme	síyě(g)
			sìnè
53.	many	beaucoup	kpíízí(g)
			bólóbóló(g)
54.	moon	lune	gàlù(g)
55.	mountain	montagne	gìzè
56.	mouth	bouche	dà
57.	name	nom	dàsè(g)
58.	neck	cou	bóló
59.	new	nouveau	níná
60.	night	nuit	kpĩdì
			kùyà

61.	nose	nez	sòkpà
62.	not	ne pas	ta
63.	one	un	gílá
64.	path	route	pélé
65.	person	personne	nú
66.	rain	pluie	já
67.	red	rouge	kpéyã(g)
68.	root	racine	sápé
69.	round	rond	kìliγìlì(g)
70.	sand	sable	ɲéyé
71.	say	dire	dé(g)
			ké
72.	see	voir	tò
73.	seed	graine, germe	kèzè
			kpáálá
74.	sit	etre assis	séy
75.	skin	peau	kòlò(g)
76.	sleep	dormir	ɲĩ
77.	small	petit	kúló
			pélé
			fɔzɛ
78.	smoke	fume	dúlí
79.	stand	se lever, se tenir debout	tò
80.	star	étoile	témúléyà
81.	stone	Pierre	kótí
82.	sun	soleil	fòlò
83.	swim	nager	dásé(g)
84.	tail	queue	gò(g)
85.	that	cela	nò
			nà
			mùnò
86.	this	ceci	sì
			í
87.	tongue	langue	nè(g)
88.	tooth	dent	gòlì
89.	tree	arbre	gùlù

90.	two	deux	fèlè(g)
91.	walk	marcher	síyá(g)
92.	warm	chaud	kpãdì
93.	water	eau	já
94.	we	nous	né (excl.)
			mó / àmó (incl.)
95.	what	quoi	dé
96.	white	blanc	kólé(g)
97.	who	qui	ḡè
98.	woman	femme	ḡàzà
99.	yellow	jaune	kpází(g)
100.	you (singular)	tu	yà
			yè

Appendix 2. Text samples

1. How We Became the Zoumanigui

Né-kééyè-nì té (-)dé-nì né-ŵá
 1PL.EXCL.POSS- father-PL 3PL 3SG.PF-say-PRET 1PL.EXCL-PP
né-vá-vélé-y Zòmènìgì (-)tíí.
 1PL.EXCL.POSS-come-NMLZ-DEF Zoumanigui 3SG.PF-call
 ‘Our fathers told us the way the Zoumanigui were called.

Kó-y dòbá è wù né-ŵá,
 REF\war-DEF TOP 3SG.DEP be.put 1PL.EXCL-on
né vííyě, né lí jé-y là.
 1PL.EXCL run 1PL.EXCL go REF\water-DEF near
 We were at war then and we ran towards the river.

Néyá là né yé-ní já wòlùvélé-y,
 1PL.EXCL.FOC COP 1PL.EXCL be-PRET REF\water behind-DEF
tówóló wúli-y dòbá è vūdè è jé-y wààlòvè.
 REF\cola tree-DEF TOP 3SG.DEP fall 3SG.DEP REF\water-DEF pass
 And when we were behind the river, the cola tree then fell and crossed the river.

Gílè-y ná ló nú-gà-y-tì pòlù.
 REF\dog-DEF now COP REF\person-PL-DEF-PL behind
 The dog was following the people.

Kpókó nà té vá-á jé-y là,
 REF\evening that 3PL come-RES REF\water-DEF near
nà té váá-nì jé-y là, súbĩdí-gò-y nènè.
 when 3PL come-PRET REF\water-DEF near REF\be.dark-NMLZ-DEF yet
 In the evening, they came to the river, and when they came there it was still dark.

Nà (-)sú yè bĩdĩ-nì,
 when 3SG.PF-in be be.dark-PRET
tówóló wúli-y vá fūdé-gò-y jé-y wà, è
 REF\cola tree-DEF come REF\fall-NMLZ-DEF REF\water-DEF on 3SG.DEP
je-y wààlòvè.
 REF\water-DEF pass
 When it was dark, the fallen cola tree crossed the river.

Gílè-y dòbá è ziyà kóówó-y nà wà kóówó-y
 REF\dog-DEF TOP 3SG.DEP walk REF\trunk-DEF that on REF\trunk-DEF
è vūdé, é li já wòli-y.
 3SG.DEP fall 3SG go REF\water behind-DEF
 That dog crossed the river by the trunk that fell, and went to the other side.

Té yé: “A!” Té yé: “Gílè-y siné-y é
 3PL QUOT ITJ 3PL QUOT REF\dog-DEF this-DEF 3SG
lówé-gò yálè?”

pass-AOR how

They said: “A! How did this dog reach there?”

Té yé: “Àmó lì, àmó wèlè nà!”
 3PL QUOT 1PL.INCL.IMP go 1PL.INCL.IMP look there

They said: “Let us go and look there!”

Té dòbá té wòté, té lì té kówó-y nà lè, té
 3PL TOP 3PL turn 3PL go 3PL REF\trunk-DEF that see 3PL
lówé ()-mà.

pass 3SG.PF-on

They turned and went there, and saw the trunk, and they crossed the river by it.

Tí-lówé-và-y bá-á,
 3PL.POSS-cross-NMLZ-DEF be.hard-RES
tówóló wúlì-y lá yé-ní jé-y wà lówè-nì nàpé
 REF\cola tree-DEF NEG be-PRET REF\water-DEF on pass-PRET fully
 Their crossing was hard, because the trunk did not fully cross the river.

Débé-y ló ná è vâà-nì.
 REF\sheatfish-DEF COP now 3SG.DEP come-PRET
 The sheatfish came there now.

é lá tówóló wúlù zòkpà-y yá té wóté ()-má, té lówè.
 3SG lie REF\cola tree edge-DEF at 3PL turn 3SG.PF-on 3PL pass
 It lay at the edge of the cola tree, so that they walked on it and passed.

Té wáálówé ná jé-y wòlù
 3PL pass now REF\water-DEF behind
 Now they reached the other side of the river.

Té dòbá té dá-yá-y nà lèwè
 3PL TOP 3PL REF\leaf-DEF there cut
 Then they cut a leaf there.

Hã té lì là, gélé và wò, té ()-tó té gà
 Until 3PL go DEP REF\sky come be.clear 3PL 3SG.PF-see 3PL with
tówólò-y lè
 REF\cola-DEF EXI
 They went until the sky went clear and saw that the leaf they were carrying was a cola leaf.

Té yé: “Wó!” Té yé: “Gílè-y yé-yà gà zàwù
 3PL QUOT ITJ 3PL QUOT REF\dog-DEF be-RES with reason
ámó jé-y wóté!”
 1PL.INCL REF\water-DEF turn

They said: “O! The dog was the reason why we bridged the water!”

Àmó yé-yá gà zòmè-nì.
 1PL.INCL be-RES with be.attentive-PL

We became attentive.

Àmó lá gílá w̃è. Àmó lá tówóló w̃è.
1PL.INCL NEG REF\dog eat 1PL NEG REF\cola eat
We do not eat dogs, nor cola.

Á l̃ è ()-ké-gò.
3SG.FOC COP 3SG.DEF 3SG.PF-do-AOR
This was what happened.

É yé-gò gà Zòmèni pá-vélé-y
3SG be-AOR with Zoumanigui REF\come-NMLZ-DEF
This was how we became Zoumanigui’.

The Hyena and the Hare

Bùkí-y òò zábé-y òò tíyá l̃ té yé-nì wòlù.
hyena-DEF CONJ hare-DEF CONJ 3PL.FOC COP 3PL be-PRET together
The hyena and the hare, they were together.

Té yé-nì gà bòlá wòlà-y-tì.
3PL be-PRET with friend big-DEF-PL
They were good friends.

Té dòbá té yé: “Àmóy ná àmó bálí-y
3PL TOP 3PL QUOT 1PL.INCL.IMP.go now 1PL.INCL.IMP REF\trap-DEF
lè.
set
Once they said: “Let us go and set some traps”.

Tá vá lì bálí lé-mà-y, té ínã bálí-y-tì tè.
3PL.IRR come go REF\trap raise-NMLZ-DEF 3PL mouse trap-DEF-PL set.
They [decided they] would go to set traps, to set traps for mice.

Té yè ()-kpíízi.
3PL do 3SG.PF-be.numerous
They did a lot.

Nà l̃ tá vá bálí-y nà ñ s̃ ()-té
when COP 3PL.IRR come REF\trap-DEF that this 3SG.PF-set
nà wò ílá, zábé-y yé b̃kí-y w̃à s̃: vè gèyà
there get.caught one hare-DEF say hyena-DEF PP this give 1SG.CNTR
zà, linã gélé, ná wó nà né yè
today tomorrow REF\sky 3SG.COND be.caught that 1PL.EXCL be
gà ì-dé-y.
with 2SG.POSS-property-DEF

When they set the traps here and there, and one mouse got into the trap, the hare told the hyena: “Give me this today, and what we’ll catch tomorrow morning will be yours’.

Pólúwà-y *nà* *tá* *lì* *wòlù,* *é* *wò-gò,* *nà*
 REF\tomorrow-DEF when 3PL.IRR go together 3SG get.caught-AOR that
wó *lísólú,* *nà* *yé* *(-má:* *álò* *wò* *gà*
 get.caught five that say 3SG.PF-PP 3SG.IPFV get.caught with
gójítá-gò *linà.*
 six-DEF tomorrow

The next day, they went again, the trap caught five mice, and he said: “Tomorrow we’ll catch six.

Dóólú-gò-y *ná* *è* *wò-gò* *zá,* *nà* *yélé* *(-fè*
 five-DEF-DEF now 3SG.DEF get.caught-AOR today that still 3SG.PF-give
gèyà *wòlù.*
 1SG.CNTR again

And the five ones we’ve got today, give them to me again.

Linà, *ná* *wò* *wójítá* *gè* *nà* *vè* *yà.*
 tomorrow 3SG.COND get.caught six 1SG that give 2SG.CNTR
 Tomorrow, when it catches six, I give them to you”.

Tátá *lò* *ná* *nànnè* *yé* *mà,* *hã* *é* *òìzì.*
 3PL.IPFV see now that do IPFV until 3SG be.numerous
 They were doing that until they have got many mice.

Zábé-y *lò* *gé-dé-y* *yéyé* *ná,*
 hare-DEF COP 3SG.POSS-property-DEF take now
é *yà* *(-bé,* *é* *yà* *(-bé.*
 3SG HAB 3SG.PF-dry 3SG HAB 3SG.PF-dry
 The hare now took his property, and he dried it and dried it further.

Bùkí *dé-y* *wà,* *tá* *là* *(-bè.*
 hyena property-DEF FOC some NEG 3SG.PF-for
 And the hyena had nothing.

Té *dòbá* *té* *yé* *(-má:* *àmó* *nàtó* *wè* *kpó-gì*
 3PL TOP 3PL say 3SG.PF-PP 1PL.INCL PROG meet REF\crowd-DEF
táá *zù,* *àmó* *zéy,* *àmó* *kpóóló* *lé.*
 REF\town in 1PL.INCL.IMP sit 1PL.INCL.IMP REF\word say
 Then they said to each other: “We’ll be meeting at the fair in town, let’s sit down, let’s talk. When they were going to meet,

Nà *té* *vá* *wè,* *zábé-y* *gé-dé-y* *wù*
 when 3PL come meet hare-DEF 3SG.POSS-property-DEF put
kódà-y *zù.*
 REF\mortar-DEF in
 The hare put his booty into the mortar.

É *(-sáyá,* *é* *(-fúká.*
 3SG 3SG.PF-pound 3SG 3SG.PF-grind

He pounded and grinded it.

Tíyá ló ná zéy-nì gátébà-y zù.
 3PL.FOC COP now sit-PRET REF\gathering-DEF in
 They were now sitting at the gathering.

Álò b̀̀t̀̀t̀̀i k̀̀l̀̀ò-y ná g̀̀l̀̀á è (̀̀)-t̀̀l̀̀í:
 3SG.IPFV box small-DEF now take.out 3SG.DEP 3SG.PF-shake
kpéké-kpéké-kpéké.
 ID

He took out a small box and shook it, and it sounded: “kpeke-kpeke”.

É (̀̀)-p̀̀ú-yá é (̀̀)-k̀̀óy.
 3SG 3SG.PF-put-RES 3SG 3SG.PF-taste
 He took it, and he tasted it.

B̀̀k̀̀í-y l̀̀ò yé ná dé l̀̀ò yà?
 hyena-DEF COP say now what COP 2SG.CNTR
 The hyena is now asking him: “What is it you’ve got?”

Álò yé ná: ǹ̀è-j̀̀è-y l̀̀ó, g̀̀è yé-g̀̀ò g̀̀è
 3SG.IPFV say now 1SG.POSS-mother-DEF COP 1SG do-AOR 1SG
(̀̀)-p̀̀é-l̀̀é-g̀̀ò k̀̀ó-d̀̀a-y là, g̀̀è (̀̀)-g̀̀ó-l̀̀ó-g̀̀ò.
 3SG.PF-grind-AOR REF\mortar-DEF at 1SG 3SG.PF-smash-AOR
 He is replying: “This is my mother, what I did is I pounded her in the mortar, and made powder out of her.”

Ǹ̀àné l̀̀ò yèg̀̀i g̀̀è v̀̀à (̀̀)-m̀̀é.
 this COP now 1SG come 3SG.PF-eat
 This is what I am eating now”.

B̀̀k̀̀í-y á lá k̀̀ó-dé g̀̀l̀á-g̀ò é yé: O!
 hyena-DEF 3SG.IRR NEG count quit-AOR 3SG QUOT ITJ
 The hyena did not puzzle this out, he said: “Oh!”

Ǹ̀à b̀̀á-lá l̀̀inà, g̀̀à ẁ̀ò ǹ̀è-j̀̀è-y v̀̀èl̀è
 1SG.FOC too tomorrow 1SG.IRR PROSP 1SG.POSS-mother-DEF grind
k̀̀ó-d̀̀a-y là, g̀̀è (̀̀)-g̀̀ó-l̀̀ò.
 REF\mortar-DEF at 1SG 3SG.PF-smash
 Me too, tomorrow, I will powder my mom in a mortar”.

P̀̀ó-l̀̀ú-ẁ̀à-y é li, é yé g̀̀é-jé-y ẁ̀á:
 REF\tomorrow-DEF 3SG go 3SG say 3SG.POSS-mother-DEF PP
v̀̀à lé nd̀̀è!
 come IMP my.mother
 The next day he went, he told his mother: “Come here, mom!”

Ǹ̀à á v̀̀à é yé ná ẁ̀à: v̀̀à lé ì-v̀̀èl̀è,
 when 3SG.IRR come 3SG say now PP come IMP 2SG.POSS-way

kóǎ-y *là, gè* *ì-ǎèlè.*
 REF\mortar-DEF at 1SG 2SG.PF-look
 When she came, he said: “Come here, on the mortar, I’ll look at you!”

Nà á vá vélé kóǎ-y *là, é gètè-y* *yèyè,*
 when 3SG.IRR come way REF\mortar-DEF to 3SG REF\pestle-DEF take
é ()-sílé nà wǎ.
 3SG 3SG.PF-drop that on
 When she came to the mortar, he took the pestle and hit her with it.

É nà wóló, é nà wú-gì wòlò, ()-gólò *bólóbólò*
 3SG that hit 3SG that head-DEF hit 3SG.PF-hit much
 He hit her, hit her head, hit her completely.

É dòbá á bálá è ()-géyé,
 3SG TOP 3SG.FOC too 3SG.DEP 3SG.PF-take
è ()-pú bòtì-gì zù, è lókòwàkè ()-bà.
 3SG.DEP 3SG.PF-put box-DEF in 3SG.DEP keep 3SG.PF-PP
 And then he too, he took her and put into a box, and he kept her in his hand.

Fóló fèlè-gò lǎvè tá vá wè gátèbà-y *wǎ,*
 REF\day two-DEF pass 3PL.IRR come meet REF\gathering-DEF on
á òò zábé-y sì yóò
 3SG.FOC CONJ hare-DEF this CONJ
 In two days, they meet at the gathering, him and the hare.

Zábé-y gé-dé-y gúlá wòlù, é ()-ké
 hare-DEF 3SG.POSS-property-DEF take.out again 3SG 3SG.PF-do
kpéké-kpéké-kpéké.

ID

The hare took his booty again, and did “kpeke-kpeke” with it.

É dòbá è yá gé-dé-y gúlá.
 3SG TOP 3SG.DEP FOC 3SG.POSS-property-DEF take.out
 Then it was the hyena who took out his stuff.

Nà yà yé: kpókó-kpókó-kpókó gà nǔ yálè lètèlè-gì.
 that FOC QUOT ID with REF\person bone only-DEF
 But that one sounded “kpoko-kpoko”, because there were only human bones there.

Nà dòbá nà yé ()-má: yè ì-jè-y váá-gò ná,
 when TOP that say 3SG.PF-PP 2SG 2SG.POSS-mother-DEF kill-AOR now
 Then the hare asked the hyena: “Did you kill your mother?”

nà é yé ()-má: yèy.
 that 3SG say 3SG.PF-PP yes
 And the hyena replied: “Yes”.

Nà yé ()-má: ì-bòlò-wàà lè dè!

That say 3SG.PF-PP 2SG.PF-be.crazy-RES EXI true
The hare said: “You are really crazy!”

Ínã-gì kpě mó yà gà ()-só,
mouse-DEF all 1PL.DU HAB with 3SG.PF-catch
nàné-y yèlè tó nè- dé-y gèyà,
that-DEF EMPH COP 1SG.POSS-property-DEF 1SG.CNTR
á lò wà yègì gè và ()-mé.
3SG.FOC COP FOC now 1SG come 3SG.PF-eat
All the mice we caught, that’s what was in my box, this is what I am eating now.

Néyá ì-jè-y vá-á á wó yé
2SG.COND 2SG.POSS-mother-DEF kill-RES 3SG.IRR PROSP do
ì-yààzù.
2SG.POSS-eye
If you killed your mother, woe is you!”

Zábé-y dòbá é viliyē.
hare-DEF TOP 3SG run
Then the hare ran away.

Bùkí-y dòbá é zilé zábé-y wòli mà,
hyena-DEF TOP 3SG follow hare-DEF search PP
è yé nà ()-só.
3SG.DEP be that 3SG.PF-catch
The hyena followed to search for him, he was catching him.

Nà yèlè tó é bá tí-bólávà-y yàni-nì
that EMPH COP 3SG REF\reason 3PL.POSS-friendship-DEF spoil-PRET
That was why their friendship was spoiled.

3. Legend of Guilavogui totems.

Né-kééyè wòlà-nì té ()-dé-nì gà
1PL.EXCL.POSS-REF\father big-PL 3PL 3SG.PF-say-PRET COMP
pélé-gì Gílávógì-tì té vàà-gò là.
REF\way-DEF Guilavogui-PL 3PL come-AOR DEP
Our ancestors told us the way the Guilavogui appeared.

Té yé fóló-gì zù nú-gà-y-tì kpě
3PL QUOT REF\day-DEF in REF\person-PL-DEF-PL all
té légàà wě dówólò-y zù gà té
3PL HAB.PST meet REF\land-DEF in COMP 3PL
kpélè-y lò ãdà.
REF\plantation-DEF build place.
They say that once upon a time all the people used to meet in one place to build a plantation.

Nà tá bé kpélè-y lò nà, má wátí-y zù
 when 3PL.IRR IRR REF\plantation-DEF build there that time-DEF in
 dápí-vá-y lò è yè-nì gà.
 REF\fight-NMLZ-DEF COP 3SG.DEP be-PRET with
 But when they were about to build the plantation, at that time a war occurred.

Té légàà yè (-)túwá tá-y sì yòò sìmà lá yòò
 3PL HAB.PST be 3SG.PF-agree REF\village-DEF this CONJ this at CONJ
 tátá w̃ε nà má lápí-y yé-nì làà-nì.
 3PL.IPFV meet there that battle-DEF be-PRET lie-PRET
 They agreed to come together from the two villages at a place where the fight will take place.

Wátí-y nà té lii-nì dápíwò-mà-y è w̃é-nì
 time-DEF when 3PL go-PRET REF\fight-NMLZ-DEF 3SG.DEP appear-PRET
 gà ñázà-y-tì té lii-gò jé-y zù.
 COMP REF\woman-DEF-PL 3PL go-AOR REF\water-DEF in
 When they went to fight, it appeared that the women went to the river.

Síyẽ-gì-ti kpálá té gúlá-gò tá-y wà
 REF\man-DEF-PL too 3SG quit-AOR REF\village-DEF PP
 The men also left the village.

Tá vá li dápíwò-mà-y mùnò.
 3PL.IRR come go REF\fight-NMLZ-DEF there
 They went to fight there.

Ñázà-y è lii-gò jé-y zú
 REF\woman-DEF 3SG go-AOR REF\water-DEF in
 é gé-ló-y ló-wà kóví-y zù.
 3SG 3SG.POSS-son-DEF leave-RES REF\yard-DEF in
 The woman who went to the river, she left her son at home.

Góbí-y dòbá é yá (-)sóó pélè-y wà
 REF\fire-DEF TOP 3SG JNT 3SG.PF-take REF\house-DEF PP
 The fire enveloped the house.

É w̃é-nì ná gà gílè-y yè-nì tíyá nà y
 3SG appear-PRET now COMP REF\dog-DEF be-PRET 3PL.CNTR there
 pélè-y wù.
 REF\house-DEF under
 It appeared that they had a dog there in the house.

Gílè-y nà tá dópò-y nà fólófolò té yé-nì wòlù
 REF\dog-DEF that CONJ REF\baby-DEF that always 3PL be- together
 DEF DEF PRET
 That dog and that baby were always together.

Gílè-y *lé-ní* *nà* *pélè-y* *wù,* *góbí-y* *và*
REF\dog-DEF enter-PRET there REF\house-DEF under REF\fire-DEF come
(*-sóó*) *mà* (*-bá,*) *dópò-y* *yè-nì* *làà-nì,* *bété-y* *zù,*
3SG.PF- IPFV 3SG.PF- REF\baby- be- lie- REF\bed- in
take PP DEF IMPF PRET DEF

kpóló-gì *zù.*
REF\basket-DEF in
When the dog entered the house, it was enveloped in flames, and the baby was lying in the bed inside the basket.

É *dòbá* *é* *yà* *kpóló-gì* *nàné-y* *yèyè* *gà* *dà-y,*
3SG TOP 3SG JNT REF\basket-DEF that-DEF take with REF\mouth-DEF
é *yà* *gúlá-á* *gà* *dópò-y* *góbí-y* *zù.*
3SG JNT quit-RES with REF\baby-DEF REF\fire-DEF in
So, the dog took that basket into its mouth, and took it out of the fire.

É *yà* *víliyě* *nà* *é* *yà* *lì* *lá* *méyã* *pùlùkà-gì* *zù.*
3SG JNT run there 3SG JNT go with.3SG REF\banana forest-DEF in
It ran with the baby to the banana forest.

É *và* *lì* *lá* *méyã-gì* *zù,* *é* (*-dó*) *này.*
3SG come go with.3SG REF\banana-DEF in 3SG 3SG.PF-leave there
It went into the banana bush, and left the baby there.

Dópò-y *yà* *wòlò* *này.*
REF\baby-DEF JNT cry there
The baby cried there.

Góbí-y *dòbá* *é* *yà* (*-sóó*) *pélè-y* *wù*
REF\fire-DEF TOP 3SG JNT 3SG.PF-take REF\house-DEF under
The house was burning at the same time.

Nàzù *pélè-y* *yèlè* *gé* *yé-nì* *nà* *wõ-nì,*
When REF\house-DEF already 3SG be-PRET then burn-PRET
dó-y *jé-y* *vá-á* *é* *yà* *wòlò*
REF\son-DEF REF\mother-DEF come-RES 3SG JNT cry
When the house already burnt down, the baby's mother came crying.

Gílè-y *vàà-nì,* *é* *lè* *gà* *dó-y* *jè-y.*
RWF\dog-DEF come-PRET 3SG climb with REF\son-DEF REF\mother-DEF
The dog also came, and it pounced on the mother.

É *lè* *lá,* *é* *lè* *lá,* *é* *pélé-y* *zòò,*
3SG climb with.3SG 3SG climb with.3SG 3SG REF\road-DEF take
é *lì* *méyã-gì* *yèlè* *pélé-y.*
3SG go REF\banana-DEF towards REF\road-DEF
It pounced and pounced on her, and it took the road to the banana forest.

É yāgáli ()-má é và.
 3SG return 3SG.PF-PP 3SG come.
 Then it returned back.

É và wòlù é lè gà dó-y jé-y.
 3SG come again 3SG climb with REF\son-DEF REF\mother-DEF
 And it pounced on the mother again.

É dòbá é yé: U, dé lò gílè-y sì và yè
 3SG TOP 3SG QUOT ITJ what COP REF\dog-DEF this come do
 è ()-dé, bélézò gè zìlè ()-pólú?
 3SG.DEP 3SG.PF-say when 1SG follow 3SG.PF-behind
 She said: “Oh, what is this dog saying it will do when I follow it?”

Té yá néé-ní tá dópò-y. Gè zìlè
 3SG FOC be.pleasant-PRET CONJ REF\baby-DEF 1SG follow
 ()-pólú, gè lì, gè nà lò.
 3SG.PF-behind 1SG go 1SG that see
 They liked each with my son. I would better follow it and see”.

Dó-y jé-y é yà zìlè nà gílè-y wòlù.
 REF\son-DEF REF\mother-DEF 3SG JNT follow that REF\dog-DEF behind
 The mother followed the dog.

Té yá lì, é lì é gé-ló-y lò è láá-nì
 3PL JNT go 3SG go 3SG 3SG.POSS-son-DEF see 3SG.DEP lie-PRET
 méyã pùlùkà-gì zù
 REF\banana forest-DEF in
 They went, and she saw her son lying in the banana forest.

Dó-y nàné á vá wòlò té dòbá té yé dó-y
 REF\son-DEF that 3SG.IRR come grow 3PL TOP 3PL say REF\son-DEF
 nàné-y wã: yà là mò gílè-y wè, méyã-gì
 that-DEF PP 2SG.IRR NEG anymore REF\dog-DEF eat REF\banana-DEF
 bálá

too

When this child has grown, they told him: “You should never eat the dog, and the bananas”.

Gílávogì-tì té vàà-gò, gémíná nà yé-gò là.
 Guilavogui-PL 3PL come-AOR like that be-AOR DEP
 That was how the Guilavogui appeared.

Appendix 3. Zialo - English / French Vocabulary

General observations

The absolute majority of lexical items in Zialo are derived from Proto-SWM and are easily comparable to the data from its closest relatives. According to our estimates, the closest lexical ties link the Zialo lexicon with Bandi (94% cognates in the 100-item Swadesh list) and Mende (90-92% cognates). Despite the geographical proximity to Looma, the level of common items in the basic lexicon does not exceed 85%. This lexicostatistical analysis would definitely bring Zialo into the same branch of SWM with Bandi, Mende and Loko. However, phonological and morphosyntactic evidence provided throughout this paper would, on the contrary, suggest that Looma might seem closer to Zialo in terms of paradigmatic similarities. Therefore, a logical decision would be to place Zialo in between Looma and Bandi on the genealogical tree of the group, see in Chapter 1 above.

Most borrowed lexemes in Zialo have origins in the two languages: Maninka (or rather, wider, Manden languages of the Mande family) and French. However, they form different layers of the lexicon, both chronologically and semantically. An earlier level of loanwords was brought by Manden-speaking Muslim merchants who introduced cultural lexicon of currency and trade (*wálí* “money”, *muli* “tax”, etc.), monotheism (*gàlà* “god”, *mízílí* “mosque”, etc.), as well as a lot of products not habitual for the rainforest, and a number of abstract terms, such as the days of the week. Many of these words were themselves borrowed to African languages from Arabic.

Another layer of the borrowed lexicon started to appear after the Europeans came into the Zialo country in the late 19th century. Most of these words are French, representing a wide range of fields: industry, instruments, professions and occupations, furniture and clothes, technics and technology. A small group of Western loanwords comes from English, which must have penetrated across the Liberian border, e.g. *bété* ‘bed’.

A specific group of Zialo lexemes are “nomadic” items (mostly nouns) widely spread across the region and denoting plants, animals and food species. Some of them are equally present in both West Mande and East Mande languages, and even in the neighbouring Atlantic (Mel) tongues which complicates the task of tracing their original source. These include, for instance, Zialo words for *bùlú* “bread”, *píllínání* “chimpanzee”, *jílé* “python”, names for a lot of species of insects and birds.

Phonological resemblance does not often allow to identify items borrowed from Bandi. It is easier with the words coming from Looma, which remains a prestigious language among the Zialo. These may be distinguished by the violation of the regular phonetic correspondences between the two languages, e.g. *kòyzò* ‘bicycle’ vs. its alternative, original Zialo variant *kòlìzò*.

Loanwords are marked in the vocabulary of this paper where possible, together with the supposed source of borrowing.

Vocabulary structure and technical notes

The presented vocabulary includes the data gathered with the help of my collaborators from Macenta, and the villages of the Zialo country, namely Gavi Koylazu and Pājazu. Items differing in pronunciation with different speakers are marked as dialectal (dial.); I tried to mark items used by the Macenta citizens this way. Lexemes indicated by the speakers as belonging to the Lawolozu dialect are marked as (Lz).

Lexical items are given according to the following alphabetic order:

a ã b ɓ c d é ě ε ã f g ɣ h i ĩ j k kp l m n ɲ ŋ o õ ɔ ñ p s t u ũ v w Ẃ y ỹ z.

Long vowels, both oral and nasal, are marked by the respective double vowel and follow their short counterparts. Words ending in a historical *-ŋ (so called -gì nouns) follow homonymous items with a vocal outcome.

Entries are structured under the following pattern.

The vocabulary entry is given in bold: **ba**. Phonological and morphological variants of the lexeme are given immediately after the item and underlined. Nouns are given without determinative markers except for the cases where the marker dissimilates the final vowel of the noun. For all such nouns, both variants are provided, and the determinative marker is separated by a dash: **da**, **de-y**. Compound lexemes are not divided: **jabili**. Gì-words are marked with the word-final (**g**) on the lexeme.

Etymological homonyms are given in different entries and indicated by Roman letters:

be I adv [1] (dial. LZ) --> ve ici | here **ve II**

be II pred [2] (no ICC) *marque irr elle* | *irrealis verb marker*

All items are given with a “strong” initial consonant, in accordance with the traditional representation of the SWM languages. In case there are two allophones of the “weak” initial counterpart, both consonants are given in a row in slash signs: **baala** /v,w/.

The next element of the entry is the part of speech given in bold italic. Parts of speech are abbreviated according to the following list:

adj	adjective
adv	adverb
conj	conjunction
itj	interjection
mrph	morpheme
n	noun
npp	postpositive noun
num	numeral
part	particle
pred	predicative marker
prep	preposition
pron	pronoun
pp	postposition
v	verb (vi intransitive, vt transitive).

The tonal class is indicated by an Arabic figure from 1 to 6 (for nouns) and from 1 to 2 (for verbs) given in square brackets: [1a]. For the auxiliary parts of speech, [2] marks the constant high tone, while [1] indicates the low tone. The absence of the tonal class indication on the lexeme means that the tone of the item is unclear. Only in case the word is composed of several morae with different tones, the tonal picture is shown on the word itself with diacritics, e.g. ** l **. This in most cases means that the lexeme is a compound.

Multiple meanings of the same item are marked by Arabic letters:

ba II n [1] **1** riz | rice **2** repas | food || L b ya, b ya, b ga, B & M mba

The (*no ICC*) comment signifies that the item does not experience the initial consonant alternation.

All entries have French and English translations, in this order, divided by a vertical line; French translations are given in the Verdana font. Semantisation notes are given where necessary in brackets in italic following the translation. French semantisation notes are poorer than English, in order to save some space.

Some entries contain examples reflecting the syntax of the lexical item. Examples are given in *italic*, and separated by a colon. The translations provided follow them in English. Idiomatic expressions are also given in *italic* and separated from the previous data by a semi.

Some items refer to synonyms given in ***bold italic*** and underlined. Otherwise, all references are presented by the --> sign.

Finally, two vertical lines (||) separate the description of the lexeme from its cognates in the other SWM languages (given in smaller font size). In case the item is a loanword, the etymological source is also provided (indicated by < sign). The source word is only given in case the entry does not contain it itself: so, since the entry for *sʃfélé* ‘driver’ contains the French translation *chauffeur*, the French word is not mentioned once again as a borrowing source.

Language names are given in **bold** and abbreviated as follows, with the reference to the authors consulted:

- A Arabic
- B Bandi [Grossmann & al. 1991]
- E English
- F French
- L Looma [Sadler 1949; Prost 1967; Vydrin 1987; Mischenko, field notes]
- M Mende [Innes 1969].

The tones are placed on cognate forms if they are indicated in the respective sources.

A - a

- a mrph** *-ya, -wa* *marque résultative* | *resultative verb suffix* : *Gè góbíy yáfówà* ‘I have started a fire’
- a I** *ga, ya, aa* **pred** [2] *marque personnelle du 3sg. (sér. irréelle)* | *3sg. PPM (irrealis series)* il, elle | he, she, it *ǝ*
- a II** *eva* **pron** [2] *pronom personnel du 3sg. (sér. focalisée)* | *3sg. personal pronoun (focalised series)* lui, elle | him, her, it
- a III** *wa* **pred** [1] *marque personnelle du 2pl. (sér. impérative)* | *2pl. PPM (imperative series)* vous | you
- àlà mízá n** jeudi | Thursday || L *álamiza, alamize*
- alava n** [5] mercredi | Wednesday || L *álava, yalava*
- álè conj** même | though : *Álè nàgá bɔlɔ gɔlawɔ* ‘Though I speak much’
- álè l̥** **pred** *marque personnelle du 3sg. (sér. imparfaitive)* | *3sg. PPM (imperfective series)* il, elle | he, she, it
- ama pred** [1] *marque personnelle du 1pl. incl. (sér. prohibitive)* | *1pl. incl. PPM (prohibitive series)* nous | we
- àmá pred** *marque personnelle du 1pl. incl. (sér. irréelle)* | *1pl. incl. PPM (irrealis series)* nous | we
- ámámà pred** *marque personnelle du 1pl. incl. (sér. imparfaitive)* | *1pl. incl. PPM (imperfective series)* nous | we
- àméy àmóy pred** *marque personnelle du 1pl. incl. (sér. prospective négative)* | *1pl. incl. PPM (prospective negative series)* nous | we
- àmó pred** *marque personnelle du 1pl. incl. (sér. de base, dépendante, impérative)* | *1pl. incl. PPM (basic, dependent, imperative series)* nous | we
- àmó- mrph** *marque possessive du 1pl. incl.* | *1pl. incl. possessive prefix* notre | our
- àmóy itj** allons-y | let’s go *moy*
- àmóyá I pron** *pronom personnel du 1pl. incl. (sér. contractive)* | *1pl. incl. personal pronoun (contractive series)* nous | we, us
- àmóyá II pron** *pronom personnel du 1pl. incl. (sér. focalisée)* | *1pl. incl. personal pronoun (focalised series)* nous | we, us
- àmóyáy àmóyáyì pron** *pronom personnel du 1pl. incl. (sér. emphatique)* | *1pl. incl. personal pronoun (emphatic series)* nous | us
- amoye pron** [1] *pronom personnel du 1pl. incl. (sér. comitative)* | *1pl. incl. personal pronoun (comitative series)* (avec) nous | (with) us
- àmóyè ànàmóyè pred** *marque personnelle du 1pl. incl. (sér. conditionnelle négative)* | *1pl. incl. PPM (conditional negative series)* si nous ne | if we not
- ànámá pred** *marque personnelle du 1pl. incl. (sér. conditionnelle)* | *1pl. incl. PPM (conditional series)* si nous | if we
- ani I conj** [2] même | though : *Ání yè lì zòwòy yélegì, yèy wò yēdè* ‘Even if you go to the fetisheer, you will not recover’ || L *ani* ‘if’
- ani II n** [2] --> *ɲani*
- anisiga(g), siga(g) n** [1a] *foutou* | *foutou (traditional dish made of boiled mashed bananas or cassava)* : *Nè-jèy ló ánísigày bātè* ‘My mother is cooking *foutou*’ *siga*
- awa pred** [1] *marque personnelle du 2pl. (sér. prohibitive)* | *2pl. PPM (prohibitive series)* vous | you
- àwá itj** de rien | never mind
- aysa I anisa conj** [2] avant | before, earlier *sani I* || L *aisa*
- aysa II anisa prep** [2] avant | before, earlier, ago *sani II* || L *aisa*

Ã - ã

ãda n [2] lieu, endroit (*pas loin*) | place, point (*not far away*) : *Nāga li ãda* ‘I go to a place [not far away]’ || L *dà*

B - b

- ba I pp** [1] **1** à | to : *É wáábùlùgò (˘)-bà* ‘He approached me’ **2** pour | for the sake of **3** à cause de | because of, due to : *Ì-và ló gè vâàgò* ‘I came because of you’ **4** comparé | compared to : *(˘)-Kóózá lè (˘)-bà* ‘He is taller than me’ || L ba, baa; B mba
- ba II n** [1] **1** riz | rice **2** repas | food || L bàya, ɓàya, ɓaga; B & M mba
- ba III cop** [1] : *Nè-kééyè wà dótólóy* ‘My father is a doctor’
- baala /v,w/ n** [2] mouton | sheep || L bala(g), baala(g), balavala(g); B mbaala
- bayulasumita bayulasumite-y n** [2] spatule à to, riz | spatula for the "to" dish or rice
- balevebowa n** [1] petit couteau (*pour couper le riz*) | small knife (*for cutting rice*)
- bale(g) /v,w/ n** [1a] ceinture pour monter au palmier | belt for mounting the palm || L bàle(g); B balí(ɲ), mbalí(ɲ)
- bali /v,w/ n** [2] piège (*pour les animaux*) | trap (*for animals*) || L báli, beli, beli(g)
- bali(g) /v,w/ v** 1) *vt* fendre, déchirer | cleave, crack, tear : *Dopoy taayay waliya* ‘The child cracked the calabash’ 2) *vi* se fendre, se déchirer | cleave, crack, tear || B mbali ‘tear, rend’
- bã(g) /v,w/ I v** [1a] *vt* produire | produce
- bã(g) /v,w/ II n** [1a] fruit | fruit *guluwã(g)* || B mba(ɲ)
- be I adv** [1] (dial. LZ) --> ve ici | here **ve II**
- be II pred** [2] (no ICC) *marque irréaliste* | *irrealis verb marker*
- be(g) v** [1a] 1) *vt* secher | dry : *Nāga kōlayti be* ‘I am drying the clothes’ 2) *vt* se secher, être sec | dry oneself, be dry : *Ne-wolayti te weya* ‘My clothes have been dried’ || B mbe
- bela mrph** *suffixe d’agent au pluriel* | *plural agentive suffix* : *Kpóbbéblàytì té péléy wégò* ‘Workers linked the roads together’ || B -mbela
- bete n** [2] lit | bed || < E; L bété
- be pp** [1] à | to (*smb*) (*dative postposition*) : *Gíla fé (˘)-bè* ‘Give me one’
- bele n** [1] type de fromager | cotton tree (*Ceiba*) species || B mbele ‘large hardwood tree species’
- bele(g) /v,w/ n** [1a] pantalon | pants, trousers || L véle(g); B mbelé(ɲ)
- belekooza /v,w/ n** [2] pantalon | trousers (*long, European-style*)
- beletukpu /v,w/ n** [1] culotte | shorts || L velekpu(a)(g), véle(g)
- bike(g) n** [2] bic, stylo | pen
- bībi n** [2] véranda | veranda
- bībiwote n** [1] lit (*traditionnel*) | bed (*traditional*)
- bo v** [2] *vt* faire | do, perform : *Mamadi lo kalagi wo lakoliy zu* ‘Mamadi is doing studies at school’ || L bō(g), bo(g), bu(g) ‘say, do’; B mbo
- bole n** [1] igname | yam || L bōe, bue, boi
- bolo n** [2] cou | neck || B mboló
- boolo(g) n** [1a] aubergine | eggplant
- bowa n** [1] couteau | knife || L bōa, buwa, bowa, boya, bowo, ɓowa; B mbowá
- bowaleve n** [1] machète | machete
- bōjo v** [1] *vi* **1** aboyer | bark **2** hurler | earn || L bōzɔ, bozɔ
- bōlɔ v** *vi* grandir | grow || L bōlɔ, bala, kpɔlɔ, kpáo; B mbōlɔ ‘big’
- bōlɔgulu n** [1] arbre (*esp.:*) | tree (*sp.:* *high, fruit similar to baobab*)
- bōlɔ n** [1] chapeau | hat || L bōlɔ(g), bōlɔgi, bala(g), gbala(g), bōlɔ; B mbōlɔ
- bu npp** [1] sous | under || L bū; B mbu
- buvele n** [2] sud | south
- buwe v** [2] 1) *vt* reveiller, lever | wake up, get up : *Doy jey ge-loy buweya* ‘The mother woke her child up’ 2) *vi* se reveiller, se lever | wake up, get up **we**
- bùwóózá v** *vi* **1** être loin | be far **2** être profond | be deep (*bottom is not seen*) || L bùwooza
- buzey(g) v** [2] *vi* être profond | be deep **bùwóózá**

- be(g) n** pic | woodpecker
be(g) v [2] --> kpe(g)
beya n [1] --> kpeya
beya(g) n [1] --> kpeya
beyãbu n --> kpeyãbu
beke(g) n --> kpeke(g)
bekpe adv [2] --> kpekpe
bela npp [1] --> kpela
bela(g) n [2] --> kpela(g)
bele I n [1] --> kpele I
bele II v --> kpele II
belefu n arbre (*esp.*) / tree (*sp.*)
bele(g) n [1a] --> kpele(g)
belekaso n --> kpelekaso
bete n [1] --> kpete
beteya(g) n [1a] --> kpeteya(g)
beyã(g) v [2] --> kpeyã(g)
beyĩ n [3] **1** écuelle | bowl **2** verre | glass (*drinking vessel*)
bēbele n --> kpēbele
bēbile(g) n [2] --> kpēbile(g)
bégì n hier | yesterday || L wógì
be pron [1] qui | who : *Bè-ní múnò?* ‘Who are there?’ || L 6ε; B 6ε ‘what, which’
be v [1] --> kpe
bèdá pron de quoi? | whose? : *Bázà y sî bèdá lé?* ‘Whose headdress is this?’ || L 6ε ‘who’; B 6ε ‘what, which’
bègélé pron quel? | which?
bèlézòwò pron quand , quel jour? | when , which day? || L 6ε ‘who’; B 6ε ‘what, which’
bele(g) n [2] --> kpele(g)
beli v [1] --> kpele
bēde v --> kpēde
biizi(g) v [2] --> kpiizi(g)
biliki n [3] **1** brique | brick **2** route | road || < E; L bìliki
bilo I n [1] bureau | office || < F
bilo II n [1] bleu (*pour le linge*) / blueing (*for wash*) || < F
biyaki(g) n [5] guyave | guava || L bìeki
bĩdi I n [1] --> kpĩdi I
bĩdi II v [1] --> kpĩdi II
bo I n [1] --> kpo I
bo II v [1] --> kpo II
bobo n [2] --> kpobo
bobowolu n [1] --> kpobowolu
bo(g) [6] n conte | fairy tale **boyi(g)**
boyi(g) n [6] conte | fairy tale **bo(g)**
bókávè(g) n --> kpókávè(g)
boke n [3] louche | dipper **kpaka(g)**
bokolo v --> kpokolo
bokolo(g) n [1a] --> kpokolo(g)
bola n [3] ami | friend || L bòla, bòla, bòla
bolava n [3] amitié | friendship **nēbe**
bolawila n le meilleur ami | best friend

- bolo I n** [2] --> kpolo I
bolo II v [2] --> kpolo II
bolobolo(g) adv [2] beaucoup | many , a lot of (*countable objects*) || B mbóóló ‘big’
bolokota n [1] maison de la communauté | community house (*in a village*)
boloye n [2] --> kpoloye
boole(g) v [2] --> kpoole(g)
boti(g) n [1] --> kpoti(g)
boŵa n [2] hamac | hammock
boyko n [3] chien | dog || B bóíko
bōbe(g) n [1a] --> kpōbe(g)
bōji n [1] --> kpōji
bo I n [2] ami | guest , friend || L bóó, bó, bon(g), bo(g) boa, baa ‘same age person’; B bó ‘join’
bo II pron [1] se | self **ḡyḡ** || L bóyḡ
bo(g) n [2] --> kpó(g)
bōyētō v *vi* se taire | be silent , become silent
bōyḡ pron [1] se | self **ḡḡ** || L bóyḡ
bókó n [1] --> kpókó
bókòvoló n [1] --> kpókòvoló
bókpó v [1] --> kpókpó
bókpó(g) n [1] --> kpókpó(g)
bóle v [1] --> kpóle
bóló n sac (*grand, ex. valise*) / bag (*large, ex. backpack*) || L b̀̀l̀, bola, bolo(g)
bóló v --> kp̀̀l̀
bólu v [2] --> kp̀̀lu
bónó n --> kp̀̀nó
bóóló I v [1] --> kp̀̀óló I
bóóló II n [1] --> kp̀̀óló II
bóti(g) n [4] boîte | box (*for liquids and powders, can be solidly shut*) : A l̀ zéyní b̀̀t̀ m̀̀ ‘He is sitting on a box’
bówe n --> kp̀̀we
bóy(g) n [2] serviteur | servant , maid || < E ‘boy’
bōḡḡ n [1] gombo | gombo || B bóḡḡndó ‘okra’
bōḡ(g) v [2] --> kp̀̀ḡ(g)
búbu n [3] cochon | pig || L bóí(g), bí(g), buí(g); B búbu ‘domesticated pig’
buki n [3] hyène | hyena
bule v [2] --> kpule
buló(g) n [1] --> kpulo(g)
bulu ḡuli-y n [3] pain | bread || L buuli, beḡ, bùlu
bulu(g) I v [2] --> kpulu(g) I
bulu(g) II n [2] --> kpulu(g) II
bululeveḡo n [1] **1** boulanger | baker **2** boulangerie | bakery
bumāgulo n [1] tourterelle | turtledove || B bomukulo ‘pigeon’
busa n [1] --> kpusa
buta v --> kputa
bute n [2] --> kpute
butḡ n [3] bouton | button || < F
buuwi n [1] hibou | owl || L buu, bun(g)
būbu n [3] nasse | fishing net
būda n [1] --> kpūda
būde v --> kpūde

C - c

ceke n [3] atiéké | atieke (*dish made of manioc*)
cěcě(g) n [4] cigale | cicada
cece(g) n [4] castagnettes | castagnettes (*worn on legs*)

D - d

-da morph [1] *suffixe locative* | *locative nominal suffix* --> Masada
da I n [1] **1** foi | belief (*in - dà*) **2** confiance | trust (*in - dà*) || L da, da(g)
da II v [1] **1** vi croire | believe (*smb, in - dà*) : *Da le gala da* 'I believe in god' : *Da le ye la* 'I believe you' **2** vi être d'accord (*avec - dà*) agree (*with - dà*) || B ndà
da III n [1] bouche | mouth || L da(g), dà; B nda
da IV v [1] **1** 1) vt mettre, poser, coucher | place, out, lie 2) vi se mettre, se coucher | lie down **2** vi être couché | lie || L dà, da(g); B ndà
da V npp [1] **1** près de | near **2** sur (*d'un réservoir ouvert*) | at the top of (*open vessel, box*) **3** au-devant | past : *Nāga love pele lay* 'I am going past the house'
da VI de-y n [2] (no ICC) propriété | property, possession || L dɔ, de; B ndá 'own'
da VII n [1] endroit, lieu | place (*usually in compound nouns: --> Masada*) **āda** || L dà
da VIII de-y npp [2] (no ICC) pour | for : *Kòlì ló Māsà bālè gā gé-déy* 'Koli makes Masa work for him' || L dɔ, de 'property'; B ndá 'own'
daabɔlu(g) v [2] 1) vt fermer | close (*tightly*) 2) vi se fermer | close (*tightly*) || B ndabólu
daale v vi porter sur tête (*qch. - bù*) | carry on the head (*smth. - bù*) : *Nāga laale ne-lapay wu* 'I am carrying my bag on the head' || B ndaale
dáávè(g) v 1) vt remplir (*de - gā*) | fill (*with - gā*) 2) vi se remplir (*de - gā*) | fill (*with - gā*) : *Taayay daaveya ga jey* 'The calabash was filled by water' || L dáve, dave(g), dave(g); B ndaahéi
dabele(g) n [2] barbe | beard **kpele(g)** || L dabele, dabala
daɓo n [3] petit déjeuner | breakfast; *daɓo gulo* petit déjeuner | breakfast
dabulu(g) n [2] levre | lip **kpulu(g)** || L dakɔlɔ(g), dakulu(g)
daya n [1] feuille | leaf (*of a plant*) || L daya, daya(g), daa, daa(g); B ndayá
dakɔlsu n [1] bord | edge
dakpa n [1] lance | spear || B ndekpa 'arrow'
dala(g) v vt tirer | drag, pull || B ndalá 'draw, pull'
dali v [2] vt frequenter (*qn., qch. - m̀à*) | visit often (*smb., smth. - m̀à*) : *Kòlì légáá lálí né-ẁà* 'Koli used to visit us' || L d̀ali
damakpe(g) n [2] **1** calme | calm **2** attention | cautiousness, attentiveness || B ndama 'be careful'
dapa n [2] sac | bag : *Í lápá gúlóy lè* 'This bag is small' || L d̀ap̀ap̀è 'women's bag carried on the waist'
dapi I n [2] bagarre, combat | fight, struggle; *dapi wo* lutter | struggle : *Tátá w̃e nà má lápíy ýéni là̀ǹi*. 'They met where the fight was taking place' || B ndapí, M nd̀ap̀í
dapi II v [2] vi lutter | struggle || B ndapí, M nd̀ap̀í
dase(g) I n [1a] nom | name : *Dó z̀aẁasiỳeỳ l̀as̀è b̀à Kòlì* 'The third son is called Koli' || L dasi(g), dazi(g), daazei(g), dase(g), dàsè(g); B ndaahé 'to name'
dase(g) II v vi [2] nager | swim || L d̀as̀é(g)
dasuwola n couverture | bed sheet, blanket
davila v [2] 1) vt remplir (*de - gā*) | fill (*with - gā*) 2) vi se remplir (*de - gā*) | fill up (*with - gā*) : *Taayay davilaa ga jey* 'The calabash is filled with water' **pila II**
davili v [2] vt pousser | push
dawo(g) v [2] 1) vt ouvrir | open : *Koli peley lawowa* 'Koli opened the door' 2) vi s'ouvrir | open || L da la, da wo(g), da wu(g), M nd̀aẁó

- dawowo v** vi bâiller | yawn || L dawo(g); B ndaŵóí ‘kiss, lick mouth’
- dawu npp** [1] **1** devant | in front of **2** pendant | during
- daŵa n** endroit pour dormir | sleeping place (*bed, mat, armchair*)
- daŵazubele(g) n** [2] moustache | mustache
- daŵe v** [2] --> daŵε
- daŵo n** [3] **1** personnalité | personality : *Kòlì làŵóyì kpóló-wáá lè* ‘All Kolis are strange’ **2** nom | name
- daŵuyani(g) n** [2] nourriture, déjeuner | food, lunch, dinner : *Folofolo ne-jey daŵuyani bate* ‘Every day my mother cooks a dinner’ || L damiŋeni, daŋiŋeni
- daŵε daŵε v** [2] vi manger | eat || L dāli, dame, dāmi; B ndayé ‘saliva’
- dāba(g) n** [1a] crocodile | crocodile || L daba(g); B ndambá(ŋ)
- dāgoli n** dent | tooth *goli*
- de I pron** [2] (no ICC) que, quel? | what, which? || B ndeení ‘what’ (pl.?) : *De wulu zi wa si?* ‘What kind of tree is this?’
- de II v** vi être bruyant | be loud
- debe n** [1] silure | || L debe, dèbè; B ndebé ‘catfish’
- de(g) I v** [1a] **1** vt mettre au monde | give birth **2.1** vi naître | be born (*process*) **2.2** vi être né | be born (*state*) || B ndé ‘give birth’
- de(g) II v** [2] dire (*à - mà*) say (*smb. - mà*); *dè(g) wòlù* répéter | repeat || B nde, M ndé
- deya n** [1] cheveux | hair *gūdeya* || L dèya, deγε
- deye n** [1] (no ICC) cadet | younger sibling || L dèye; B ndeye
- déváázù pron** (no ICC) **1** pourquoi? | why? : *Déváázù yè và ínéné?* ‘Why are you worrying?’ **2** parce que | because || B ndee lé ‘why’
- deve v** [2] **1** vt frapper | beat **2** vt frapper, cogner | knock **3** vt jouer (*d’un instrument de percussion*) | play (*a percussion instrument*) || L duwo, duwa, dowa, doya, du; B ndeve ‘strike, beat’, M ndèwé
- deŵā(g) v** [1a] vi oublier (*qn., qch. - mà*) forget (*smb., smth. - mà*) || B ndeŵa ‘forgetfulness’
- dē(g) n** [1a] (usually plural: *dègàyti*) **1** fils | son **2** enfant | child || L duu(g), di(g), dun(g), don; B ndengá ‘children’
- dε v** [1] vi être un menteur | be a liar || B nde ‘be false’
- dεεlebo v** [2] vi se reposer | rest || B ndεεlebo
- dεγedeγe v** --> leγεleγε
- dεve n** [2] hirondelle (?), chauve-souris | swallow (?), bat || B ndehe ‘bat’, M ndévé ‘house bat’
- devu v** **1** vi respirer | breathe **2** vi vivre | live || L ñεfù; B ndεehu
- dεy(g) v** [1a] vi être froid, être frais | be cold, be cool || L dèi, deye, deida; B nde
- dēbi n** [1] respect | respect, esteem : *Lēbi wōla lo geya dosoyti ba* ‘I have a great respect for hunters’ || L dèbi; B ndembí ‘last long, live long’
- dī I v** [1] vi aller | go; *dī gā* continuer | continue || L dī, de; B ndi, M ndí
- dī II n** [1] coeur | heart || L zi, zì; B ndi, M ndí, ndíí
- dība(g) v** [1a] vt presser | squeeze || B ndiibá, M ndígbá ‘press, squeeze’
- dībe n** [2] plumeau | whisk (*made of bull’s tail*)
- difuwa(g) n** [1a] poumon | lung || L zivaya(g), zìivoγa(g)
- diili n** [2] mouche | fly || L dulu, duwuli, diìli; B ndiili ‘house fly’, M ndiì
- diizu n** [1] reins | waist
- dile(g) n** [1a] **1** paix | peace **2** plaisir | pleasure : *Táwólàyti kpě té yá (’)-mé gā dílégi* ‘All villagers eat this with pleasure’ || B ndiilé ‘satisfaction, peace, contentment’
- dilóló(g) I n** [1a] courage | courage || B ndiilóló ‘courage’
- dilóló(g) II v** [1a] vi être courageux | be courageous || B ndiilóló ‘courage’
- diwa I n** [2] milieu | middle || L zuwā, zui; B ndiiwá ‘among, center’

- diwa II npp** [2] *díwázù* au milieu, entre | among, between : *Á lò táy líwá* ‘He is in the middle of the village’ || L *zuwã, zui*; B *ndiiwá* ‘among, center’
- díwázù npp** --> diwa II
- diya n** [1] (no ICC) ainé | elder sibling : *Nè-diyà yéyà gà kkdíyìy* ‘My elder brother has become the chief’ || L *dìà, diyè, die, die*; B *ndia*
- diyawona(g) v 1** *vt* maudire, nerver | curse **2 vt** nerver | irritate
- do I v** [2] *vt* laisser | let, leave : *É gé-lóy lówà kóvìy zù* ‘She left her son at home’ || B *ndo*
- do II n** [1] **1** enfant | child **2** fils | son || L *duu, duu(g), dũ(g), dõ, dõĩ*; B *ndó*
- dòbá part** *thématisateur* | *topic marker* **1** et | and **2** donc, alors | then, so : *Gílèy dòbá é zíyá kóówòy nà wà* ‘As for the dog, it went on the trunk’
- dobo(g) n** [1a] arbre (*esp.: aux feuilles grandes et rondes*) | tree (*sp.: with big round leaves*) || L *daboi(g)*
- dola(g) n** [1a] fourmi (*esp.: des arbres*) | ant (*sp.: live on trees*) || L *dòwò da(g)*; B *ndolá(η)* ‘red ant’
- domã(g) n** [2] **1** chemise | shirt **2** habit | clothes || B *ndoma(η)*, M *ndòmá* ‘gown, shirt’
- dooli n** [2] **1** amusement | amusement; *dóólí wó* jouer, s’amuser se réjouir | play, enjoy **2** fête | festivity, party : *Dóólíy lò néyá* ‘We have a festivity’ **3** anniversaire | birthday
- dooli(g) n** [1a] ligne (*de peche*) | rod; *dooligi vili* to fish || M *ndólí*
- dopo n** [1] enfant | child || L *dopo, nopo*; B *ndopó* ‘boy, girl’
- doso I n** [2] chasse | hunt : *Nè-kééyè liìgò dósóy wà* ‘My father went hunting’ || L *dósó* ‘hunter’; B *ndoso* ‘hunter’
- doso II v** [2] *vi* chasser (*qn. - mà*) | hunt (*smb. - mà*) || L *dósó* ‘hunter’; B *ndoso* ‘hunter’
- dovo n** [2] crapaud | toad || L *dovo, devo*; B *ndoho*
- dowa n** [1] **1** trou | hole **2** fosse | pit **3** trou de la serrure | keyhole || B *ndowá*
- dòwázù I n** [1] linteau | bulkhead, intersection (*e.g., between two branches of a tree*) || B *ndowahu* ‘among, between’
- dòwázù II npp** entre, au milieu | between, among : *Yà sò nò sò wò-lòwàzù* ‘Between you and him’ || B *ndowahu* ‘among, between’
- dowoozuwõ n** [1] femme enceinte | pregnant woman : *Dowoozuwõy vaago* ‘The pregnant woman came’ *koozuwõ*
- dò n** [2] **1** palme | palm **2** vin de palme | palm wine || L *dò, dò(g), dóó*; B *ndò* ‘liquor, wine’
- dòbò n** [2] brousse | bush || L *dòbò, dòbó*; B *ndòbò*
- dòbòwulususu(g) n** serpent (*esp.: noir, grand*) | snake black (*sp.: big, black*)
- dòle n** [2] faim | hunger; : *Dòley lò ma* ‘I am hungry’ || M *ndòlé*
- dòle(g) pron** [1a] combien? | how many?
- dòlò(g) v** [1a] chercher | search || B *ndòlò* ‘seek out’
- dòlò n** [2] mil | millet || L *dòlò*; B *ndòlò* ‘kind of rice’
- dòlò(g) num** [2] (no ICC) cinq | five || L *dòlò, dóólù*; B *ndòlù*
- dòwò n** [1] **1** marché | market : *Mámà li dóówòy zù* ‘We are going to the market’ **2** semaine | week || L *dòwò* ‘weekly market’; B *ndòwò*
- dòwòla n** [1] vendredi | Friday || L *dòwòla, dòwala*; B *ndòwòwala*
- dòpa n** [1] gazelle | gazelle || L *dòpa, dopo, dòpa, dopa* ‘antelope species’; B *ndòpá* ‘red deer’
- dòtòlò** *dòtòli-y* **n** [5] (no ICC) médecin | doctor || L *dikta, dòtòle*
- dòvali n** palme (*esp.: petite*) palm (*sp.: small*)
- dòve n** [2] paresse | laziness : *Nāga dòvey gula kpòbe kemay* ‘I am reluctant to do the job’
- dòwòlò n** [1] terre, sol | land, soil || B *ndòwòlò* ‘ground, earth, country’
- dòwòlòyize(g) n** [1a] gingembre | ginger
- dòwu v** [2] **1** *vt* cacher | hide **2** *vi* se cacher | hide **2** *vi* disparaître | disappear || L *dòwu, doowu(g), dowu(g), domu(g), doju(g)*; B *ndòwú* ‘secret, hiding’
- duduma n** [1] brouillard | fog || L *didime(g)*
- dulu** *duli-y* **n** [2] fumée | smoke || L *dúuli, duwulu, duulu, duri*; B *nduli*; M *ndùlú* ‘smoke, vapour’

duula v [1] **1** *vi* pourrir | rot **2** *vi* fondre | spoil || L dulo, duulo; B ndulá ‘be rotten’
duwa v [1] *vi* avoir peur (*de - bà*) | be afraid (*of - bà*) : *Nã gálùwà fúǎé-fây wà* ‘I am afraid of falling’ || L duwo, duo, dual; B nduwá
duwo *duwi-y n* [2] cendre | ashes || B nduwu, M ndùvú à
duye(g) n chaleur, chaud | heat || L di(g), diye(g)
duzu n [1] vin de raphia | raphia wine || L dùzù ‘raphia fibre’; B nduhú ‘bamboo tree or wine’
dūda n [1] facocher, sanglier | boar

E - e

e I *ge pred* [2] *marque personnelle du 3sg. (sér. de base) | 3sg. PPM (basic series)* il, elle | he, she, it
e II pred [1] *marque personnelle du 3sg. (sér. dépendante) | 3sg. PPM (dependent series)* il, elle | he, she, it
eya pron [1] *pronom personnel du 2sg. (sér. contractive) | 2sg. personal pronoun (contractive series)* tu, toi | you
eyay eyaygì pron [2] *pronom personnel du 3sg. (sér. emphatique) | 3sg. personal pronoun (emphatic series)* lui, elle | him, her, it

Ɛ - ε

εε itj [2] non | no
eni conj [1] si | if : *èni nè-bòláy yé-ní Māsàdà* ‘If my friend were in Macenta...’ || L ani
ey I yey itj [2] oui | yes || L owei
ey II gey pred [2] *marque personnelle du 3sg. (sér. prospective négative) | 3sg. PPM (prospective negative series)* il, elle | he, she, it
eye neye pred [1] *marque personnelle du 2sg. (sér. conditionnelle négative) | 2sg. PPM (conditional negative series)* si tu ne | if you not
éyè néyè pred *marque personnelle du 3sg. (sér. conditionnelle négative) | 3sg. PPM (conditional negative series)* si je ne | if he not

F - f

fa n [2] **1** chose, quelque chose | thing, something : *Ge fa biizi kolo* ‘I know a lot of things’ **2** récit, phrase | tale, phrase, story : *Geya folofolo fayti de wōwā* ‘I tell stories to you every day’ **3** essence | substance : *Ì-vayti de* ‘Tell about yourself’ : *Siyēgi si vay vani* ‘This guy is good’ || L faa, fa; B fa ‘thing, matter’
-fa I mrph [2] *suffixe des noms abstraits | abstract nominal suffix -->* bolava
-fa II mrph *suffixe du nom verbale | verbal noun suffix* : *Nã gáinènè gà dópòy fúǎé-fây* ‘I am worrying about the child not to fall’
fabo I n [1] cadeau | gift; *fabo yε presenter* | present a gift : *Ne-keeyε lo yε e fabo yε Koli we* ‘My father wants to present a dog to Koli’ **fabowo** || L fèbe ‘подарок’
fabo II fàbò wó v [1] *vi* présenter un cadeau | present a gift : *Nuy si fàbòwale* ‘This person is fond of giving presents’
fabowo n [1] cadeau | gift **fabo**
fala v ça fait rien, c’est bon | it’s ok, it’s all right : *Aliya va yena ge legi, falaa le* ‘Even if you come to me like this, it’s ok’
falafala adv [2] vite, rapidement | quickly : *Gè viláá nè-òò bègìwà valàfàlâ* ‘I finished my work quickly’ || L fala ‘quick’; B fálafala ‘very quick’
falala v *vi* être malhonnête | be dishonest, be shameless
falā(g) n [1a] franc | franc
falimu n [1] farine | flour **falini** || < F
falini n [1] farine | flour **falimu** || < F
fasa n [1] roche | rock || L fàsà ‘small stone, pebbles’; B fasá ‘bear rock, mountain’

- fasa(g) n** [1a] petites crevettes | river shrimp (crawfish?) || L fèza(g); B fasá(η) ‘shrimp’
fáwã npp pendant | during : *Nà ló vè dǎwǎy yílá fáwã* ‘I have been here for a week’
fayasa(g) n [1a] erreur | error, mistake
faza v [1] **1** vt éparpiller | spill, strew **2** vi s’éparpiller | spill **2** vt semer | sow || B fahá ‘sow, scatter’
fe(g) v [1a] **1** vt donner, présenter, offrir (à - yà) | give, offer (smb., to - yà), present (smb. - yà) : *Àmó bǎbǎy vègǎ tǎyá* ‘We gave them the candies’ **2** vt présenter, donner cadeau (à - bε) | present (smb. - bε) || L fe, fε(g), fei; B fe
feya v vi être léger (n’avoir pas beaucoup de poids) be light (of little weight) || L fèya(g), fela(g), fii
fele(g) num [1a] (no ICC) deux | two || L félé(gǎ); B féle
fenetele n [6] (no ICC) fenetre | window || < F
feya adv [2] tout de suite, juste | just, recently || L fea ‘just, as soon as’; B féyaa ‘just now, most recent’ **féyánd**
féyánd adv juste, tout de suite | just (recently) : *Ge ne-bolay lǎgǎ feyano* ‘I just saw my friend’ || L fea ‘just, as soon as’; B féyaa ‘just now, most recent’ **féyá**
fε n [2] marmite | pot || B fε
fεfε(g) n [1a] **1** air | air **2** vent | wind || L fε ‘blow’, fεfε(g) ‘hurricane’, file ‘wind, air’; B fεfε(η) ‘air, wind’
fεleme v [6] fermer (la porte avec une clef) | close, shut (the door), lock || < F
feli v [2] **1** vt demander | ask **2** vt gala fēli prier | pray || L fāli, feli, fei ‘ask’; B fēli ‘ask, pray, beg’
felibō v [2] changer (argent) | change (money) || L feli(g), maaveli(g); B felí ‘lack smth’
feti n [2] fête | festivity : *Zà wà fētíy* ‘Today is the festivity’ || < F; L feti
fitili(g) n [1a] crépuscule | dusk, twilight (from 6 to 7pm) || B fitíli(η) ‘twilight’
fiyolo n [6] fleur | flower || < F
fō n [1] zéro, rien | zero, nothing : *Gà là fōy wǎb* ‘I know nothing’ || L foe; M fō ‘completely’
folo n [1] **1** soleil | sun **2** jour | day || L fōlo, fulo, furu; B foló
folofolo folo-ǎ-folo adv [2] **1** d’habitude | usually **2** toujours, tous les jours | always, every day : *Gè yà Kòlì yǎd Māsà sǎ tí-lǎ fólófólò* ‘I see them, Koli and Masa, every day’ || L fóló-wó-vòlò
folo(g) I adv [1a] un jour (du passé) | once (in the past)
folo(g) II n [1a] jour (du passé) | day (in the past)
foloǎfolo adv --> folofolo
foloyakpa(g) n midi | noon (time from 11am to 2pm) || L folo yalogai, folo gaaloga
foto n (no ICC) photo | photo, picture || < F
fowã adv [2] il fait claire | it is clear : *Woza geya le fowã* ‘It is becoming clearer’
fowo n [1] saison sèche | dry season || L fō ‘be dry’; B fowó ‘dry season’
fǎfǎ n [2] bogue (esp.: grande) | bug (sp.: large) || L fǎfǎ ‘larva’
fǎfǎle v [1] sucer | suck || L fǎfǎne, fεfεne; B fǎfǎlé; M fǎfǎε(η)
fǎlese v vt défendré (à qn.) prohibit (to smb.) *Ne keεye fǎlesego ga ge Mari zey* ‘My father prohibited me to marry Mary’
fǎve(g) n [1a] roseau | reed || M fǎvǎvǎ ‘wet, marshy area’
fǎvǎ adv [1] tout-près | close by **fǎvǎvǎ**
fǎze v vi être petit | be small (about objects, people)
fǎdǎ v vi suer | sweat || L fodo, fǎdǎ, mǎvǎdǎ ‘sweat, blood’; B fǎndǎ
fǎǎ adv [2] (no ICC) bien | well || B fǎ ‘truly, certainly’
fufule(g) n [1a] poussière | dust || L fifili(g), fūfule(g); B fufulé(η)
fuka I n [1] **1** poudre (à canon) gunpowder **2** poudre | powder, pound || L fuke; B fukú ‘gunpowder’
fuka II v [1] vt bocarder | pound || L fuke ‘powder’; B fukú ‘gunpowder’
fukǎ(g) n [1a] chiffon | cloth (for carrying load on the head)

fule I n [1] soufflets | bellows || L file, fule; B fulé ‘ring’

fule II fuli-y n [1] circle | ring || B fulé

fulu I fuli-y n [1] mariage | marriage || L fùlu, vùlu

fulu II v [1] vi vivre | live, exist || B fulú ‘live, be alive’

fulu(g) n [1a] four | furnace

fuŷi n [3] éponge | sponge

fūde v cambrioler | rob

fūdemo n [1] cambrioleur | robber

fūde v [2] vi tomber | fall

G - g

ga I conj [1] *complementiser que* | that : *É w̄énì ná gà gílèy liìnì* ‘It appeared that the dog has gone’

ga II prep [1] (no ICC) **1** avec | with **2** au moyen de | by means of *exprime l’idée de l’instrument* | expresses the meaning of instrument || L ga; B ga

ga III pred [1] (no ICC) *marque personnelle du 1sg. (sér. irréelle) | 1sg. PPM (irrealis series)* je | I : *Gà wò nè-jèy nènè* ‘I will greet my mother’

ga IV pp [1] sur (*surface de l’eau*) | on (*the surface of the water*) : *Ánìy nò è jéy yà nè-wòòlòy lé* ‘The thing that is floating along the river is my hat’

-ga I mrph [1] *-yà, -wà* *marque plurielle indéfinie* | NP indefinite plurality marker || L -ga

-ga II mrph [1] (no ICC) *-wa* *marque plurielle relative* | relative plurality marker : *Álò yà và gà fábówòy dópó-wàytì gèlè* ‘He usually brings gifts to the children’

gaala I n [2] savanne | savanna || L gála; B ngaala ‘wilderness’

gaala II n [2] chiendent | crabgrass || L gála ‘straw’

gaazu n [1] **1** visage | face **2** œil | eye || L gàazu, gazu, gaazu yèze, gaazu vaza, gaazu vè; B ngaahu

gaazubēdeya(g) n sourcil | eyebrow

gaazubele(g) n [2] pupille | pupil

gaazuwole(g) v [2] vi être aveugle | be blind || L gazuwole

gaazuwolo(g) n [1a] paupière | eyelid

gadala v [1] **1** vi étendre | stretch **2** vi s’étendre | stretch : *Kolay yadala le tabali ya* ‘The cloth is stretched on the table’

gadey(g) v [1a] **1** vi être calme | be calm, be quiet **2** vi n’être pas chaud | be cool, not cold

gadeye v [1] vi être fragile | be fragile

gadeyedeye v [1] vi être très fragile | be very fragile

gadi v [1] vt aiguiser | sharpen || B ngandi; M ngándí

gadiyē n gardien | guard || < F

gado(g) I n compte | count || M ngándós ‘collect, assemble’

gado(g) II v compter | count || L gálu(g), dodo(g), dodo(g); M ngándós ‘collect, assemble’

gado v [1] vi être debout | stand : *Yado!* ‘Stand!’

gafē v [1] vanner | winnow || L gave; B ngafē ‘fan (rice), winnow’

gafō v [1] allumer | put on fire : *Gè góbíy yáfówà* ‘I have started the fire’ || L gaazo(g); B ngafó ‘fan (fire)’

gake v [1] vt expliquer | explain || B ngaké ‘show, prove’

gakele(g) v [1a] **1** **1** vt finir | finish : *Gè zévéy yakeleya* ‘I finished writing’ **2** vi être dernier, être tard | be late : *Ì-vavay gakeleya* ‘Your arrival is late’ || B ngakele ‘last, end’

gaku n [1] crabe | crab || L naku; M ngákú ‘crab, crane’

gakula(g) v [1a] résoudre | resolve, sort out (*a problem - bà*)

gakpa(g) v [1a] **1** vi être fort | be strong **2** vi être industrieux || L gába; B ngakpa ‘be strong’

galafelivele n [1] église | church || L gala(g) pele

- gala(g) I n** [1a] dieu | god || L gàla(g), gala; B ngala
- gala(g) II n** [1a] canne, plafond de canne, plancher de canne | reed, reed cover (*for floor or ceiling*) || L gàla(g); B ngalá ‘hart mat’
- gale v** 1) *vt* casser | break : *Koli ne-bikigi yaleya* ‘Koli has broken my pen’ 2) *vi* se casser | break || L gale, gale; B ngale
- galu n** [1] œuf | egg || B ngalu
- galu(g) n** [1a] 1 lune | moon : *Gálúgì lè géléy yà* ‘The moon is on the sky’ 2 mois | month || L γalu(g), àlo(g); B ngalu(η)
- gama adv** [1] tout de suite | at once **gamagama** || L gama; M ngámà ‘immediately, at once’
- gamagama adv** [1] tout de suite | at once **gama** || L gama; M ngámà ‘immediately, at once’
- gapõ v** [1] *vi* être avare | be greedy
- gapopo v** [1] 1 *vt* consoler | console 2 *vt* endormir | make asleep || B ngapõpõ ‘calm, comfort’
- gapote(g) I n** [1a] réponse | reply, answer || L gawõte, gawõte(g); B ngapote
- gapote(g) II v** [1a] répondre | reply, answer || L gawõte, gaawõte(g), gawõte(g); B ngapote
- gasoba(g) v** [1a] *vi* être pointu | be sharp || L zõbõ
- gate v** [1] *vi* se rassembler | assemble || L gààlè ba
- gato v** [1] 1 sentir | feel 2 comprendre | understand || B ngatõ ‘feel, understand’
- gavi n** [2] pou | louse (*in hair*) || B ngahú; M ngàví
- gawu(g) n** [1a] igname | wild yam || M ngàwú
- gañana v** 1 *vi* être fatiguant | be tiring 2 *vi* être fatigué | be tired || B ngañalango ‘be painful’
- gãgale v** 1) *vt* retourner (*à - mà*) | return (*to, smb. - mà*) 2) *vi* s’en retourner | return || L gale(g), galu(g); B ngangaima ‘return, send back’
- gãỹ gẽỹ v** [2] battre | play (*music with hands*) || L ñai
- ge I pred** [1] (no ICC) *marque personnelle du 1sg. (sér. de base et dépendante) | 1sg. PPM (basic and dependent series)* je | I : *Gè pèlèy lóní* ‘I built a house’
- ge- I mrph** [1] *préfixe de substantivisation | substantivising prefix*
- ge II pred** [2] --> e I
- ge- II mrph** [2] *marque possessive du 3sg. | 3sg. possessive prefix* son | his, her, its
- gebulo(g) n** [1a] coude | elbow **kpulo(g)**
- geye v** [2] *vt* prendre | take *geye ya* prendre, porter (*en main*) | carry (*in hand, e.g. a bag*) : *Zábéy lè gé-déy yéyé ná* ‘The hare now took his property’ || B ngeye ‘take’
- gele I pp** [1] 1 de | about 2 à | to : *Jéy gè và bððlò gèlè, á lè này* ‘The river I am speaking about is there’ || B ngelè ‘to, towards’
- gele II n** [2] ciel | sky || L ge, gele, gée; B ngele; M ngèlé
- gele III v** [2] *vt* griller | grill (*in the pot, with oil*) || L geẽ, ge; B ngelè
- gelebãda n** [1] tonnerre, orage | thunder || L gele bada; B ngelebandé
- gele(g) I n** [1a] endroit, lieu | place (*smb’s place*) || B ngelè ‘place’
- gele(g) II npp** [1a] chez | at (*smb’s place*) || B ngelè ‘place’ : *Á và vè, wòyà lè wò-yèlègì* ‘Come (pl.) here, you are at home’
- gelesu n** [1] lever du soleil | sunrise (*5-6 am*) **gelesukpìdi** || B ngelesú ‘very early morning’
- gelesukpìdi n** [1] lever du soleil | sunrise (*5-6 am*) **gelesu**
- gelèda n** [1] matin | morning (*starts 7 am*) || L gela ‘day’; B ngelendá
- gemina pp** (no ICC) comme | so as, the same way as
- gesa n** [2] corde | rope || B ngesa
- gèsá n** (no ICC) main droite, côté droit | right hand, right side || L sa(g); B gesa ‘right (hand)’
- gesawõ(g) n** [1a] liana | cut rope, liana || L ñasa; B gesa ‘rope’
- gesayñavele n** [2] (no ICC) est, côté droit | east, right side
- gete n** [1] perche, pilon | pole, perch, pestle || L gété; B ngeté ‘pestle’

- geteya n** [1] **1** monde, univers | world, universe, earth **2** vie | life **3** créature | creature : Nè-yètèyàz zú Kòlì làwó sáágò nò ló gè (‘)-tówà ‘I have only seen three Kolis in my life’ || L ètea; B ngetéya(η) ‘generation, age’
- geya I pron** [1] (no ICC) *pronom personnel du 1sg. (sér. contractive)* | *1sg. personal pronoun (contractive series)* je, moi | I, me : Méyǎǎgà lá gèyà ‘I have no bananas’
- geya II v** [2] *vt* acheter, payer (*qch.*) | buy, pay (*for smth.*) : Gà lá bùlù yéyágò ‘I did not buy bread’ || L gea, geea, ge, gewa; B ngea
- gèyà pron** (no ICC) *pronom personnel du 3sg. (sér. contractive)* | *3sg. personal pronoun (contractive series)* il, elle, lui | him, her, it
- geyaño n** [1] acheteur | purchaser
- geyuwo n** [1] petit (*d’animal*) | cub (*of animal*) **juwo**
- geza n** [1] femelle (*d’animal*) | female (*animal*) **sa II**
- geze n** [2] coton | cotton || L gèze
- gezeykpela n** [1] secrétaire du chef du village | secretary of the village chief
- gezinaboto(g) n** (no ICC) pouce | thumb
- gezine n** [1] male (*des animaux*) | male (*animal*) **sina**
- gēbòkòtì n** [2] enclume | anvil || L yēībo kóti
- gēbòmo n** [1] forgeron | blacksmith
- gēgebomo n** [1] cultivateur | peasant
- gēge(g) n** [2] terre cultivée | field, cultivated land || ngenge(η) ‘work’
- geeli v** *vt* insulter | insult, abuse || B ngeelí(η) ‘insult, abuse’
- gele I n** [1] rire, sourire | laughter, smile : Í nééyàà lè (‘)-bè nèyà gélèy wò ‘It pleases me when you laugh’ || L nḡḡ; M ngélé ‘laughter, laugh’
- gele II v** [1] 1) *vt* rire (*de - mà*) | laugh (*at - mà*) 2) *vi* sourire | smile || L nḡḡ; M ngélé ‘laughter, laugh’
- gey pred** [1] (no ICC) *marque personnelle du 1sg. (sér. prospective négative)* | *1sg. PPM (prospective negative series)* je | I : Gèy vílá gà và dótóló lólí wè ‘I cannot call for the doctor’
- geye negeye pred** [1] (no ICC) *marque personnelle du 1sg. (sér. conditionnelle négative)* | *1sg. PPM (conditional negative series)* si je ne | if I not : Nègèyè vàà-ní ‘If I do not come’
- gēy v** --> gāy
- gi- mrph** [2] (dial. Lz) (no ICC) *marque possessive du 3sg.* | *3sg. possessive prefix* son | his, her, its --> ge- II
- gi I mrph** [1] (no ICC) *emphatique* | *emphatic part.*
- gi II mrph** [1] (no ICC) *marque déterminative* | *NP definiteness marker* || L -gi; B -ngi
- gila gile-y n** [1] chien | dog || L gile, gele, gilà; B ngílà
- gila(g) I n** [2] seul | lonely (*person*) : Gílágò lè è vààgò ‘It is alone that he came’. || L gílà ‘one’; B ngilaa(η), íta ‘one’
- gila(g) II num** [2] un | one || L gílà; B ngilaa(η), íta
- gili I gili(g) n** [2] termite | termite || B ngili
- gili II v** [1] *vt* cuir | cook || L gìli; Ba ngilí; M ngílí
- gili III v** [1] *vt* lier | attacher (*à - bà*) | bend, stick together, attach (*to - bà*) **maayili** || L gìli; B ngili
- gili(g) n** [2] --> gili I
- gilije n** [2] chef des termites | queen of termites
- gisiya v** [1] **1** *vi* penser (*de - sù*) | think (*of - sù*) **2** *vi* se rappeler (*qn., qch. - sù*) remember (*smb., smth. - sù*) **3** inventer | make up || L kì(g) sía
- gize n** [1] montagne | mountain, hill || L gizi(g), gizi, gize(g), gíze; B ngihé(η)
- gizelwazu n** [2] col | mountain pass **kapò(g)**
- gizewūba n** [1] sommet | mountain top
- gizi n** [2] kissi, kissien | Kissi (*ethnonym*)

- gĩbi n** [1] genou | knee || L j̄ibi
go n [1] **1** voix | voice **2** langue (*au sens linguistique*) | language || L goy, gu, guwo; B ngo ‘word, voice’
-go mrph [1] (no ICC) *suffixe du nom verbale (participe) | verbal noun (participle) suffix* : *Àmámà bá lévégòy lókólàzèy nà* ‘We are already starting the harvest of rice’
go(g) n [1] queue | tail || L jo(g), kon(g), wò(g)
gole v raser | shave || B ngolé
goli I n [2] oreille | ear || L gwi, goyi, góí; B ngolí
goli II n [1] urine | urine; *goli wo* uriner | urine **goliya** || L gòí; B ngoli
golifalaso n trou d’oreille | earhole
gólíld **góylò v** écouter (*qn., qch. - mà*) listen (*to - mà*) || L gwilo, goyilo, góí tó(g)
goliwoko(g) n vipère | viper
goliya n [1] urine | urine **goli II** || L gòí; B ngoli
gólízùbóóló v *vi* être sourd | be deaf || L gwi wolenu
golizuvule **goyzuvule n** [1] boucle d’oreille | earring
golo v [1] *vt* briser | break into pieces, hit || L golo, kpoolokpoolo; M ngóló
goola n [1] forêt | forest (*mixed*) || M ngòlàà
góylò v --> gólíld
goyzuvule n [1] --> golizuvule
-go I mrph [1] (no ICC) *marque d’aoriste | aorist verb marker* || B -ngo
-go II mrph [1] *marque définie des numéraux cardinaux | definite suffix of cardinal numerals* || L -go
gobu **gobi-y n** [2] feu | fire || L nabui, ábú; B ngombu
goc v *vt* [2] ramasser (*e.g., café*) | gather (*e.g., coffee*)
gofela(g) num [1] sept | seven || L dōfela; B ngōfēla
gola I adj [1] grand | big || L gwala, gòla; B ngwalá
gola II n [1] une grande partie | larger part
golawo adv [1] **1** très | very : *Kóláy s̄i váání gòlàwò* ‘These clothes are very nice’ **2** beaucoup | a lot **golay**
golay adv [1] **1** très | very : *Ja bādi wōlay* ‘Very hot water’ **2** beaucoup | a lot **golawo**
gole v *vi* choisir (*qn., ach. - sù*) choose (*smb., smth. - sù*)
goli n dent | tooth **dāgoli**
golo v [1] *vi* pleurer | cry, weep || L wòlo; B ngóló
goyita(g) num [1] --> gōzita(g)
goza n [1] écureuil | squirrel
gōzakpa(g) num [1] (no ICC) huit | eight || L dōsava, dōsowà; B ngōhákpa
gōzita(g) **goyita(g) num** [1] (no ICC) six | six || L dōzita, dōzita; B ngōhíta
gu(g) num [2] cent | hundred || L úgìla
gukpe n [2] souche | stump (*of a tree*) || B ngukpe
gukpòlo(g) n cerveau | brain || L (ju-)kpolo(g)
gula(g) v [2] --> kula(g)
gule n [1] chanson, musique | song, music || B ngule
guli v *vt* puiser | draw || B ngulí
gulo I n [1] huile | oil || L gùlo; B nguló
gulo II adv [1] un peu | a little, some : *Bá gùlò vè gèyà* ‘Give me some rice’ **taagulo** || M kùlò, klò
gulo III adj --> kulo
gulogulo adj --> kulogulo
gulu **guli-y n** [1] arbre | tree || L gùlu; B ngulú
gulubeke(g) n branche | branch **kpeke(g)** : *Gulubekegiti tata liyili* ‘The branches of the tree are swinging’

guluḅu n tronc | trunk
gululowo n pois d'angole plant (*sp.*)
guluwã(g) n [1] fruit | fruit ***bã(g) II*** || L guluwa
guluyaya n [1] bois | timber
gutulosu n crête | crest (*of a house roof*)
guya v [2] laver | wash (*for inanimate objects*) || L gwo, gba, gwa; B nguya
guye n [1] fromager | || L gwa, gbà, guo
gūba n [1] **1** tête | head ***gū(g) 2*** sommet | mountain summit || B ngumbá
gūbabaza n [3] mouchoir-de-tête | headdress ***baza***
gūdamaḅōji n [1] oreiller | pillow
gūdeya n [1] cheveu | hair ***deya*** || L dèya, deye; B ndeya
gū(g) n [1] tête | head ***gūba*** || L ju(g), nū(g), wū(g), nōū(g); B ngu(η)
gūdébòkòtì n trois pierres pour le feu | three stones for the fire || B ngunde(η) 'cook'

Y - y

ya pp [1] --> ga IV
yaala I n [2] --> gaala I
yaala II n [2] --> gaala II
yaalani n [2] --> kaalani
yaale n --> kaale
yaale n [1] --> kaale
yaali n [2] --> kaali
yaazu n [1] --> gaazu
yaazubele(g) n [2] --> gaazubele(g)
yaazukpèdeya(g) n --> gaazukpèdeya(g)
yaazuwole(g) v [2] --> gaazuwole(g)
yadala v [1] --> gadala
yadey(g) v [1] --> gadey(g)
yadeye v [1] --> gadeye
yadeyedeye v [1] --> gadeyedeye
yadi v [1] --> gadi(g)
yado(g) I n --> gado(g) I
yado(g) II v --> gado(g) II
yado v [1] --> gado
yafe v [1] --> gafe
yafu v [1] --> gafo
yaka n [2] --> kaka
yákálà npp --> kákálà
yakalapi n [2] --> kakalapi
yákáwà(g) npp --> kákáwà(g)
yake n [3] --> kake
yake v [1] --> gake
yakele(g) v [1a] --> gakele(g)
yaku n [1] --> gaku
yakula(g) v [1a] --> gakula(g)
yakpa(g) n [1a] --> gakpa(g)
yala n [2] --> kala
yaladopo n [1] --> kaladopo
yala(g) v [1a] --> kala(g)
yala(g) I n [1a] --> gala(g) I

ɣala(g) II **n** [1a] --> gala(g) II
ɣalakpa **n** [1] --> kalakpa
ɣalamo **n** [5] --> kalamo
ɣalābo **v** [2] --> kalābo
ɣale **v** --> gale
ɣalé **pron** comment? | how?
ɣali **n** [1] --> kali
ɣalu **n** [1] --> galu
ɣalu(g) **n** [1a] --> galu(g)
ɣaɲɔ̃ **v** [1] --> gaɲɔ̃
ɣapopo **v** [1] --> gapopo
ɣapote(g) **v** [1] --> gapote(g)
ɣapɔ̃(g) **n** --> kapɔ̃(g)
ɣasoba(g) **n** [1] --> gasoba(g)
ɣate **v** [1] --> gate
ɣato **v** [1] --> gato
ɣavi **n** [2] --> gavi
ɣawu(g) **n** [1a] --> gawu(g)
ɣaŋwana **v** --> gaŋwana
ɣayě(g) **n** [1a] --> kayě(g)
ɣāba **n** [1] --> kāba
ɣāgale **v** --> gāgale
ɣāpilijaka **n** [2] --> kāpilijaka
ɣāỹ **v** [2] --> gāỹ
ɣeyɛ **v** [2] --> geɣɛ
ɣele I **v** [2] --> gele III
ɣele II **adv** [1] --> kele
ɣele III **pp** [1] --> gele I
ɣelebāda **n** [1] --> gelebāda
ɣele(g) I **n** [1a] --> kele(g) I
ɣele(g) II **n** [1a] --> kele(g) II
ɣele(g) III **npp** [1a] --> gele(g) I
ɣele(g) IV **n** [1a] --> gele(g) II
ɣeleɣele(g) **v** [1] --> keleyele(g) II
ɣelekpaku **n** [1] --> kelekpaku
ɣelesu **n** [1] --> gelesu
ɣelēda **n** [1] --> gelēda
ɣesa **n** [2] --> gesa
ɣèsá **n** --> gèsá
ɣesawɔ̃(g) **n** [1a] --> gesawɔ̃(g)
ɣesaywāvele **n** [2] --> gesaywāvele
ɣete **n** [1] --> gete
ɣeteya **n** [1] --> geteya
ɣeya **v** [2] --> geya II
ɣeyaŋo **n** [1] --> geyaŋo
ɣeze **n** [2] --> geze
ɣezeykpela **n** [1] --> gezeykpela
ɣēbɔ̃kɔ̃ti **n** [2] --> gēbɔ̃kɔ̃ti
ɣēbɔ̃mo **n** [1] --> gēbɔ̃mo
ɣēgebomo **n** [1] --> gēgebomo

ɣēge(g) n [2] --> gēge(g)
ɣe v [2] --> ke I
ɣeli v --> gēli
ɣele I n [1] --> gele I
ɣele II v [1] --> gele II
ɣele(g) n --> kele(g)
ɣelekulo v [1] --> kelekulo
ɣelēde(g) n --> kelēde(g)
ɣeya n [1] --> keya
ɣeze n [1] --> keze
ɣezeɣeze adv [2] bien sûr, vraiment | certainly, true
ɣēde(g) I n [1a] --> kēde(g) I
ɣēde(g) II v [1a] --> kēde(g) II
ɣỹ v [2] --> gỹ
ɣi(g) n [1] --> ki(g)
ɣila n [1] --> gila
ɣila(g) I num [2] --> gila(g)
ɣila(g) II n [1a] --> kila(g)
ɣilakpaku n [1] --> kilakpaku
ɣili I n [2] --> gili I
ɣili II v [1] --> gili II
ɣili III v [1] --> gili III
ɣiliyili(g) I n [1a] --> kiliyili(g) I
ɣiliyili(g) II v [1a] --> kiliyili(g) II
ɣilije n [2] --> gilije
ɣilizi(g) n [2] --> kilizi(g)
ɣisiya v [1] --> gisiya
ɣito I n --> kito I
ɣito II v --> kito II
ɣize n [1] --> gize
ɣizelowazu n [2] --> gizelowazu
ɣizewūba n [1] --> gizewūba
ɣize(g) n [1a] --> kize(g)
ɣizi n [2] --> gizi
ɣĩbi n [1] --> gĩbi
ɣĩdavili(g) v --> kĩdavili(g)

H - h

hã I conj jusqu'à | until : *Lò vè hãgè và* 'Stay here until I come'
hã II prep jusqu'à | until : *Hã leelee wɔfela* 'Until 7 o'clock'

I - i

i pron [2] ce | this || L ĩ 'this'; B i
i- morph [1] *marque possesseive du 2sg.* | *2sg. possessive prefix* ton | your
ila adv [2] **1** un jour, jamais | once, ever : *Yè pílíyáníy lówà ílá?* 'Have you ever seen a monkey?' **2** jamais | never || L gílà 'one'
ina(g) n [4] --> inã(g) II
inaina v [2] --> ineine
inã(g) I n [2] diable | devil
inã(g) II ina(g) n [4] souris | mouse || L ìne(g)

ineine *inaina* **v** [2] **1** *vi* s'inquiéter | worry **2** *vi* douter | doubt

J - j

ja *jɛ-y* **n** [2] **1** eau, fleuve | water, river **2** pluie | rain **3** suc | juice || L *dɛ, zie, zi, zía*; B *nja, nje*
jaabe **n** [1] (no ICC) **1** cousin | cousin **2** neveu, nièce | nephew, niece || L *dábe, dábe*; B *njaabé*
jaba **n** [4] tam-tam | tamtam
jababa **n** [5] parapluie | umbrella
jabela **n** [1] bord (*de rivière, mer*) | bank (*of river, sea*)
jabibi **n** [5] ananas | pineapple
jabili **n** [1] nuage | cloud || L *tona bi(g)*; B *njabilí* 'rain cloud'
jabu **n** glace | ice (*of water*)
jalodama **n** embouchure | river mouth || M *njalɔtoma* 'source of a stream'
jatakoli **n** [1] pou | louse (*of dogs*)
java **n** [2] oignon, ail | onion, garlic || L *yava(g), yava(g), yàvà*
javabu **n** tête d'oignon | an onion
jawoli **n** [1] mollusque | mollusc, sea shell
jawū(g) **n** [1] source du fleuve | river source
jazakpa **n** torrent |
jazuluma **n** [1] cascade, chute (*d'eau*) | waterfall, downfall
je **n** [2] mère | mother || L *de, di, dée*; B *njee, njé*
jemīga **n** [3] banane | banana (*middle size, eatable*)
jey I **v** *vi* être calme | be calm be quiet : *Nè-woy á lá yěyni* 'My voice is not low'
jey II **v** *vi* descendre | descend, fall : *Kpĩ diyeyà*. 'The night has come' || M *njèi* 'lower, let down, descend'
jě(g) **n** [1] chèvre | goat || B *njié(η)*; M *njé*
jekɔ **n** arbre (*esp.*) | tree (*sp.*)
jepewo **n** [1] récit | tale, story : *Nā gáwólílò nè-bòlà yèpèwòy wà* 'I am listening to my friend's tale' || B *njepè* 'talk, conversation'
jile **n** [1] (no ICC) python | python || L *zili(g), zile(g)*
jiva **n** [1] poche | pocket || L *ziive(g)*; B *njihá*
jobo(g) **n** [1a] boubou | bubu (*traditional long dress*)
jo(g) **n** plante (*esp.*) | plant (*sp.*)
jowo(g) **n** [2] manioc | cassava || L *zowo(g), zóyo(g)*; B *njowo*
jukpele(g) **n** [2] champignon d'arbre (*esp.*) | tree mushroom (*sp.*)
juwo **n** [1] petit (*d'animal*) | cub (*of animal*) **geyuwo** || B *njivó*

K - k

kaalani **n** [2] verre (*réipient*) | glass (*drinking vessel*)
kaale **n** [1] balle | bullet
kaale **n** [1] os | bone || L *kai(g), kàe*; B *kaalé*
kaali **n** [2] serpent | snake || L *káálí*; B *kaali*
kafɛ **n** [3] (no ICC) café | coffee || L *káfé*
kafevele **n** [1] (no ICC) café, restaurant | café
kaka **n** [2] **1** flanc (*partie latérale du corps*) | side **2** côté | side **3** poitrine | breast || L *kàka* 'breast', *kàkamá* 'side'; B *kaká* 'side'; M *káká* 'side'
kákálà **npp** devant | in front of : *Gè (')-tóni pélé yàkàlày* 'I saw him in front of the house' || L *kàka* 'breast', *kàkamá* 'side'; B *kaká* 'side'; M *káká* 'side'
kakalapi **n** [2] lutte africaine | struggle (*type*)
kákáwà(g) **npp** à côté de | side by side, near : *Nà ló nè-pèlè yàkàwã gĩ* 'I am beside my house' || L *kàka* 'breast', *kàkamá* 'side'; B *kaká* 'side'; M *káká* 'side'

- kake n** [3] rivière fangeuse | boggy river bank
- kala n** [2] herbe (*esp.*) grass (*sp.*: *paints indigo black*) || L kàla
- kala(g) v** [1] lire | read, study : *É (-)tókólázéy gà sévé yálágòy* ‘He starts reading the book’ || L kàlà(g); B kalá ‘read’
- kalakpa n** [1] pou | louse (*white and small, in bed linen*) || B kalakpa ‘side whiskers’
- kalamo n** [5] maître | teacher || < Maninka; L kálamo
- kalābo v** [2] 1) *vt* étudier | study 2) apprendre | learn, understand : *Sévé yálǎ bógòyvání* ‘Studying reading is useful’ || B kalá ‘read’
- kali n** [1] houe | hoe || M káli
- kalitō n** [3] boîte | box
- kapo(g) n** col | mountain pass *gizelwazu*
- kavi(g) I adv** [2] (no ICC) longtemps | long time : *Dótólóy sî yà bàlè yè káví* ‘This doctor works here for a long time’
- kavi(g) II n** [2] temps ancien | old times : *Gúlèy wòyà gà (-)mèní káví gúlèy lè* ‘The song you are hearing is an old one’
- kawōla kewōla n** [1] (no ICC) vieux | old man
- kayē(g) n** [1a] pangolin | pangolin || B kayēyí
- kāba n** [1] tombeau | tomb || B kambá
- kā(g) n** [1] 1 excrément | excrement 2 ordure | dirt, garbage || L kpòò; B kaa(η); M ka ‘dirt’
- kāpilijaka n** [2] poubelle | recycle bin
- kele adv** [1] déjà | already : *Nàzù pèlèy yèlè gé yéni nà wōni* ‘When the house already burnt down...’
- kele(g) I n** [1a] pirogue | boat || L kèi(g); B kele(η) ‘canoe’
- kele(g) II n** [1a] balafone | balafone || L kèi(g) ‘xylophone’
- keleyele(g) I n** [1] intelligence | intellect, intelligence || L kèleyele(g); B kele-yelé
- keleyele(g) II v** [1] *vi* être intelligent | be clever, be intelligent || L kèlèyèlè(g); B kele-yelé
- kelekpaku n** [1] pagaie | paddle
- keŷā n** [2] (no ICC) oncle maternel | maternal uncle || L kèkè; B keŷá
- kēgeleba n** [1] vrai kinkéliba | plant (*sp.*) || L kékélibá
- ke I v** [2] 1 *vi* être (*passé*) | be (*past tense*) : *Kòlì yégò Māsàdà* ‘Koli was in Macenta’ 2 *vt* faire | do 3 *vt* dire (*à qui - mà*) | say (*whom - mà*) : *É yégò yá và* ‘He said you were coming’ 4 *vt* montrer (*à qui - gà*) | show (*whom - gà*) 5 *vt* écrire | write 6 *vi* devenir (*qui - gà*) | become (*whom - gà*) 7 *vi* être nécessaire | be necessary (*modal*) : *(-)Ké yè níká yèyà* ‘You should buy a cow’ || L kè, kà; B ké
- ke II pred** [2] *marque quotative* | *quotative marker* || L ke; B ke
- keeyē n** [1] (no ICC) père | father || L ke, kéε, kèke ‘uncle’; B keeyé
- keeyewōla n** (no ICC) [1] grand-père | grandfather || L kewolo, kawala
- keke n** [1] (no ICC) père (*du locuteur*) father (*speaker’s*) || L kèke ‘uncle’
- kele conj** [2] (no ICC) mais | but : *(-)Sólwáá lè gà nà ló vè kélé wà là vè* ‘Even though I am here you (pl.) are not here’ || L ke, kele; B keléi ‘except, unless’
- kele(g) n** terrain en brousse (*pour ameublissement*) | slot in the bush (*prepared for cultivation*)
- kelekulo n** [1] rat balé | African ground squirrel
- kelēde(g) n** diarrhée | dysentery, diarrhea
- kénò prep** (no ICC) sauf | except : *Kénò Kòlì, nùytì kpě té lígò* ‘Except Koli, everyone left’ || B kenó ‘just do it’
- kewōla n** [1] --> kawōla
- keya n** [1] probabilité | chance, probability : *Kpĩ ñiyéyà. Kéyá wòlày, kèkè gúlágò kpááláy zù* ‘The night has come. Most probably, my father has returned from the field’ || M keya, kenga ‘perhaps’
- keze n** [1] graine | grain

- kēde(g) I n** [1] santé | health **kēdeya(g)** || L kēde(g); Loko kéndé
- kēde(g) II v** [1] 1) *vt* traiter (*médicalement*) | treat, cure 2) *vi* être sain | be healthy || L kēdè(g); Loko kéndé
- kēdeya(g) n** [1] santé | health **kēde(g)** || L kēde(g) ‘be healthy’; Loko kéndé ‘be healthy’
- ki(g) n** [1] 1) idée | idea, thought : *Ki pāday lo be* ‘I’ve got a good idea’ 2) mémoire | memory; *ki(g) silɛ* souvenir | recall || L kī(g) ‘wisdom’
- kila(g) n** [1a] 1) arc | bow 2) flèche | arrow **kilakpaku** 3) aiguille | needle || L kilà(g) ‘bow’; B kilá(ŋ) ‘arrow’
- kilakpaku n** [1] flèche | arrow **kila(g)** || L kilà(g) ‘bow’; B kilá(ŋ) ‘arrow’
- kiliyili(g) I n** [1] cercle, boule | sphere, globe || B kiliyíli ‘round thing’
- kiliyili(g) II v** [1] 1) *vi* rouler | roll (*move rolling*) : *Kotiy lo gilikili yizey ya* ‘The stone is rolling from the mountain’ 2) *vi* être rond | be round || L kiliyili; B kiliyíli ‘round thing’
- kilizi(g) n** [2] lime | file (*tool*)
- kilo n** [3] (no ICC) balance | balance || < F
- kito I n** 1) espoir | hope 2) confiance | confidence
- kito II v** 1) *vi* espérer (*qn., qch. - bà*) | hope (*for - bà*) 2) *vi* avoir confiance (*en - bà*) | be confident (*of - bà*)
- kize(g) n** [1a] piment, poivre | pepper || L kize(g); B kihé(ŋ)
- kīdavili(g) v** *vi* être étonné, être ébahi | be surprised || B kindavilí ‘strange, mysterious, confused’
- ko(g) n** [2] porte | door || L kó(g) ‘belly’; B kó(ŋ)
- koko n** [2] (no ICC) coco | coconut || L kókó
- kole(g) v** [2] *vi* être blanc | be white || L kwele, kólé(g), kólé; B kole
- kolo v** [1] 1) *vi* obéir (*à - bè*) | obey (*to - bè*) : *Nè-lòy wòlòwáá lè bè* ‘My son obeys to me’ 2) *vt* punir | punish : *Gè nè-lòy wòlògè* ‘I punished my son’ || L kòlo ‘be trained, tame’; B koló ‘obey’
- kolobo v** [2] *vt* piocher (*la terre*) | hoe (*land*) || B kolómbo
- kolòdo v** *vi* frotter | to rub (*food into pieces*) : *Nāga guli y wā wolondo* ‘I am scratching bark from the tree’ **maawolòdo**
- koo** **koo(g) n** [2] ventre | belly **koozu** || L kó(g); B koo
- koo(g) n** --> koo
- koole n** margouillat | agama lizard || L kóló
- koowo n** [1] fourmi magnan (*esp.:*) | driver ant (*sp.:* *big, black, live on the ground*) || L koowo, kòwò; M kowò, kòò ‘driver ant’
- kooza v** [2] *vi* être haut, long, être long | be high, be long || L kooza(g), kòzà; B kooha ‘tall, gluttonous’
- koozu I** **koozi-y n** [1] ventre | belly **koo**
- koozu II pp** [1] en | in, inside : *Pánngitì tó zéynì b̀̀ wòz̀̀* ‘The baskets are put one into the other’
- koozuněě v** [2] 1) *vi* se réjouir | rejoice 2) **něě** || L kóózúné; B koohuné ‘gladness’
- koozuwõ n** [1] femme enceinte | pregnant woman **dowoozuwõ** || B koohu
- kota n** [1] grenier | granary || L kòta
- kotawu n** [1] classe | class : *Ne-wotay wu wólól* ‘My class is big’ **wote I**
- kote(g) n** [1a] argile | clay || L kòbè(g)
- koto I v** *vt* plier | bend || M kótó ‘fold, coil’
- koto II v** maudire | curse || M kótó ‘a curse against the family’
- kovi I n** [1] cour | court, house
- kovi II n** [2] fagot | brushwood || L kóví; B kovi
- kovila n** [1] ville | city (*large, e.g. Conakry*) || L kòviláá
- kovizey(g) n** [2] domicile, habitation | residence (*place*) : *Gé-wówízéy l̀̀ vè f̀̀z̀̀* ‘His residence is not far from here’

- kowakaŋa(g) n** [1a] côté (*de corps*) | side (*of body*) **kaka**
- koŋa(g) n** [1a] joue | cheek || L kòmà(g); M kómá
- koyanima n** [1] avortement, fausse couche | abortion, miscarriage
- koŋfefe(g) n** [1a] cellules | honey cells
- koŋ(g) n** [1] abeille | bee || L komi, koĩ, koeĩ, kòmì(g); B koiŋ(ŋ) ‘honey, bee’
- kōda n** [1] mortier | mortar || L kwoda, kòdà; B kondá
- kōde(g) n** oiseau (*esp.:*) | bird (*sp.: small, red-headed*) || M kondè ‘butterfly’
- kōdesukole n** escargot | snail || L kòè
- kōdewōde(g) n** papillon | butterfly || L kòdòwòdò(g); kondè
- kō I v** [1] *vi* lutter (*avec - na*) | struggle, fight (*with - na*) : *Nāga kō na ne-bolay* ‘I am struggling with my friend’ || L kò ‘fight’; M kó
- kō II n** [1] guerre, bagarre | war, fight || L kò, kò; M kó
- kōbeŋa n** [1] doigt de pied | toe **kowōbeŋa** || L kowōbeŋa, kowōbeŋa; B kowōbeŋa
- kōbōkōbō n** aubergine | eggplant || L kōbō
- kōkō(g) n** [1a] petite termitière | small termite dwell (*mushroom-like*) || L kōkō(g); M kókó
- kōku(g) v** *vi* être courbé | be curved
- kōla n** [2] **1** tissu | cloth **2** habit | dress **3** nappe | tablecloth || B kola : *Kolay yadala le tabaliy ya* ‘The cloth is stretched on the table’
- kōlazōlōmo n** [1] couturier | dressmaker
- kōle I v** [1] *vi* être froid | be cold || B kōle ‘cold’; M kólé ‘cold, fever’
- kōle II v** partager, diviser (*qch. - sù*) | divide (*smth - sù*) || M kòlé
- kōle III n** [1] paludisme | malaria || B kōle ‘cold’; M kólé ‘cold, fever’
- kōlē fele I v** **1)** *vt* tourner | turn : *Koli lo kpavuy wōlēfele* ‘Koli is turning the key’ **2)** *vi* se tourner | turn
- kōlē fele II pp** autour de | around
- kōli I n** [1] panthère, léopard | panther, leopard || L kwoi, koi, kòì ‘panther’; M kólí ‘leopard’
- kōli II v** *vt* chercher | search || L kōli, kōli; B kólí
- kōlifū n** marteau | hammer
- kōlizo n** [2] velo | bicycle **koyzo**
- kōlo v** [2] connaître, savoir | know || L kwé; B kóló
- kōlo(g) n** [1a] **1** peau | skin, leather **2** écorce | bark || L kōlo(g), kòlo(g); B kóló(ŋ); M kòlò
- kōlu** **kōli-y** **n** [2] fer | iron || L kolu, kòli ‘iron’; kólò (dial.) ‘copper’; B kōlu
- kōluve n** [2] marmite (*en fer*) pot (*of iron*) || B kōluhé
- kōluvele n** [1] maison en tôle | house covered by sheet metal
- kōluwīta** **kōluwīte-y** **n** [2] cuillère | spoon (*modern-style, metal*) **mita** || L mite; B mita
- kōma I n** [1] partie arrière des épaules | back of shoulders || B kōma
- kōma II pp** [1] **1** sur les épaules | on shoulders **2** à cheval, à califourchon | astride (*e.g., a horse*) || B kōma ‘back of shoulders’
- kōnaba adv** [2] derrière année | last year : *Kónábá gè yèni gà dópóy* ‘Last year I was a child’
- kōna(g) n** [2] an | year || L kona(g), kòna(g)
- kōnō(g) kōnō(g) n** [1a] hache | ax
- kōnōkula(g) v** [1] nourrir | feed || L kò ‘food’
- kōnō(g) n** --> kōnō(g)
- kōola v** *vi* rater (*un coup*) miss (*lose a chance*) || B kōola ‘surprise, falsify’
- kōoli v** *vt* coller | stick || < F?
- kōowō n** [2] bois coupé | cut tree trunc || M kōwó ‘fallen tree’
- kōsōbōlo(g) n** salive, bave | saliva
- kōti n** [2] pierre, caillou | stone, boulder || L kwotu, kótí, kwōti; B kōtu
- kótókòlì n** sauterelle | grasshopper || L kòtò(g)
- kōvō n** [2] gauche | left (*hand*) side || L kōvō; B kōvō; M kōwó

kɔwɔwɔwele n [2] **1** gauche | left side **2** ouest | west
kɔwɔ I n [1] pied | foot || L kɔwɔ; B kɔwɔ
kɔwɔ II n [2] aigle | eagle || L kɔyɔ; M kɔwɔɔ ‘white river eagle’
kɔwɔ III v 1 vt mesurer | measure **2** vt goûter | taste || L kɔɔ, kɔwɔ
kɔwɔbɛyɔ n [1] doigt de pied | toe **kɔbɛyɔ** || L kɔwɔbɛyɔ, kɔyɔbɛyɔ; B kɔwɔbɛyɔ
kɔwɔwɔlu **kɔwɔwɔli-y n** [1] derrière de jambe | back of leg, back of shin
kɔwɔyɔ(g) n [1a] **1** semelle | sole (of foot) **2** pied de montagne | mountain foot **kɔyɔ(g)** || L kɔwɔ ‘foot’; B kɔwɔ ‘foot’
kɔyɔ(g) n [1a] **1** semelle | sole (of foot) **2** pied de montagne | mountain foot **kɔwɔyɔ(g)**
kɔyzo n [2] vélo | bicycle **kɔlizo**
kɔy v 1 vt laper | lap (of animals) **2** vt goûter | taste (liquids, powders)
kɔgɔduwa n [1] charognard | vulture
kɔjɔguloɔaawo n [1] mante religieuse | mantid || B kɔnjɔgulo ‘potto’
kula(g) v [2] (ICC g-) **1.1 1** vt retirer (de - sù) | take out, extract (from - sù) : *Álò bɔ̀tì kùlòy ná gúlá* ‘He took out a small box’; *kpāday kula(g) tirer | shoot 2*) vi sortir (de - bù), quitter (qch. - bù) | quit, leave (smth. - bù) **1.2** vt enlever (à - yà) | seize (from - yà) **2** vt perdre | lose; *kula(g) ya perdre, se perdre | lose, lose oneself* : *Koli gulaya dɔ̀bɔy zu* ‘Koli is lost in the jungle’ **3** cuellir | gather (e.g., mushrooms) : *Ŋazayti te liigɔ kpɔyɛ gulamay dɔ̀bɔy zu* ‘The women went for mushrooms to the bush’ || L kúlá ‘come out’; B kulá ‘fall down, drop, throw, come out, depart, pull out, tear off, dig’
kuli(g) n [1a] cour | court
kuligulo n [1] rat palmiste | palm rat || B kulí ‘pouched rat or giant rat’
kulo adj [2] (ICC g-) petit | small || L ko, kɔb; B kulo
kulogulo adj [2] très petit | very small || L ko, kɔb ‘small’; B kulo ‘small’
kuya I kuyɛ-y n [1] nuit | night || L kwe, kuwe; B kuyá ‘midnight’
kuya II n [2] danse | dance; *kuyɛy wu danser | to dance* || L kuwa; B kuya ‘celebrate, play, dance’
kuyaliwa n [2] minuit | midnight || L kwe, kuwe ‘night’; B kuyá ‘midnight’
kūdiyi n [1] chef | chief (of a village)

Kp - kp

kpaala I n [2] graine de riz | grain of rice (not cleared)
kpaala II n [2] champ | field || L kpàlà(g); B kpaalá ‘farm’
kpaalaya n campement | field camp (temporary) || L kpàlà(g) ‘field’; B kpaalá ‘farm’
kpaba n [1] cabane (pour préparer les repas dans les champs) | field tent (for preparing food) || B kpabá ‘farm house, shelter’
kpa(g) v [1] **1.1** vi être dur | be solid **1.2** vi être rude, être rèche | be hard, be rude **2** vi être fort | be strong **3** vi être difficile | be difficult **4** vi être cher (du prix) | be expensive **kpāgala** || L kpàà; B kpa ‘make hard, difficult’
kpaya n [1] poêle | pan (kitchen)
kpayala I v être rare | be rare
kpayala II adv rarement | seldom
kpayala(g) n petite branche | little branch **kpayalakpayala(g)** || L kpala(g); B kpaalá(ŋ) ‘bamboo ladder’
kpayalakpayala(g) n petite branche | little branch **kpayala(g)** || L kpala(g); B kpaalá(ŋ) ‘bamboo ladder’
kpayā(g) n [1a] grande crevette | large shrimp (river)
kpaka(g) n [1a] spatule à sauce | spatula (for sauce) **foke** || B kpaka(ŋ) ‘wooden stirrer’
kpaki(g) n [1a] épaule | shoulder || L kpákí(g); B kpakí(ŋ)

- kpakipolu** *kpakipoli-y* **n** [1] derrière d'épaule | back of shoulder || L *kpákí(g)* 'shoulder'; B *kpakí(ŋ)* 'upper arm, shoulder'
- kpakolo(g)** **n** [1a] adulte | adult || B *kpakolo(ŋ)* 'oldest child in a group'
- kpaku** **n** [1] **1** bâton | stick **2** tronc de petite arbre | trunk of a small tree || M *kpákú* 'pliable stick for fishing net'
- kpakpa I** **n** [1] toit | roof
- kpakpa II** **v** [1] **1** *vt* serrer | tighten **2** *vt* appuyer | attach *maabakpa* || B *kpakpá* 'nail, fasten'
- kpala I** **adv** [2] aussi | too, also || L *nabla*; M *kpálé* 'completely, all'
- kpala II** **n** [1] cuisse | hip || L *kpàlà*
- kpalaŵa** **n** [1] vagin | vagina
- kpale(g) I** **v** [1] **1** balayer | sweep **2** nettoyer | clean || L *kpala, kpale, kpàlè(g)*; B *kpálé* 'sweep'
- kpale(g) II** **n** [1] balai | broom || L *kpala, kpale, kpàlè(g)* 'sweep'; B *kpálé* 'sweep'
- kpale I** **n** douleur, mal | pain || L *kpàlà* 'be miserable'; B *kpale* 'to ache, hurt'
- kpale II** **v** [1] *vi* travailler | work : *Gè bâlègè vè kóná fèlègè làwù* 'I worked here for two years' || L *kpàlè*
- kpateya(g)** **n** [2] chapeau | hat
- kpate(g)** **v** [1] **1** *vt* ranger | arrange **2** *vt* préparer, cuire | prepare, cook **3** *vt* réparer | repair || B *kpate* 'repair, fix'
- kpavu** **n** [2] clé, clef (*de serrure*) | key (*locking device*)
- kpawo I** **n** [1] pont | bridge || L *kpawi, kpawo*; B *kpaawo* 'bridge'; M *kpáwú*
- kpawo II** **n** [1] bâton courbé | bent stick (*for reaching high branches*) || M *kpàwó*
- kpaȳ(g)** **v** [1] *vi* crier | cry, shout (*mostly animals*) || L *bani(g)*; B *kpaí* 'scream, bark, shout'
- kpaza** **n** [2] tronc de raffia | raffia stem (*for making furniture*) || L *kpaza* 'bamboo'
- kpazamalamalã(g)** **n** arc-en-ciel | rainbow || L *kpwaza malamala(g)*
- kpazamanamana(g)** **n** foudre | lightning || L *meime, myamya*
- kpazi(g)** **v** [2] *vi* être jaune | be yellow || L *vazi, kpázi*
- kpãbo(g)** **n** légume (*esp.:*) vegetable (*sp.: small, red, bitter, to boil*)
- kpãda** **n** [1] **1** fusil | shotgun; *kula(g) ya* tirer | shoot : *Yá lì gâ kpã dày* 'You are bringing the gun' **2** arm, canon gun || L *kpada, kpàde*; B *kpanda*
- kpãdi** **v** [2] *vi* être chaud | be hot, be warm || L *kpádí*; B *kpandi*
- kpãgala** **v** *vi* être dur | be solid *kpa(g)* || L *kpaana, kpwana, kpàà* 'hard, solid, heavy'; B *kpa* 'make hard'
- kpebe** **n** [1] grenouille (*esp.:*) | frog (*sp.: edible*) || M *kpégbé, kpéngbé* 'green frog'
- kpe(g)** **v** [2] *vi* cesser (*de faire qch.*), s'arrêter (*à faire qch.*) | stop, cease (*doing smth*) : *É bëya seve yalagoy wa* 'She ceased reading' || L *kpé(g)*
- kpeya** *kpeya(g)* **n** [1] doigt | finger, toe || L *kpèya* 'shin, finger'; B *kpèya*
- kpeya(g)** **n** [1] --> *kpeya*
- kpeyãbu** **n** aisselle | armpit
- Kpekedu** **n** (no ICC) Gekedou (*ville*) | Gekedou (*place name*)
- kpeke(g)** **n** branche | branch *guluŋeke(g)* || L *beke(g), beka(g), kpeke(g)*
- kpekpe** **adv** [2] fortement | strongly : *Ge sowaa kpekpe* 'I held it strongly'
- kpela** **npp** [1] à côté de | next to : *Wĩ gisì góbú bélày lè* 'This foreigner is near the fire' || B *kpela*
- kpela(g)** **n** [2] génisse | heifer || B *kpela* 'reach maturity'; M *kpèlá* 'maturity'
- kpele I** **n** [1] plantation | plantation || L *kpèle* 'kitchen garden'; B *kpélé* 'garden'
- kpele II** **v** *vt* regarder | look (*at smb., smth.*) : *Gè ì-bèlè* 'I'll look at you' || B *kpélé*
- kpele(g)** **n** [1a] **1** plume | feather, hair **2** cheveu | hair (*on human body*) || B *kpélé(ŋ)*
- kpelekaso** **n** jambe | leg, shin
- kpete** **n** [1] marécage | marsh, swamp || L *kpété* 'lowland'; B *kpeté* 'swamp'
- kpeteya(g)** **n** [1a] derrière | butts

- kpēyā(g) v** [2] **1** *vi* être rouge | be red **2** *vi* être mûr | be mature, be ripe **3** *vi* être cru | be raw (for meat) || L kpəyε(g), kpoi(g), kpóí
- kpēbele n** panier | basket (for drying and preserving food, hanged under the ceiling)
- kpēbile(g) n** [2] colline | small hill
- kpē(g) adv** [2] (no ICC) **1** tout | all, entirely : *Ge bay kpē mēgɔ* ‘I ate all the rice’ **2** tous | all, everyone (multiple objects or people) : *Núyiti kpē té líígò* ‘Everyone left’
- kpε v** [1] *vt* chasser (animal, poisson) | chase, hunt, catch (animal, fish) || L kpè; B kpé ‘run after’
- kpεle(g) n** [2] barbe | beard; *kpεle bó* se raser | shave (beard) **dabele(g)** || L kpéle; B kpεle
- kpεleze n** [2] (no ICC) kpellé | Kpelle (ethnonym)
- kpeli v** [1] *vi* trembler | shiver || B kpeli
- kpēde v** **1** *vi* être nécessaire | be necessary **2.1** *vi* être désiré | be desired **2.2** *vi* être intéressant | be interesting || B kpéndé ‘need, care’
- kpiizi(g) v** [2] *vi* être plusieurs | be numerous || B kpihí ‘plenty, many’
- kpídi I n** [1] nuit | night || L kpìdì; B kpiindí
- kpídi II v** [1] *vi* être obscur | be dark || L kpìdì ‘night’; B kpiindí ‘night, darkness’
- kpo I n** [1] excréments | excrements; *kpóy wu* déféquer | defecate || L kpò; M kpó ‘excreta’
- kpo II v** [1] *vi* aider (à - bà) | help (smb. - bà) || M kpó
- kpobo n** [2] nuque | nape **kpobowolu** || B kpoboya(η)
- kpobowolu n** [2] nuque | nape **kpobo** || B kpoboya(η)
- kpókávè(g) n** scorpion | scorpion
- kpokolo v** *vi* s’enfler | swell || B kpokólo ‘make old’
- kpokolo(g) n** [1a] hanneton |
- kpolo I n** [2] sel | salt || L kpulu, kpóló; B kpolo
- kpolo II v** [2] **1** *vi* être vide | be empty **2.1** *vi* être bête | be silly **2.2** *vi* être fou | be crazy : *Ì-òlòwàà lè dè!* ‘You are really crazy!’ || L ɓuluwo, ɓoluwo ‘silly thing’; B kpoloɣa ‘make crazy’
- kpoloye n** [2] **1** l’Océan Atlantique | Atlantic Ocean **2** mer | sea (salt water) || L kpoloye, kpolode; M kpòlòɣa
- kpoole(g) v** [2] *vi* **1** être vert, être bleu | be green, be blue **2** pas mûr | unripe || L kpēĩ(g); B kpole, kpoole ‘green, unripe’
- kpopa(g) popa(g) n** [1a] (no ICC) lac | lake || B popá(η)
- kpoti(g) n** [1] fesses | buttocks || B kpotí(η)
- kpōbe(g) n** [1a] travail | job, work || B kpombe(η)
- kpōji n** [1] sac, baluchon, paquet | bag, sack
- kpɔ(g) n** [2] foule | crowd
- kpɔkɔ n** [1] soir | evening (before 6 pm) || L kpòkò; B kpɔkɔ
- kpɔkɔkpɔkɔ** **kpɔkɔwɔkpɔkɔ** **adv** [2] (no ICC) chaque soir | every evening || L kpòkò ‘evening’
- kpɔkɔwɔlo n** [1] après-midi | afternoon (from 2pm to 5pm) || L kpòkò ‘evening’; B kpɔkɔ ‘evening’
- kpɔkɔwɔkpɔkɔ** **adv** [2] --> kpɔkɔkpɔkɔ
- kpɔkpɔ v** [1] **1** *vt* traîner | drag **2** *vi* ramper | crawl (about snake)
- kpɔkpɔ(g) n** [1] chaise | stool, chair || L kpòkpò(g); B kpɔkpó(η)
- kpɔle v** [1] **1.1** *vt* boire | drink **1.2** *vt* avaler | swallow **2** fumer | smoke || L kpólé; B kpólé
- kpɔlo v** *vi* être fatigué | be tired || L kpòlò; B kpɔlo
- kpɔlu v** [2] *vt* couvrir | cover || B kpólú ‘bury, close’
- kpɔno n** [3] ferme | ransom (for avoiding public works) || B kpɔno ‘expenses’
- kpɔɔlo I v** [1] **1** parler | speak **2** claquer | click || L ɓɔ, ɓɔe ‘speak’; B kpɔɔlo ‘talk’
- kpɔɔlo II n** [1] mot | word; *kpɔɔlo zuɣula(g)* raconter | tell (a story) || L ɓɔ; B kpɔɔlo ‘talk’
- kpɔwe n** champignon (esp.) | mushroom (sp.) || L kpóɣé
- kpɔ̄(g) v** [2] *vi* être sale | be dirty : *Kólàɣ sî é yá wóléní kélé é ɓɔwà* ‘This dress was white but it has become dirty’ || B kpò

kpule v [2] *vt* raser (*tête*) | shave (*head*) **kpule(g)** || M kpùlèè
kpulo(g) n [1] coude | elbow **gebulo(g)** || L kpubua
kpulu(g) I v [2] **1 vi** être court (*d'homme*) | be short (*about people*) **2 vi** être petit (*d'homme*) | be short (*about people*), be low **3 vi** être proche | be close (*location*) || L kpua(g), kpuwo(g), kpùya
kpulu(g) II n [2] lèvres | lip **dabulu(g)** || L dakòlo(g)
kpusa n [1] corps | body || L kpùsà; B kpusa 'naked'
kputa v *vt* piquer | sting || B kputá 'cut through'
kpute n [2] même | self (*with a pronoun of the focalised series*) : *Nà bûtèy lè* 'It is me myself'
kpūda n [1] estomac | stomach || M kpúndá
kpūde v traverser | cross (*river by ford*) **tove**

L - 1

la I n [1] --> da I
la II v [1] --> da II
la III n [1] --> da III
la IV pp [2] avec | with (*substitutes the 3sg. pronoun of the comitative series*) : *Gè v àgò lá pèlèy wù* 'I came home with him' || L lá; B là
la V cop --> ta III
laa n [2] --> taa
laabolu(g) v [2] --> daabolu(g)
laaya n [2] --> taaya
laali n [3] dimanche | Sunday || L làalí; M Làhádi
lávè(g) n --> dáávè(g)
lázù n --> táázù
labali n [2] --> tabali
labo v --> tabo
labá v [1] --> tabá
labo n [3] --> dabo
labulu(g) n [2] --> kpulu(g) II
lagula v [1] --> tagula
laya n [1] --> daya
layize(g) n [1a] --> tayize(g)
lakala n [4] --> takala
lakalabaku n [1] --> takalabaku
lakoli n [5] école | school || < F; L lakoli, lákólí
lakolilopo n [1] étudiant | pupil, student || L lakoli, lákólí 'school'
lakòlsu n [1] --> dakòlsu
lakpa n [1] --> dakpa
lakpala n [3] --> takpala
lala(g) n --> dala(g)
lali v [2] --> dali
lalo v [1] --> talo
lama n [3] --> tama
lamakpe(g) n [2] --> damakpe(g)
lamu n [2] --> tamu
lapa n [2] --> dapa
lapi n [2] --> dapi
lase(g) I n [1a] --> dase(g) I
lase(g) II v [2] --> dase(g) II
lasuwola n --> dasuwola

- lavala n** [1] --> tavalala
lavila v [2] --> davila
lavili v [2] --> davili
làwé v --> tàwé
lawo(g) v [2] --> dawo(g)
lawowo v --> dawowo
lávólà n --> táwólà
lawu npp [1] --> dawu
laŵa n --> daŵa
laŵazuβeε(g) n [2] --> daŵazuβeε(g)
laŵε v [2] --> daŵε
laŵo n [3] --> daŵo
laŵuyani(g) n [2] --> daŵuyani(g)
laŵε v [2] --> daŵε
lāba(g) n [1a] --> dāba(g)
lābo n [4] lampe | lamp || < E; L labo; B lámbo(ŋ)
lāde(g) n [1a] --> tādε(g)
lāgoli n --> goli
le I v [1] être | be : *ì-wòdòzàà lè* ‘You are tall’
le II pred *marque de renforcement d’impérative | imperative emphasis marker* : *Dápáy nò vè lé* ‘Give me that bag’
le III v --> de II
leβε n [1] --> deβε
le(g) I v [1] --> de(g) I
le(g) II v [2] --> de(g) II
legaa pred [2] *marque habituelle dans le passé | past habitual verb marker* : *Gè légáá lì làkólì zù* ‘I used to go to school’
leya n [1] --> deya
leme n [2] --> teme
lemudeya n [1] --> temudeya
lemunu(g) n [4] orange | orange **numunu(g)** || < F; L lè̀m̀ǹǹ(ɡ)
lemunutaba n [1] citron | lemon (*fruit*) || L lè̀m̀ǹǹ(ɡ) tà̀bà
letema pp [1] --> tetema
leve I v [2] --> deve
leve II v [1] --> teve
leveleve v [1] --> teveleve
leŵā(g) n --> deŵā(g)
leya n [1] --> teya
lède(g) n [4] libellule | dragonfly || M lè̀ndèè ‘mouse’ ?
lè(g) n [1] --> dè(g)
lèy(g) v [2] --> tèy(g)
le I v --> de
le II v [1] --> te
lebo n --> tebo
leε n [2] --> teε
leεle n [4] heure | hour || B leεle ‘slowly’
leεlebo v [2] --> deεlebo
leewuli(g) n --> teewuli(g)
leya(g) n [2] --> teya(g)
leyεleyε v 1 *vi être fragile | be fragile* **2** *vi être instable | be unsteady*

loso I **n** [2] --> doso I
 loso II **v** [2] --> doso II
 lovo **n** [2] --> dovo
 lowa I **n** [1] --> dowa
 lowa II **n** [2] --> towa
 lowagulo **n** [1] --> towagulo
 lòwázù I **n** --> dòwázù I
 lòwázù II **npp** --> dòwázù II
 lowolo **n** [1] --> towolo
 lōyā **n** [1] --> tōyā
 lo I **n** [2] --> do
 lo II **cop** --> to I
 lo III **v** [1] --> to II
 lobo **n** [2] --> dobo
 lóbɔwulususu(**g**) **n** [3] --> dóbɔwulususu(**g**)
 lɔbɔ(**g**) **n** [1a] --> tɔbɔ(**g**)
 lɔkpɔ **n** [1] --> tɔkpɔ
 lɔle **n** [2] --> dɔle
 lɔle(**g**) **n** [1] --> dɔle(**g**)
 lóólè **adv** --> tóólè
 lɔlo **n** [1] --> tɔlo
 lɔlɔ **n** [2] --> dɔlɔ
 lɔwɔ **n** [1] --> dɔwɔ
 lɔwɔla **n** [1] --> dɔwɔla
 lɔwã(**g**) **n** [4] toma | Looma (*ethnonym*) || L lɔɔma, lɔɔmà(**g**)
 lɔpa **n** [1] --> dɔpa
 lɔvali **n** --> dɔvali
 lɔve **v** [1] --> tɔve
 lɔve **n** [2] --> dɔve
 lɔwɔ **n** [2] --> tɔwɔ
 lɔwɔlɔ **n** [1] --> dɔwɔlɔ
 lɔwɔlɔyize(**g**) **n** [1a] --> dɔwɔlɔyize(**g**)
 lɔwɔlɔwɔ **v** [1] --> tɔwɔlɔwɔ
 lɔwɔne **v** --> tɔwɔne
 lɔwu **v** [2] --> dɔwu
 lɔfa **v** [2] --> tɔfa
 luduma **n** [1] --> duduma
 lufa **n** [2] --> tufa
 lu(**g**) **n** --> tu(**g**)
 lukpe(**g**) **n** [1a] --> tukpe(**g**)
 lukpu **n** [1] --> tukpu
 lulu **n** [2] --> dulu
 luula **n** [1] --> duula
 luwa I **n** [1] --> duwa
 luwa II **v** --> tuwa
 luwo I **n** [2] --> duwo
 luwo II **npp** [1] --> tuwo II
 luwo III **n** [1] --> tuwo I
 luwulɔ **n** [1] --> tuwulɔ
 luwõ **n** [2] --> tuwõ

luye(g) n --> duye(g)
luzu n [1] --> duzu
lūda n [1] --> dūda

M - m

-ma mrph (no ICC) *suffixe du nom verbale (supine) | verbal noun (supine) suffix* : *Nã gáli dóólí pìlì-mày* ‘I am going fishing’
ma I pred [2] (no ICC) *marque personnelle du 1du. (sér. irréelle) | 1du. PPM (irrealis series) nous | we*
ma II pp [1] *sur | on (the surface), over* : *Gúlòy wúyà dówólòy wã* ‘The oil has melted on the ground’ || L ma
ma III pred (no ICC) *marque imparfaitive | imparfaitive verb marker (enclitic)* : *Álò sévèy wònè wátíy nòpé mà* ‘He is writing letters all the time’ || B ma
ma IV pred [1] (no ICC) *marque personnelle du 1du. (sér. prohibitive) | 1du. PPM (prohibitive series) nous | we*
ma V pron [2] (no ICC) *ce | this (anaphoric pron.)* : *Gè níkáy yéyágò, má níkáy lò gà níkábélagì* ‘I bought the cow, that cow is a heifer’
maabakpa v [1] **1** serrer | tighten **2** appuyer | attach *kpakpa II*
maabeyã(g) v [2] *vi être orange | be orange (color)*
maabulu *māābulu v* [2] **1** *vi s’approcher (de - bà) | approach (to - bà)* : *Gè máábúlúyà Kòlì wà* ‘I have approached Koli’ **2** *vi être proche | be close (not far)*
maaye v [2] *vt vendre | sell* || B maaye
maayili *mayili v* **1** attacher | attach *gili III 2.1* *vi s’habiller | dress maalove 2.2* || L mayili
maaleele v [2] attendre | wait || L malele ‘study, examine’
maalove v [2] *vi maayili s’habiller | dress up*
maalovi v [2] **1** *vt changer | change, exchange* **2** *vi se changer | change* : *Ne-teyay wāaloviya* ‘My life has changed’ || L maleve ‘turn, become’
maalove v [1] **1** traverser | cross **2** passer | pass away *tove*
maanõwõ v [2] *vi souffrir | suffer* || L danõõ(g), danowo(g); B maanõwõ
máávélè(g) npp pour | for, for the sake of : *jà ló vé gà ì-wãàvélé* ‘I am here for the sake of you’
maavele v [2] courber | bend (*a stick, not heavily*)
maavila v [2] **1** *vi être rapide, être vite | be quick* **2** *vi mouvoir vite | move quickly* || L sùvila
maawolòdo v --> kolòdo
maawote v [2] **1** **1** *vt renverser | overturn* **2** *vi renverser, se tourner | turn* **2.1** *vi se changer | change* **2.2** *vi se transformer | change, turn into* **3.1** *vt rénover | renovate, refurbish* **3.2** *vt restaurer, réaménager | renovate (house) pote* || L pote ‘turn’; B pote ‘turn’
maawõsa v *vt griffer | scratch masa* || L màwõí(g)
maayili v --> maayili
maazòlo v [2] **1.1** *vt obtenir | get* **1.2** *vt gagner | earn* **2** *vt trouver | find* **3.1** *vt produire | make* **3.2** *vi être né | be born* **4** *vt coudre | sew solo* || B maahólò ‘get, receive’
máázù pp **1.1** au-dessus de | above **1.2** au-dessus de | over **2** plus | more || B maahu
maazuvele n [2] nord | north
maazuvũde v [2] *vt traverser | pass through, across tove*
make v [1] **1** *vi garder (qn., qlch. - bà) | guard (smb., smth. - bà)* **2** *vi conserver, tenir (qn., qlch. - bà) | keep, retain (smb., smth. - bà)* || B make ‘bring up, tame’
maku v *vt sentir | smell* || B maku ‘smell, have odour’
mama n (no ICC) [1] **1** grand-mère | grandmother **2** vieille femme | old woman || L mama(g), maa(g); B mamá
mámà pred (no ICC) *marque personnelle du 1du. (sér. imparfaitive) | 1du. PPM (imparfaitive series) nous | we*

- mama(g) I** mamá(g) **n** [2] (no ICC) merci | thanks || L mama
mama(g) II mamá(g) **v** [2] (no ICC) remercier | thank || L mama
mamawɔlo **n** [2] (no ICC) vieille femme | old woman mama || L mama(g), maa(g); B mamá
mamá(g) **n** [2] --> mama(g)
maně **v** [2] vi être nécessaire, devoir | must : (ʔ)-Mánéyáá lè gà Kòlì gùlà kóvíy zù ‘Koli should return home’ || B mané ‘be pleasant’
masa **v** vt griffer | scratch maawása
Masada **n** [1] (no ICC) Macenta | Macenta (toponym) || L Masada
masa(g) **n** [1a] roi, chef | king, chief || L màsà(g) ‘chief’; B masa(η) ‘chief, king, ruler’
masakoole **n** tortue | turtle
maye **v** 1) vt diminuer | decrease, lessen (e.g., water) 2) vi se diminuer | decrease (e.g., water) || B mayéi ‘lower, lessen’
màyfóló(g) **num** premier | first || L mɛfɔlɔ(g); B maífɔlɔ
mādalasa **n** [1] médersa | madrasah (Quranic school) || < A
māgasa **n** magasin | shop : (ʔ)-Ké yè lì mā gáá níínáy là ‘You need to go to the shop again’ || < F
māgolo **n** [5] (no ICC) mangue | mango || L mǎgóló; B mangó(η)
meyǎ(g) **n** [1a] banane (terme générique) | banana (generic term) || L mela(g), mìnàà(g); B mia(η)
meyǎkite **n** banane (esp.: verte, pour griller) | banana (sp.: green, for frying)
mě(g) **n** [1a] (dial. Lz) banane (esp.) | banana (sp.) || L mela(g), mìnàà(g); B mia(η)
melemele menewene **n** miroir | mirror
meli **n** [4] (no ICC) mairie | city hall, mayor’s office || < F
menewene **n** --> melemele
meni **v** [2] vt entendre | hear || L meni, méní(g) ‘hear, understand’; B meni
mey moy **pred** [2] (no ICC) marque personnelle du Idu. (sér. prospective négative) | Idu. PPM (prospective negative series) nous | we
mě mɛ **v** [1] vt manger | eat || L mì, me; B me
miili **n** [4] (no ICC) mur | wall || < F
mine **n** [1] corne | horn || L mìnè
mini **pron** [1] (no ICC) où | where || L menɛ, mena, meli
miniti **n** [6] (no ICC) minute | minute || < F
mita mitɛ-y **n** [2] cuillère | spoon koluwíta || L míté; B mita
mizili **n** [5] (no ICC) mosquée | mosque || < A
mo **pred** [2] (no ICC) marque personnelle du Idu. (sér. de base, dépendante, impérative) | Idu. PPM (basic, dependent, imperative series) nous | we
mo- **mrph** [2] (no ICC) marque possessive du Idu. | Idu. possessive prefix notre | our
-mo **mrph** [1] suffixe d’agent singulier | actor suffix singular
moy **itj** [2] (no ICC) allons-y | let’s go àmóy
moya I **pron** [2] (no ICC) pronom personnel du Idu. (sér. focalisée) | Idu. personal pronoun (focalised series) nous | we, us
moya II **pron** [2] (no ICC) pronom personnel du Idu. (sér. contractive) | Idu. personal pronoun (contractive series) nous | we, us
moyay moyaygì, méy, méygi **pron** [2] (no ICC) pronom personnel du Idu. (sér. emphatique) | Idu. personal pronoun (emphatic series) nous | us
moye **pron** [1] (no ICC) pronom personnel du Idu. (sér. comitative) | Idu. personal pronoun (comitative series) (avec) nous (with) us
mɔ mɔ **adv** [2] (no ICC) avec la négation | with a negation plus | no more, no longer : Wálí lá mǔ gèyà ‘I have no more money’ mɔnɔ II
mɔɛ mɔɛ **n** [1] (no ICC) belle-mère | mother-in-law || L moɛ, muɛ, muɛ, mɔĩ; B mɔɛ
mɔě **n** [1] --> mɔɛ

mɔɔ I **v** *vi* se multiplier | multiply (*grow in quantity*): *Ināgiti ti mɔɔwaa le* ‘The number of mice grows’ || L *mói* ‘be numerous’

mɔɔ II **mā** **adv** [2] (no ICC) *avec la négation* | *with a negation plus* | any more, any longer **mɔ**

mɔɔni(g) I **v** [2] *vi* aimer (*qn., qch. - mǎ, faire qch. - gǎ*) | love, like (*smb, smth - mǎ, to do smth. - gǎ*) : *Ne-yazay wɔɔniyaa le jaley wǎ* ‘My wife likes cats’ || B *mɔɔni* ‘ask, inquire’

mɔɔni(g) II **v** [2] *vi* demander (*qn. - mǎ*) ask (*smb. - mǎ*) || B *mɔɔni* ‘ask, inquire’

mɔɔni(g) III **n** [2] question | question || B *mɔɔni* ‘ask, inquire’

mɔyè **namóyè** **pred** (no ICC) *marque personnelle du 1du. (sér. conditionnelle négative)* | *1du. PPM (conditional negative series)* si nous ne | if we not

mǎ I **v** [1] **1** *vt* brûler | burn **2** *vi* brûler | burn **2** *vt* griller (*sur le feu ouvert*) cook (*on open fire*) || L *mò, mɔ, mwɔ* ‘boil’; B *mɔ* ‘burn, roast, bake’

mǎ II **adv** --> *mɔ*

mǎbili **n** [5] (no ICC) voiture | car, automobile || < F

muli **n** impôt | tax : *Nūgayti kpě te ya muli zala* ‘All people pay taxes’

mumu(g) **n** [4] **1** givre | hoarfrost **2** brouillard | morning fog || L *mumu(g)* ‘rain cloud’

munɔ I **pron** [2] (no ICC) celui-là | that (*far from both locutors*) || L *munu*; B *muló* ‘over there’

munɔ II **adv** [2] (no ICC) **1** là-bas | there (*location, far from both locutors*) **2** là | thither (*direction, far from both locutors*) **3** de là-bas | thence || L *munu*; B *muló* ‘over there’

munɔda **pron** [1] (no ICC) celui-là | that yonder (*not seen*) **munɔ** I || L *munu*; B *muló* ‘over there’

muyaño **n** [1] voleur | thief

muyǎ **v** *vt* voler | steal || B *nyǎ*

muye **n** paille, chaume | thatch (*for covering roofs*) || L *mù* ‘plant (sp.)’

muyevele **n** [1] maison couverte d’herbe | house covered by grass

N - n

na I **pred** [2] *marque personnelle du 1pl. excl. (sér. irréelle et prohibitive)* | *1pl. excl. PPM (irrealis and prohibitive series)* nous | we

na II **conj** [1] quand | when (*at the moment when*) **nazu** || B *ná*

na III **adv** [2] **1** maintenant | now **2** déjà | already || L *níná*; B *naa*

na IV **pron** [2] celui-là | that (*at yours*) || B *na*

na V **neya** **pred** [2] *marque personnelle du 3sg. (sér. conditionnelle)* | *3sg. PPM (conditional series)* s’il, si elle | if he, she, it

náágòlò **adv** bientôt | soon

naani(g) **num** [2] quatre | four || L *naani, na, nááni, nánǎ*; B *naaní*

náávà **v** *vi* passer, finir | pass, be over, come to an end

naavolo **n** [5] argent (*monnaie*) | money || L *nàvolo*

nááwòlù **adv** **1** puis | later **2** encore | more : *Nāga kpōbegi ye naawolu* ‘I will work later’

naawɔlɔ **v** [2] **1** *vi* savoir | know (*how to do smth*) **2** *vi* savoir faire | can (*be able, skilled*)

námá **pred** *marque personnelle du 1du. (sér. conditionnelle)* | *1du. PPM (conditional series)* si nous | if we

náná **pred** *marque personnelle du 1pl. excl. (sér. conditionnelle)* | *1pl. excl. PPM (conditional series)* si nous | if we

nánà **pred** *marque personnelle du 1pl. excl. (sér. imperfective)* | *1pl. excl. PPM (imperfective series)* nous | we

nàpá **adv** jamais | never || B *napá*

nàpé **adv** entièrement | entirely

nàtá **pred** *marque personnelle du 3pl. (sér. conditionnelle)* | *3pl. PPM (conditional series)* s’ils, si elles | if they

nàtós **pred** *marque progressive* | *progressive predicative marker* : *Ì-keeyɛ ɔɔ ne-keeyɛ ɔɔ tiya nato va* ‘My father and your father are coming’

- nàtó adv** presque | almost : *Ne-kpōbegi nato e vila* ‘My job is almost finished’ **nàtónà**
nàtónà adv presque | almost **nàtó**
- nàwá pred** *marque personnelle du 2pl. (sér. conditionnelle) | 2pl. PPM (conditional series)* si vous | if you
- nay adv** [1] **1** là-bas | there **2** là | thither **3** de là | from there || L nà ‘there’; M nà ‘there’
- nazu conj** [1] quand | when **na II**
- nábò wà conj** *marque conjunctive successive | circumpositional marker of coordinative sequence et | and* : *Né wēgò gā ì-kééyè nã ð nè-kééyè wà* ‘We met your father and [then] my father’
- nāga pred** [2] *marque personnelle du 1sg. (sér. conditionnelle) | 1sg. PPM (conditional series)* si je | if I : *Nāgá yé Māsàdà yà wò vā* ‘If I am in Macenta you will come’
- nã gápred** *marque personnelle du 1sg. (sér. imparfaitive) | 1sg. PPM (imperfective series)* je | I : *Nã gá lî dósóy wā* ‘I am leaving for a hunt’
- nde n** [1] ma mère | my mother
- ne I conj** [1] si | if **ni**
- ne- I mrph** [1] *marque possessive du 1sg. | 1sg. possessive prefix* mon | my
- ne II pred** [2] *marque personnelle du 1pl. excl. (sér. de base et dépendante) | 1pl. excl. PPM (basic and dependent series)* nous | we
- ne- II mrph** [2] *marque possessive du 1pl. excl. | 1pl. excl. possessive prefix* notre | our
- neya pron** [2] *pronom personnel du 1pl. excl. (sér. focalisée) | 1pl. excl. personal pronoun (focalised series)* nous | we, us
- néyà I pred** *marque personnelle du 2sg. (sér. conditionnelle) | 2sg. PPM (conditional series)* si tu | if you
- néyà II pron** *pronom personnel du 1pl. incl. (sér. contractive) | 1pl. incl. personal pronoun (contractive series)* nous | we, us
- neye pron** [1] *pronom personnel du 1pl. excl. (sér. comitative) | 1pl. excl. personal pronoun (comitative series)* (avec) nous (with) us
- néyáyèyè** *néyáyèyègì, nèy, nèygi* **pron** *pronom personnel du 1pl. excl. (sér. emphatique) | 1pl. excl. personal pronoun (emphatic series)* nous | us
- ne I adv** [1] **1** encore | still **2** encore | yet **3** d’abord | at first **nene** || B nene ‘yet, a while’
- ne II v** [2] **1** vi bouillir | boil **2** vi se bouillir | boil : *Jéy lè né kólúvèyè zù* ‘The water is boiling in the pot’ || B né
- ne(g) n** [1] langue | tongue || B nεε(η)
- neke(g) v** [1] vi être lent | be slow || L nèkè(g)
- nekpa n** [1] menton | chin || B nekpe(η)
- nene adv** [1] **1** encore | still **2** encore | yet **3** d’abord | at first **ne** || B nene ‘yet, a while’
- nenē v** saluer | greet || L nene
- nevu(g) n** [1a] lézard | lizard || L nɛ̃fu
- neŵe n** [2] plaine | plain || B ne, neŵo
- ney I part** *marque interrogative | general interrogative particle* : *Nà wà làkòlilòpòy ney?* ‘Am I a schoolchild?’
- ney II pred** [2] *marque personnelle du 1pl. excl. (sér. prospective négative) | 1pl. excl. PPM (prospective negative series)* nous | we
- neyã(g) n** [1a] rosée | dew || L neye(g), noye(g)
- néyè** *nánéyè* **pred** *marque personnelle du 1pl. excl. (sér. conditionnelle négative) | 1pl. excl. PPM (conditional negative series)* si nous ne | if we not
- nēbe n** amitié | friendship **bolava**
- nēē** *nεε* [2] **v 1** vi être délicieux | be delicious **2** vi être doux | be sweet **3** vi se plaire | like **koozu** **nēē** : *Nè-zòvāàlègì jówógì néyáá lè (-)bè* ‘My donkey likes cassava’ || L né; B nεε ‘be sweet, tasty, pleasant’
- ni conj** [1] si | if **ne**
- ni mrph** *marque de prétérite | preterite verb suffix* : *Té yé-ni wòlù* ‘They were together’

-**ni(g) mrph** *marque plurielle associative* | *NP associative plurality marker* || L -ni; B -tini
niina I adj [2] nouveau | new || L nine, nina, niine, níiné; B niina
niina II v être nouveau | be new || L nine, nina, niine, níiné; B niina
nika n [2] vache | cow || L níka, níké; B nika
nikabela(g) n [2] génisse | heifer
nimó conj si | if **ni, ne**
no pron [1] **1** celui-là, il | that, he (*far away*) **2** autre | another || B no
nofozo adv [1] tout-près | close by **fozo**
no(g) adv [1] seulement | only : *Dó fêlègè nò gèyà* ‘I have only two sons’ || L no, òno
noko n [1] (no ICC) **1** beau-père | father-in-law **2** beau-fils, belle-fille | son-in-law, daughter-in-law || L noko, noko, náko; B núko ‘brother-in-law’
none(g) n [1a] mousse | moss
none n [1] cette personne-là | that person
nono n [2] lait | milk (*of cow or goat*) || L nono; M nónó
nonoŋo n [1] handicapé | handicapped (*person*) || B nono ‘injury, be lame’
nòpé pron **1** chaque | every, any **2** avec la négation | with a negation aucun | none : *Gà lá dótóló nòpé kóló* ‘I do not know a single doctor’
nove adv [1] là-bas | there : *É yèni nòvè bē gī* ‘Was he there yesterday?’ **nay**
nu n [2] **1** personne | person **2** homme | man || L nù; B nu
numunu(g) n [4] orange | orange **lemunu(g)** || L numunu(g)
núgàyì n pl **1** parents | parents **2** parents (*gens de la même famille*) | relatives (*members of the same clan*)

N - n

na pron [1] (no ICC) *pronom personnel du 1sg. (sér. focalisée)* | *1sg. personal pronoun (focalised series)*
 moi | me : *Nà ló nìy zù* ‘I am sleeping’
naale n [2] chat | cat || L nálé, nali, yaále; M nàlè ‘gnome’
naani v [1] **1** vi se gâter | rot **2** vt détruire | destroy, ruin **3** nuire | harm || B naani ‘destroy, get rid of, spoil’
nani n [2] --> nani
naŋa n [2] sang | blood || L námá; B nàaŋo
nàyéy **nàyéygi pron** (no ICC) *pronom personnel du 1sg. (sér. emphatique)* | *1sg. personal pronoun (emphatic series)* moi | me
nāde v vi être propre | be clean || L nāde(g)
nāge v 1) vt griffer | scratch with nails 2) vi démanger | itch
ne n [1] poisson | fish (*generic*) || B ne; M né
nele v vi disparaître | disappear || B nelé
nī v [1] vt mordre | bite : *Áni (‘)-niyaa le* ‘I am bit by something’ || L gī, ī, yī, nī; B ní
nifo v [2] vt froter | rub (*clothes, when washing*) || B nifó
nikéye v 1) vi mâcher | chew **2** manger (*des animaux*) | eat (*of animals*) **puwã**
niya(g) v vt casser | break
niyaniya(g) v 1) vt détruire | destroy 2) vi se détruire | collapse
nĩ I n [2] sein | breast; *nĩ ve* allaiter | milk (*give milk to a baby*) : *Álò niy ve ge-loy ya* ‘She is giving milk to her baby’ || L ními; B nini
nĩ II v [2] vi dormir | sleep || L ni, nĩ, nĩ; B ni
nĩya n [2] lait de la femme | female milk
nokpó n [2] vieux champ | old field
nó v [1] vi être mauvais | be bad || L nó; B nó
nóŋ(g) n [2] maïs | corn || B nó(ŋ)
puwã v 1) vt broyer | grind **2** vt mâcher | chew **nikéye**

ŋ - ŋ

- ŋani** *ani*, **ŋani** *n* [2] **1** chose | thing **2** quelque chose | something || L *ŋeni*; B *ŋaní*
-ŋani *mrph* [2] *suffixe du nom verbale* | verbal noun suffix (agentive noun)
ŋaza *n* [1] **1** femme | woman **2** femme (*épouse*) | wife; *ŋaza zey(g)* se marier | marry || L *áza*,
aza; *nàzà* ‘father’s sister’; B *ŋaha*
ŋazalo *n* [1] **1** jeune fille | girl **2** fille | daughter *ŋazalopo* || L *ŋaza luu*
ŋazalopo *n* [1] **1** jeune fille | girl **2** fille | daughter *ŋazalo*
ŋazavulu *v* [1] *vi* se marier | marry || L *fulu*
ŋazaŋwoni(g) *v* [2] *vi* être amoureux | be amorous (*man*)
ŋeye *n* [2] sable | sand || L *ŋàza(g)*; B *ŋiye*
ŋeyelwɔlɔ *n* [1] désert | desert

ɔ - ɔ

- ɔ pred** [2] *marque personnelle du 3sg. (sér. irréelle)* | 3sg. PPM (*irrealis series*) il, elle | he, she, it **a**
ɔ̀ɔ̀ conj *yɔ̀ɔ̀* *coordination marker* et | and : *Ŋà ɔ̀ɔ̀ Màsà ɔ̀ɔ̀ nánà lì làkólìy zù* ‘Masa and I, we are going to school’ || L *oo*

P - p

- pa** *v* [1] *vi* venir | come || L *pà*
paa [2] **v** *1 vt* tuer | kill **2 vt** éteindre | extinguish || L *pa*, *paa*; B *paa*
pala I *n* [2] bidon (*20 l*) | vessel (*for water, kerosene, 20 l*)
pala II *n* [1] boue | marsh (*deep*) || B *palá*
palavala *palavala(g)* *n* [1a] boue | dirt, mud || L *pàlavala*, *palavala*; B *palavala(ŋ)*
palavala(g) *n* [1a] --> *palavala*
panu(g) *panũ(g)* *n* [3] **1** panier | basket **2** écuelle | bowl (*for measuring bulk*) || B *paní(ŋ)* ‘pan’
panũ(g) *n* [3] --> *panu(g)*
paŋa *n* [2] varan | monitor lizard || L *pàma* ‘pangolin’; B *paŋá* ‘kind of lizard’
pã I *n* [1] beauté | beauty || L *pàda* ‘be good’; B *pa* ‘be beautiful’
pã II *v* [1] **1** *vi* être bon | be good **2** *vi* être bon, être bienveillant | be kind **3** *vi* être beau | be beautiful : *Ge-yazay e vaani* ‘His wife is beautiful’ || L *pa*, *pà(g)*; B *pa* ‘be beautiful’
pãboto *n* [1] sauce de palme | palm sauce
pãda *adj* [1] **1** bon | good **2** bon, bienveillant | kind || L *pàda* ‘be good’; B *pa* ‘be beautiful’
peka *adv* [2] autre | another || B *peka*
pekasi *n* [1] pioche | pick-axe, hoe
-pele *mrph* [2] *suffixe du nom verbale* | verbal noun suffix (*process noun*) : *Pá-vélé lɔ̀ è ()-sù* ‘He is leaving’ (lit. ‘Leaving is what he is in’)
pele I *v* **1** consacrer | vow **2 vt** donner (*un nom ; quel - gà*) | give (*a name ; what - gà*) : *Tata dase pele ga Koli* ‘They named him Koli’ || B *pele* ‘vow’; M *pele* ‘vow’
pele II *n* [2] chemin, route | road || L *kpele*, *pélé*; B *pele*
pele III *v* **1** *vi* être juste | be right, *be correct* **2** *vi* avoir raison | be right || B *pelé(ŋ)* ‘to swear, oath’
pele IV *v* [2] *vi* tordre | twist
pele V *v* [2] **1** dissoudre (*dans - bù*) dissolve (*in - bù*) **2** se dissoudre (*dans - bù*) dissolve (*in - bù*) : *Súkáláy véléyà jéy wù* ‘The sugar has dissolved in the water’
pele VI *pele(g)* *npp* [2] par, avec | by means of || L *pélé* ‘way, road’
pele(g) I *n* [2] **1** mode, méthode | method, mode, style, way : *Ge lewagɔ pelegi ya i-zakpagi bate* ‘I forgot the way you cook your sauce’ **2** façon, conduite | behaviour
pele(g) II *pele* *npp* [2] par, avec | by means of || L *pélé* ‘way, road’
peleyaali *n* [1] vipère | viper || L *péyálí*
pelemããwɔla *n* [1] couverture | blanket, bedcover

- pelezayala n** [1] carrefour | crossroads || B pelehayála
- peylu n** [2] pelle | spade || < F?
- peype n** goutte | drop (*of liquid*); *sile peype* dégoutter | drop (*liquid*)
- pe adv** [2] (no ICC) tous | all **kpé(g)** || L kpe(g), pe(g)
- pele I v** *vi* être suspendu (*au mur*) | be hanged (*on the wall*)
- pele II v 1** mettre | put (*a thin object such as a piece of paper or a shirt on the surface*) **2** couvrir | cover **3** arriver | come (*about night*) || B pele ‘patch, put’
- pele III v** [2] *vi* être petit | be small || B pele ‘smallness’
- pele IV n** [1] **1** maison | house **2** mur de la maison | house wall **3** entrée | entrance **pelela** || L pèlè; B péle
- pelela n** [1] **1** entrée | entrance **pele 2** porte (*de la maison*) | door (*of a house*) || L pele la ye
- pelelowa n** [1] famille | family (*living in the same village*)
- pila I v** [2] **1** *vt* finir (*qch. - mà*) finish (*smth - mà*) : *Gè víláá nè-bô bègìwà* ‘I’ve finished my work’ **2** *vi* finir | finish **2** *vi* pouvoir | can || B pilá
- pila II v** [2] **1** *vt* remplir (*de - gà*) | fill (*with - gà*) **2** *vi* se remplir (*de - gà*) | fill up (*with - gà*) **davila**
- pili n** [1] plante parasite (*esp.:*) parasite plant (*sp.:* *on trees*) || L pìli
- pili(g) v** [2] **1** *vt* jeter | throw **2** *vi* sauter | jump || B pilí ‘throw’; L píli(g)
- piliyani n** [2] --> piliyani
- pilikama n** concombre | cucumber || L kílíkámá
- piliyani piliyani, piliyani n** [2] **1** singe (*terme générique*) | monkey (*generic term*) **2** chimpanzé | chimpanzee || B pilibáni
- piliyani n** [2] --> piliyani
- piliyē v** [2] **1** **1** *vt* conduire | drive **2** *vi* courir | run **2** **1** *vt* rouler | roll **2** *vi* rouler | roll || B piliyē ‘race’
- piliyēyani n** [2] bicyclette | bicycle
- pivi n** [1] porc-épic | porcupine || L píví; B pivi
- piya piye-y n** [2] panier pour poisson | basket for fish
- polu I poli-y n** [1] dos | back || L pulu, pòlu, pòlùwè; B polú
- polu II adv** [1] **1** encore, encore une fois | again : (*’-Fé gèyà wòlù* ‘Give it to me again’ **2** ensemble | together
- polu III npp** [1] derrière | behind, following : *Nāga zile ne-bolay wolu* ‘I am following my friend’ || B polú ‘back, beyond, after, behind’
- poluŵa I adv** [1] habituellement | usually, habitually
- poluŵa II n** [1] **1** demain, lendemain | tomorrow **2** après-demain | after tomorrow
- pomugulu n** [1] arbre (*esp.*) | tree (*sp.*)
- popa(g) n** --> kpopa(g)
- popo v** [1] porter sur dos | carry on the back (*e.g., child*) || B popo
- pote(g) v** [2] **1** **1** *vt* renverser | overturn **2** *vi* renverser, se tourner | turn **2.1** *vi* se changer | change **2.2** *vi* se transformer | change, turn into **3.1** *vt* rénover | renovate, refurbish **3.2** *vt* restaurer, réaménager | renovate (*house*) **maawote** || B pote
- poto(g) n** objet d’échange, objet de commerce | object for trade, exchange, barter || B potó ‘instead of’
- powa npp** [1] près de | near : *Gúlìy lè pélé wòwà* ‘The tree is next to the house’
- powo(g) v** [2] *vi* voler | fly || L pówó(g); M pówó ‘pigeon’
- powow(g) n** [1a] pigeon | pigeon || L pòpò(g); M pówó
- pōde(g) n** [1a] fonio | fonio
- pō I v** [2] *vi* vouloir (*faire qch. - gà*) | want (*to do smth. - gà*) : *Ge pō ga ge (’-naawolo* ‘I want to know how to do it’
- pō II v** *vt* couper | cut (*a big tree with an ax*) || B pō

pɔlɔ I adj [2] vieux | old || L pɔlɔ, pɔlɔzaya(g)
pɔlɔ II n argile | clay || B pɔlɔ́ ‘earth, mud’
pɔlɔvɛ n [2] jarre | jar (*for water*)
pɔlɔvɛlɛ n [1] terre en banco | mud bricks (*for housing*)
pɔnɛ v [2] *vt* écrire | write || L póné(g); B pɔnɛ
pɔnɔ I v *vi* être très pointu | be very sharp (*of iron*)
pɔnɔ II v sucer | suck || B pɔnɔ́
pɔɔwa n [2] arbre (*esp.:*) | tree (*sp.:* with giant leaves used for covering palm oil and vessels)
pɔ́bɔ n [1] pénis | penis
pu vt [2] **1** *vt* mettre (*liquids*), verser | put (*for liquids, powders*), pour **2** *vi* couler | flow **2 vi** se noyer | drown, sink **3** bêcher (*qch. - b̀̀*) dig (*smth - b̀̀*) || B pu ‘put, throw out’
pupu n [2] fourmi (*terme générique*) | ant (*generic term*) || L púpú; B pupú ‘small black or red ant’
puu(g) num [2] dix | ten || L pù; B púu
pũdi n [1] moustique | mosquito || B pundí

S - s

sa I n [2] mort | death || L sáá; B sa
sa II v [2] **1 vi** mourir | die **2 vi** s’éteindre | extinguish **3 vi** se terminer | end || L sáá; B saa : *Na ne vaagɔ, gobiy yana zani* ‘When I came, the fire was extinct already’
sa III n [1] femelle (*des animaux*) | female (*animal*) **geza** || L sàà
saa(g) num [2] --> sawa(g)
sabo n [2] sabot | hoof
saba n [2] natte | mat || L sába
sabalaya n [1] plante (*esp.*) | plant (*sp.:* used for making rugs)
saya v [1] *vi* être faible | be weak || L sàya ‘be lazy’
saya(g) v [1] **1 vt** couper, défricher, blesser | cut, hurt **2 vi** se couper, se blesser | cut oneself, hurt oneself : *Ge bɔzaya ga boway* ‘I cut myself with a knife’
sayila(g) n [1a] aiguille | needle
sakɔ I n [1] grêle | hail
sakɔ II n [1] **1.1** jeu des dames | checkers **1.2** damier | checkerboard **2** awalé |
sakpa n [1] partie basse de dos | lower part of back (*women’s*)
sakpa(g) n [1a] **1** sauce | sauce **2** condiment | condiment
sakpala(g) n [2] pied | foot
sakpe(g) n [1a] **1** dispute | dispute **2** bagarre | quarrel
sala I n [1] **1** grâce | grace **2** gloire | glory || L sàla
sala II v **1** payer | pay **2** rembourser | reimburse
sali n [1] **1** médicament | drug, medicine **2** fétiche | fetish || L sàle, sàlewo(g)
sama(g) n multitude, grande quantité | large quantity (*of objects; hard to count*) || M sama ‘division of food between multiple people’
samakolo(g) n [2] pou (*esp.*) | louse (*sp.:* in bed linen)
sani I conj [2] (no ICC) avant de | before **aysa I**
sani II prep [2] (no ICC) avant | ago **aysa II**
sape n [2] racine | root || L sápe
sasa n [2] clôture | fence (*wooden*)
savala(g) n [1a] chaussure | shoes || L savala(g)
sawa(g) saa(g) num [2] (no ICC) trois | three || L sávàgɔ, sávà; B saáwa
saŵa n [2] saison humide | wet season || L sama, saŵa; B saŵa
saŵõnu(g) n [2] ongle | nail || L sɛ̃(ŋ), seĩ(ŋ), siẽ(ŋ); B saŵóó(ŋ)
sãba(g) n [1a] cage de métal ronde | round metal cage (*for drying meat over the fire*) || B sambó(ŋ)

- sātini(g) n** [1a] *Lannea microcarpa* plante (*esp.*) | plant (*sp.*)
- seebe n** [2] **1** maladie | illness **2** malade | ill person || L sébé; B seebe
- seka(g) n** [1a] bouille | basket; *seka(g) toko* ceinture pour la bouille | belt for the rice basket || L sèkà(g); B seka(ŋ) ‘strings attached to a basket’
- sele n** [1] elephant | elephant || L sèè; B selé
- seŋa I** **seŋā n** [2] rêve | dream (*at night*) **seŋala** || M sèngáhù ‘alert, awake’; B siŋala
- seŋa II** **seŋā v** [2] rêver | dream (*at night*) || M sèngáhù ‘alert, awake’; B siŋala **seŋala**
- seŋala I n** [2] rêve | dream (*at night*) **seŋa** || M sèngáhù ‘alert, awake’; B siŋala
- seŋala II** **seŋā v** [2] rêver | dream (*at night*) **seŋa** || M sèngáhù ‘alert, awake’; B siŋala
- seŋā I n** [2] --> seŋa I
- seŋā II v** [2] --> seŋa II
- sey(g) v** [2] **1** 1) *vt* faire asseoir | seat **2vi s’asseoir, être assis | sit down, be sitting **2 vt** poser, mettre | put || L sii, si, sī, séi; B sei : *Na lo zeini* ‘I am sitting’**
- seynowo n** [1] voisin | neighbour || B seiwō
- sēgaazu n** [1] lunettes | glasses (*optic*) || B ngaahu ‘face, eye’
- se n** [2] (no ICC) bénédiction | blessing : *Wò-sé!* ‘Good afternoon’ || B se
- sebasema n** [2] fondation | foundation
- seye I n** [1] savon | soap || L seye; B seyé
- seye II v 1** *vi* revenir | return : *Gè vâà gè zèyè dǒwǒy zù* ‘I have returned from the market’ **2 vi** sortir | come out
- sele v 1** *vt* suspendre | hang **2) vi** être suspendu, se pendre | hang (*on a traverse*) || L sele, sela; B sele
- selebeti n** [1] serviette | towel || < F
- seti n** [4] **1** assiette | plate **2** vaisselle | dishes || < F
- seve I n** [1] **1** écriture | writing (*system of*) **2** lettre | letter **3** livre | book || L seve, seve; M sévéí ‘write, engrave’
- seve II v** [1] écrire | write || L seve, seve; M sévéí ‘write, engrave’
- sevebaku n** [1] stylo | pen **biki(g)**
- sēdiili n** [5] ceinture | belt (*European style*) || < F
- sēge n** [2] rideau | curtain
- si I pron** [1] (no ICC) ce | this || B si
- si II v** planter, semer plant, sow || B sí
- sigā** **sigā(g) n** [1] foutou | foutou (*traditional dish made of boiled bananas*) **anisigā(g)**
- sigā(g) n** [1] --> sigā
- siya v** piler | grind (*in a mortar, e.g. rice*) || L sige; B siya
- siyi(g) n** [1a] termitière | termitary (*sp.: big, reddish*) || L siye(g) ‘termite’; B siyi(ŋ) ‘barricade, termite hill’
- sile v** [1] **1** 1) *vt* descendre, baisser | pull down **2) vi** descendre (*de l’escalier*) | descend (*down the steps*) **2 vt** mettre (*dans - sù*) | put (*in - sù*) **sile** || B sité ‘let down, descend’
- sili v** [1] *vi* être méchant | be angry || L silì; B silí ‘hate’
- silipoŋo n** [1] ennemi | enemy
- sina** **sine n** [1] male (*des animaux*) | male (*animal*) **gezine** || L síní(g) ‘husband’; B sina
- sine I n** [1] (no ICC) cette personne | this person
- sine II n** [1] bouteille | bottle (*small, for wine*)
- sine III n** [1] --> sina
- sité v** [1] **1** 1) *vt* descendre, baisser | pull down **2) vi** descendre (*de l’escalier*) | descend (*down the steps*) **2 vt** mettre (*dans - sù*) | put (*in - sù*) **sité** || B sité ‘let down, descend’
- sivili n** [6] samedi | Saturday || L sivili, sivili, sívìlì; B sivilí
- siya v** [2] --> siya(g) II
- siya(g) I v 1** peindre (*qch. - sù*) | paint (*smth - sù*) **2** enduire (*qch. - sù*) | spread (*smth - sù*)

- siya(g) II** *siya* **v** [2] *vi* marcher | walk || L siε, siye, síá; B siya
- siyasiya(g) v** [2] *vi* se mouvoir (*â - sù*) | move oneself (*to - sù*) : *Nāga bɔ ziyasiya su* ‘I am moving’
- siyavele n** [2] comportement | behaviour : *Neya ziyaveley ye vani, ama suwoy w̃e lina* ‘If you behave well, we’ll eat meat tomorrow’
- siyēdo n** [1] garçon | boy || L zunu lu, zunu luu, zunu lūgo
- siyē(g) n** [1a] **1** mari | husband **2** homme, jeune homme | man, young man || L síní(g); siyē(η) ‘man’
- siyēmɔɔni(g) v** [2] *vi* être amoureuse | be amorous (*of a woman*)
- sizigulo n** épervier | hawk || B sihígulo
- sīdolo n** [5] chose très rouge | bright red object
- so n** [1] cheval | horse || L so, sòo, su; B so
- sokε n** [2] pintade | guinea-fowl || B soké(η)
- sokpa n** [1] nez | nose; *sokpa ve se moucher* | wipe one’s nose || L sukpo, sokpa, sòkpà; B sokpá
- sokpalowa n** [1] narine | nostril || B sokpála
- solo v 1** *vi* être bon à | be suitable **2** *vi* être plaisant, être bon | be pleasant || M sòlò ‘fit perfectly’
- soo v** [2] **1** *vt* attraper | catch **2** *vt* prendre, tenir | take, hold: *Kaali zoowaa le* ‘The snake is captured’ **3** *soo ya* prendre, porter | take, carry : *Ge dapay zoogɔ ya* ‘I carried the bag (in hand)’ || L sò(g); B sòu
- soolo(g) n** [1a] moineau | sparrow || L sòlò(g)
- soso n** [3] (no ICC) sousou | Soso (*ethnonym*) || M Sòsò ‘Soso country’
- sota n** [2] termite volant | flying termite
- sota(g) n** [1a] **1.1** hôte | guest **1.2** étranger | foreigner **2** l’étranger | abroad || B sotá(η) ‘stranger, guest’
- sovaale(g) n** [1a] **1** âne | donkey **2** cheval | horse || L sovale(g), sòvâlè(g) ‘donkey’; B soohaale(η) ‘donkey’
- sowã v** [1] *vi* être attentif | be attentive, be careful || L suma
- sōbo n** [1] sel traditionnel | traditional salt (*made of herbs*) || B sɔmbó
- sōwo n** [1] prix | price || B sɔwɔ
- sɔfɛle n** [5] (no ICC) chauffeur | driver || < F
- sɔle(g) v 1.1** *vi* être droit, être direct | be direct **1.2** *vi* être correct | be correct **2** *vi* être honnête | be honest : *Á lá zóléni* ‘He is dishonest’ || L sòlè(g)
- sɔlɔ v** [2] **1.1** *vt* obtenir | get **1.2** *vt* gagner | earn **2** *vt* trouver | find **3.1** *vt* produire | make **3.2** *vi* être né | be born **4** *vt* coudre | sew *Sɔlɔwale ga ja lo ve kele wa la ve maazolo* || L sɔlɔ(g) ‘be born, give birth’; B sɔlɔ ‘get, receive, have’
- sɔwɔ n** [2] plante (*esp.*) | plant (*sp.: used as a straw for drinking*) || B sɔwɔ
- sɔwɔ n** [1] jour | day : *Sɔwɔy ye vaagɔ gelegi ga la ya ve* ‘The day you came I was not there’ || B sɔwɔ ‘time, period’
- su pp** [1] en | in, inside || L su; B su
- suba v** [1] *vi* être solide, être dur (*difficile à courber*) | be solid || B suba ‘be strong’
- sugula I n** [2] --> sugula(g) I
- sugula II v** [2] --> sugula(g) II
- sugula(g) I** *kpɔɔlɔzuyula(g) n* [2] conversation | conversation || B sugula ‘explain’
- sugula(g) II** *sugula v* [2] raconter (*qch. - mà*) | tell (*smth - mà*) *kpɔɔlɔzuyula(g)* || B sugula ‘explain’
- suyε v** *vi* être transparent | be transparent || B suyε ‘explain, show inside’
- sukala n** [6] sucre | sugar || < F?; L sukala
- sulu(g) I v** *vi* affluer | flow (*water*)
- sulu(g) II n** [1a] bruit | noise || L suli(g)
- supu v** *vt* mélanger | mix (*solid objects*) || L supu; B supu ‘mix, mingle’

susu n [3] corossol | corossol (*fruit*) || L sòdòdò(g) (?)
suti v *vt* mélanger, remuer | mix, stir (*liquids*)
suwa n [2] **1** animal | animal **2** viande | meat || L sowa, suwa, súo, súwó; B suwa
suwe(g) v [1] *vi* être sec | be dry (*e.g., vegetable*) || L sùvò
suwooza I adv [2] longtemps | long ago || B suwóha ‘to be long ago’
suwooza II v [2] *vi* être profond (*le trou*) | be deep (*hole in the ground*) || L bùwòdà
suwòwò v *vi* essayer (*de faire qch. - gà*) | try (*to do smth. - gà*) : *Ge suwòwò ga ge si ye* ‘I try to do this’ || B suwòvó ‘test, try out, tempt’
sùyáká adj vide | empty || B suyáká

T - t

ta I conj [2] (no ICC) **1** et | and **2** *dans un énoncé négatif* | in a negative sentence ni | neither : *Ga la ga kalamo ta dótóló* ‘I am neither a teacher nor a doctor’ || L tá ‘3sg. conjunctive series marker’; B ta ‘and’
ta II pron [1] (no ICC) **1.1** quelconque | some **1.2** certain | certain **2** *dans un énoncé négatif* | in a negative sentence aucun | not a single || L ta; B ta
ta III cop *copule négative* | negative copula || L le
ta IV pred *marque négative* | negative verb marker || L le
ta V pred [2] (no ICC) *marque personnelle du 3pl. (sér. irréelle)* | 3pl. PPM (*irrealis series*) ils, elles | they
taa n [2] **1** village | village **2** ville | town **taazu** || L ta, táá; B ta
taagulo adv [1] un peu | a little, some **gulo II**
taaya n [2] calabasse | calabash
taala n [1] mardi | Tuesday || L tala, táalá
taawu(g) num (no ICC) [1] neuf | nine || L taawò, taawu, tàwù; B taavú
taazu n [2] **1** village | village **2** ville | town **taa** || B taahu ‘in town’
tabali n [2] table | table || < F; L tabali
tabò v ajouter (*qch. - bà*) | add (*smth - bà*) || M tambo ‘stretch, spread out’
taba v [1] *vi* être aigre | be sour || L taba, tàba; B taba
tagula tawula v [1] **1)** *vt* réduire (*qch. - bà*) | decrease, minimise (*smth - bà*) **2)** *vi* se réduire | decrease
tagula(g) v [2] *vt* cueillir | gather (*e.g., mushrooms*) **kula(g)**
tayize(g) n [1a] plante (*esp.: piment*) | plant (*sp.: with spicy seeds*)
takala n [4] allumettes | matches
takalaḅaku n [1] allumette | match
takpala n [3] épieu | forked stick
talo v [1] *vt* préserver, rester | preserve, leave (*food in a calabash*)
tama n [3] monnaie | coin
tamu n [2] bambou | bamboo || L tému; B tamu
tanigaa adj [1] (no ICC) certaine | some, certain
tanisu adv [2] --> tennis
tata pred [2] (no ICC) *marque personnelle du 3pl. (sér. imparfective)* | 3pl. PPM (*imperfective series*) ils, elles | they
tavala n [1] front | forehead || L tovala; B tavala
tàvéká adv (no ICC) autrement | another way : *Si ye ga taveka* ‘Do this another way’
tàwé tawé v *vi* se rassembler | gather
táwólà n villageois, citoyen | villager, citizen : *Táwólàytì kpě té yá mé* ‘All citizens eat it’
tawula v [1] --> tagula
tāde(g) n [1a] tambour (*djembe*) | drum (*djembe*) || L tàḡādè(g); B tandé(ŋ)

- tādi adv** [2] (no ICC) difficilement | hard : *Tādi ge daalego* ‘It’s difficult for me to carry it on the head’
- te ti pred** [2] (no ICC) *marque personnelle du 3pl. (sér. de base et dépendante)* | 3pl. PPM (basic and dependent series) ils, elles | they
- telē n** [3] (no ICC) train | train || < F
- teme n** [2] tamis | sieve
- temudeya temuleya n** [1] étoile | star || B temuleyá
- temuleya n** [1] --> temudeya
- tena n** [2] (no ICC) tante | aunt (*father’s sister*) || B tena
- tene(g) n** [2] (no ICC) lundi | Monday || L tene(g), téné; B tené folo
- tenema n** [5] (no ICC) dimanche | Sunday || B tenéma
- tetema pp** [1] pour | for : *Zialogoy vāgo le ()-tetema* ‘The Zialo language is interesting for me’
- teve v** [1] **1** vt couper | cut **2** vt abattre | cut, chop || L teve, teve; B tevé
- teveleve v** [1] vt couper en pièces | cut into pieces
- teya n** [1] melon | melon || B teyá ‘pumpkin’
- tēy(g) v** [2] vi être noir | be black || L tēyε(g), tei(g), tei(g), téi
- tε v** [1] **1.1** vi monter | mount **1.2** vi escalader | climb **2** vi **3** vi entrer (*dans - bù*) | enter (*smth. - bù*); *tε ba* ranger | put (*in certain order*) : *Peley e lego bu, ne vεley le* ‘The house I entered is my house’ || L té; B tε
- tεbo n** couleur de cuivre | copper colour
- tεε n** [2] poulet | hen, chicken || L tée; B tε
- tεewuli(g) n** poulailler | hen coop
- teya(g) n** [2] arachide | ground nut || L téyá(g)
- tekpe n** [2] vanneuse | winnower, fanner || B tekpe
- teniinā(g) n** [2] jeune | youngster
- tenisu tanisu adv** [2] (no ICC) parfois | sometimes : *Tanisu geya li lakolila* ‘Sometimes I visit school’
- tete adv** [2] (no ICC) complètement | completely : *Ge bay neya tete* ‘I have eaten the rice completely’
- tey pred** [2] (no ICC) *marque personnelle du 3pl. (sér. prospective négative)* | 3pl. PPM (prospective negative series) ils, elles | they
- téyè nātéyè pred** (no ICC) *marque personnelle du 3pl. (sér. conditionnelle négative)* | 3pl. PPM (conditional negative series) s’ils ne | if they not
- ti- mrph** [2] (no ICC) *marque possessive du 3pl.* | 3pl. possessive prefix leur | their
- ti(g) mrph** [1] (no ICC) *marque plurielle définie* | NP definite plurality marker
- tiyi n** [1] charbon | carbon || L teye, tìyì
- tiili v** **1.1** vt balancer, agiter | shake, swing **1.2** vt secouer | shake, jolt **2** vt mouvoir | stir, move
- tikpě n** [2] (no ICC) tous, tout le monde | all, everyone **kpě(g)**
- tiso v** vi éternuer (*mà*) | sneeze (*mà*) || L tiso; B tisó
- tiya I pron** [2] (no ICC) *pronom personnel du 3pl. (sér. focalisée)* | 3pl. personal pronoun (focalised series) ils, elles | they, them
- tiya II pron** [2] (no ICC) *pronom personnel du 3pl. (sér. contractive)* | 3pl. personal pronoun (contracted series) ils, elles, eux | they, them
- tiyay tiyaygi pron** [2] (no ICC) *pronom personnel du 3pl. (sér. emphatique)* | 3pl. personal pronoun (emphatic series) ils, elles | they, them
- tiye pron** [1] (no ICC) *pronom personnel du 3pl. (sér. comitative)* | 3pl. personal pronoun (comitative series) (avec) eux (with) them
- tībili(g) n** talon | heel (*body part*)

- to v** [1] **1** 1) *vt* mettre, poser | set 2) *vi* être debout | stand : *Na lo loni* ‘I am standing’ **2** *vt* construire | build || L to, tóg)
- todama n** lien | knot
- toko n** [2] main | hand || B toko
- tokobeya n** [1] doigt | finger || L zeebeɣa, zebeɣa; B tokobeyá
- tokobeyameyã(g) n** [1a] banane (*esp.*: petite, jaune) | banana (*sp.*: small, yellow, eatable fresh)
- tokobu n** poing | fist
- tókólàzény v** 1) *vt* commencer | begin 2) *vi* se commencer | begin || L tɔɔzi, tozei, tɔ̀zì
- tokolo v** [1] *vi* ordonner | order
- tokolola n** carpe, poignet | wrist (*body part*) || B tokolóla
- tokowavule n** [1] bracelet | bracelet
- tokowolu n** [1] main | back of hand
- tòkòzény(g) v** **1** *vt* accepter (*qch.* - bù) | accept (*smth.* - bù) **2** *vt* recevoir (*qch.* - bù) | receive (*smth.* - bù)
- toli v** [1] **1** *vt* appeler | call **2** *vt* inviter | invite : *Ge ne-bolay loligɔ ga e va* ‘I invited my friend to come’ || L tili, tuli; B tolí ‘call’
- towa n** [2] fourche | forked stick
- towagulo n** [1] antélope (*ésp.*) | antelope (*sp.*)
- towolo n** [1] kola | kola || L tuwulu, tuli, tuuli, tũwũlè; B towoló ‘kola nut’
- towoloyuse n** kola noix | kola nut || L tũwũle ‘kola’
- tõya n** [1] vérité | truth || B tɔ̀yá
- tɔ I cop** copula affirmative | affirmative copula : *ɓè ló è vâàgò?* ‘Who came?’
- tɔ II v** [1] **1** *vt* voir | see **2** *vt* trouver | find || B tɔ̀ ‘see, be, find’
- tɔ̀bɔ(g) n** [1a] potasse | potash || L tɔ̀bɔ̀(g)
- tɔ̀kpɔ n** [1] palme oléifère | oil palm **tɔ̀lo** || L tɔ̀kpɔ, tɔ̀gbɔ; B tɔ̀kpó
- tɔ̀lè adv** prochaine année | next year || B tɔ̀lé ‘pre-last year’
- tɔ̀lo tɔ̀li-y n** [1] palme oléifère | oil palm **tɔ̀kpɔ** || L tɔ̀lɔ́
- tɔ̀ve v** [1] **1** traverser | cross **2** passer | pass away **maalove** || L teve, teve; B tɔ̀ve ‘pass, surpass’
- tɔ̀wɔ n** [2] haricot | bean || L tɔ̀wɔ; B tɔ̀wɔ
- tɔ̀wɔlɔwɔ v** [1] *vt* taquiner | kid, josh, tease (*a dog, a child*)
- tɔ̀wɔne v** *vi* tousser | cough || B tɔ̀wɔlé ‘common cough’
- tufa v** [2] *vi* toucher (*qn., qch.* - bà) touch (*smb, smth.* - bà) || L tũbà; B tuba ‘beat, strike’
- tufa n** [2] herbe (*terme générique*) | grass (*generic term*) || L tife, tufe, táfá, táfé; B tufa
- tu(g) n** bruit | noise (*human*)
- tukpe(g) n** [1a] moitié | half
- tukpu n** [1] pièce, morceau | piece (*small*) || B tukpu ‘be short’
- tuwa v** *vi* répondre | answer || B tuwá ‘agree, answer’
- tuwo I n** [1] front | forepart || L tuwo; B tuwɔ ‘ahead, before’
- tuwo II npp** [1] devant, avant | before || L tuwo; B tuwɔ ‘ahead, before’
- tuwulo n** [1] vin de palme | palm wine
- tuwuwã(g) n** [2] **1** fruit du palmier à huile | palm fruit **2** résin du palmier à huile | resin of palmier **tuwũ(g)** || L tũwũ
- tuwũ(g) n** [2] **1** fruit du palmier à huile | palm fruit **2** résin du palmier à huile | resin of palmier **tuwuwã(g)**
- tuwõ n** [2] filet | net (*for hunting birds*) || L tumo

V - v

- va I n** [2] --> fa
- va II v** [1] --> pa
- vaa v** [2] --> paa

vaala n [2] --> baala
vabɔ I n [1] --> fabɔ I
vabɔ II v [1] --> fabɔ II
vabɔwo n [1] --> fabɔwo
vayulasumita n [2] --> bayulasumita
vala I v --> fala
vala II n [2] --> pala I
vala III n [1] --> pala II
válàbà pp sans | without : *Gè yà lì dápá válàbà* 'I go without a bag'
valafala adv [2] --> falafala
valala v --> falala
valavala n [1] --> palavala
valevebowa n [1] --> balevebowa
vale(g) n --> bale(g)
vali I n --> bali
vali II v *vi* divorcer (*qui - mà*) | divorce (*with whom - mà*) : *Né valiya w̃a na ŋazay* 'I divorced with my wife'
vali(g) n --> bali(g)
vanu(g) n [3] --> panu(g)
vasa n [1] --> fasa
vasa(g) n [1a] --> fasa(g)
váw̃à pp --> fáw̃à
váw̃à npp --> fáw̃à
vayasa(g) n [1a] --> fayasa(g)
vaza v [1] --> faza
vã I adv [1] lentement | slowly
vã II v [1] --> pã
vãboto n [1] --> pãboto
vãda adj [1] --> pãda
vã(g) I v --> bã(g) I
vã(g) II n --> bã(g) II
ve II adv [1] **1** ici (*localisation*) | here (*location*) **2** ici (*direction*) | hither **3** d'ici | hence **be I** || L ve,
 vɛ
ve(g) v [1a] --> fe(g)
veka adv [2] --> peka
vekasi n [1] --> pekasi
vele I v --> pele I
vele II n [2] --> pele II
vele III v --> pele III
vele IV v [2] --> pele IV
vele V v [2] --> pele V
vele VI **vele(g) npp** [2] --> pele VI
vele(g) n [2] --> pele(g)
veleyaali n [1] --> peleyaali
velemããwɔla n [1] --> pelemããwɔla
velezayala n [1] --> pelezayala
velezala adv [2] avant-hier | before yesterday || L vezeina; B
veylu n [2] --> peylu
veype n --> peype
ve n [2] --> fe

vefe(g) n [1a] --> fefe(g)
vele I v --> pele I
vele II v --> pele II
vele III v [2] --> pele III
vele IV n [1] --> pele IV
velela n [1] --> pelela
velelowa n [1] --> pelelowa
veleme n [6] --> feleme
veli v [2] --> feli
velibo v [2] --> felibo
veti n [2] --> feti
vila I v [2] --> pila I
vila II v [2] --> pila II
vili n [1] --> pili
vili(g) v [2] --> pili(g)
vilikama n --> pilikama
viliṅani n [2] --> piliṅani
viliyē v [2] --> piliyē
viliyēyani n [2] --> piliyēyani
vitili(g) n [1a] --> fitili(g)
vivi n [1] --> pivi
viya n [2] --> piya
viyolo n [6] --> fiyolo
vo n [1] --> fo
volo n [1] --> folo
volo(g) I adv [1a] --> folo(g) I
volo(g) II n [1a] --> folo(g) II
voloyakpa(g) n --> foloyakpa(g)
vowā adv [2] --> fowā
vowo n [1] --> fowo
vɔfɔ n [2] --> fɔfɔ
vɔfɔle v [1] --> fɔfɔle
vɔlese v --> fɔlese
vɔve(g) n [1a] --> fɔve(g)
vɔze v --> fɔze
vɔdo v --> fɔdo
vufule(g) n [1a] --> fufule(g)
vuka I n [1] --> fuka I
vuka II v [1] --> fuka II
vukɔ(g) n [1a] --> fukɔ(g)
vule I n [1] --> fule I
vule II n [1] --> fule II
vulu I n [1] --> fulu I
vulu II v [1] --> fulu II
vulu(g) n [1a] --> fulu(g)
vuŷi n [3] --> fuŷi
vūde v --> fūde
vūdemo n [1] --> fūdemo
vūde v [2] --> fūde

W - w

- wa I pp** [1] --> ba I
wa II n [1] --> ba II
wa III cop [1] --> ba III
wa IV pred [1] *marque personnelle du 2pl. (sér. irréelle) | 2pl. PPM (irrealis series) vous | you*
wa V pred [2] *marque personnelle du 2pl. (sér. imparfaitive) | 2pl. PPM (imparfaitive series) vous | you*
waa(g) n mil (*esp.*) | millet (*sp.*)
waala n [2] --> baala
wáázù pp --> máázù
wa(g) num [1] mille | thousand **wagila** || L wa; M wà ‘very-very much, greatly’
wagila num [1] mille | thousand **wa(g)** || L wa, wàgíla
wali n [4] **1** argent | money **2** franc | franc (*CFA or Guinean*) || L wòli
wasu v *vi* se vanter | boast
wate wati-y n [2] temps | time || L wátí || M wátí ‘time, occasion’
wati conj [2] quand | when (*period of time*) || M wátí ‘time, occasion’
watiwawati adv [2] parfois | sometimes
wátízù conj pendant | during
waŵa n [2] --> paŵa
wã(g) I v [1a] --> bã(g) I
wã(g) II n [1a] --> bã(g) II
wãna v [2] *vi* être amer | be bitter || L jana, jala, wàna, wãla B
we v [2] *vi* se réveiller | wake up
we(g) v [1] --> be(g)
wete n [2] --> bete
we pp [1] --> be
wele I n [1] --> bele
wele II v --> wòle
wele(g) n [1a] --> bele(g)
welékooza n [2] --> belekooza
weletukpu n [1] --> beletukpu
wey I pred [1] *marque personnelle du 2pl. (sér. prospective négative) | 2pl. PPM (prospective negative series) vous | you*
wey II weygi pron [1] *pronom personnel du 2pl. (sér. emphatique) | 2pl. personal pronoun (emphatic series) vous | you*
wike(g) n [2] --> bike(g)
wĩ v *vi* être lourd | be heavy || L bi
wĩbi n [2] --> bĩbi
wĩbiwote n [1] --> bĩbiwote
wĩbole n [1] taro | taro
wĩfove(g) n [2] canne à sucre | sugar cane
wĩ(g) n [1] **1** Français | frenchman **2** homme blanc | white man || L wì(g); B wi
wĩkpèli n [1] papaya | papaya || L gibelie, wĩkpèlè
wĩtɛ n [2] canard | duck || B wité
wo- mrph [1] *marque possessive du 2pl. | 2pl. possessive prefix votre | your*
wo I v [2] --> bo
wo II n [1] --> go
wo III pred [1] *marque personnelle du 2pl. (sér. de base, dépendante, impérative) | 2pl. PPM (basic, dependent, imperative series) vous | you*

wo(g) I n [1a] --> go(g)
wo(g) II n [2] --> ko(g)
woko n [2] --> koko
wole I v --> gole
wole II n [1] --> bole
wole(g) v [2] --> kole(g)
woli I n [2] --> goli I
woli II n [1] --> goli II
wolibalaso n --> golibalaso
wólílò v --> gólílò
woliwoko(g) n --> goliwoko(g)
wólízùbóíló v --> gólízùbóíló
wolizuvule n [1] --> golizuvule
wolo I n [2] --> bolo
wolo II v [1] --> golo
wolo III v [1] --> kolo
wolobo 2v --> kolobo
wolòdo v --> kolòdo
wolu I n [1] --> polu I
wolu II adv [1] --> polu II
wolu III pp [1] --> polu III
woluŵa I adv [1] --> poluŵa I
woluŵa II n [1] --> poluŵa II
womugulu n [1] --> pomugulu
woo n [2] --> koo
woola n [1] --> goola
woole n --> koole
woolo(g) n [1a] --> boolo(g)
woowo n [1] --> koowo
wooza v [2] --> kooza
woozu I woozi-y n [1] --> koozu I
woozu II woozi-y pp [1] --> koozu II
woozuŵo n [1] --> koozuŵo
wopo v [1] --> popo
wota n [1] --> kota
wote n [2] 1 leçon | lesson *Wóté wátíy zù* ‘During the lesson’ 2 classe | class *kotawu*
wote(g) I n [1a] --> kote(g)
wote(g) II v [2] --> pote(g)
woto I v --> koto I
woto II v --> koto II
woto(g) n --> poto(g)
wovi I n [1] --> kovi I
wovi II n [2] --> kovi II
wovila n [1] --> kovila
wowa n [1] --> bowa
wowakaŵa(g) n [1] --> kowakaŵa(g)
wowaleve n [1] --> bowaleve
wowo(g) v [2] --> powo(g)
wowowɔ(g) n [1a] --> powowɔ(g)
woŵa(g) n [1a] --> koŵa(g)

wɔɔ(g) n [1a] --> kɔɔ(g)
wɔɔgulu n [1] --> bɔɔgulu
wɔɔɔ n faucille | sickle
wɔɔɔve n [2] --> pɔɔɔve
wɔɔɔvele n [1] --> pɔɔɔvele
wɔɔlu n [2] --> kɔɔlu
wɔɔluve n [2] --> kɔɔluve
wɔɔluvele n [1] --> kɔɔluvele
wɔɔma I n [1] --> kɔɔma I
wɔɔma II pp [1] --> kɔɔma II
wɔɔnaba adv [2] --> kɔɔnaba
wɔɔna(g) n [2] --> kɔɔna(g)
wɔɔne v [2] --> pɔɔne
wɔɔɔ I v --> pɔɔɔ I
wɔɔɔ II v --> pɔɔɔ II
wɔɔɔ(g) n [1a] --> kɔɔɔ(g)
wɔɔɔkula(g) v [1] --> kɔɔɔkula(g)
wɔɔɔla v --> kɔɔɔla
wɔɔɔli v --> kɔɔɔli
wɔɔɔɔ n [1] --> bɔɔɔɔ
wɔɔɔwa n [2] --> pɔɔɔwa
wɔɔɔwɔ n [2] --> kɔɔɔwɔ
wɔɔti n [2] --> kɔɔti
wɔɔtɔkɔ̀li n --> kɔɔtɔkɔ̀li
wɔɔvɔ n [2] --> kɔɔvɔ
wɔɔvɔiŋavele n [2] --> kɔɔvɔiŋavele
wɔɔwɔ I n [1] --> kɔɔwɔ I
wɔɔwɔ II v [2] --> kɔɔwɔ II
wɔɔwɔ III n --> kɔɔwɔ III
wɔɔwɔ IV adv [1] **1** toujours | always **2** généralement | usually **wɔ** || L wɔ; M wɔ́ ‘long ago’
wɔɔwɔɔɔ n [1] --> kɔɔwɔɔɔ
wɔɔwɔwɔlu n [1] --> kɔɔwɔwɔlu
wɔɔwɔya(g) n [1a] --> kɔɔwɔya(g)
wɔɔŋa adv ensemble | together
wɔɔỹ v --> kɔɔỹ
wɔza n [1] --> gɔza
wɔ̀ɔ n [1] --> pɔ̀ɔ
wɔ̀gɔduwa n [1] --> kɔ̀gɔduwa
wɔ̀jɔguloɔaawo n [1] --> kɔ̀jɔguloɔaawo
wɔ̀ni n [4] oiseau (*terme générique*) | bird (*generic term*) || L ɔ̀ni, wɔ̀ni; B ɔ̀ni
wɔ̀nilã(g) n --> wɔ̀nitã(g)
wɔ̀nitã(g) wɔ̀nilã(g) n [1a] nid (*d’oiseau*) | nest (*of bird*)
wu I npp [1] --> bu
wu II v [2] --> pu
wukpe n [2] --> gukpe
wukpɔɔ(g) n --> gukpɔɔ(g)
wule n [1] --> gule
wuli v --> guli
wuli(g) n [1a] --> kuli(g)
wuligulo n [1] --> kuligulo

wulo **n** [1] --> gulo I
wulu **n** [1] --> gulu
wulubu **n** --> guluɓu
wululowo **n** --> gululowo
wuluwã(g) **n** [1] --> guluwa(g)
wuluyaya **n** --> guluyaya
wupu **n** [2] --> pupu
wutulosu **n** --> gutulosu
wuvele **n** [2] --> buvele
wuwe **v** [2] --> buwe
wuya I **v** [2] --> guya
wuya II **n** [1] --> kuya I
wuya III **n** [2] --> kuya II
wuyaliiwa **n** [2] --> kuyaliiwa
wuye **n** [1] --> guye
wuzey(g) **v** [2] --> buzey(g)
wũba **n** [1] --> gũba
wũdamabõji **n** [1] --> gũdamabõji
wũdebokoti **n** --> gũdebokoti
wũdi **n** [1] --> pũdi
wũdiyi **n** [1] --> kũdiyi
wũ(g) **n** [1] --> gũ(g)

W - Ẃ

Ẃa **pp** [1] --> ma II
Ẃaaba**kpa v** [1] --> maabakpa
Ẃaabe**yã(g) v** [2] --> maabeyã(g)
Ẃaaba**ulu v** [2] --> maabulu
Ẃaabe**v v** [2] --> maave
Ẃaabe**yili v** --> maayili
Ẃaabe**lele v** [2] --> maalele
Ẃaabe**love v** [2] --> maalove
Ẃaabe**lovi v** [2] --> maalovi
Ẃaabe**love v** [1] --> maalove
Ẃaabe**ɔwɔ v** [2] --> maanɔwɔ
Ẃaabe**vèlè(g) npp** --> máávèlè(g)
Ẃaabe**le v** [2] --> maavele
Ẃaabe**vila v** [2] --> maavila
Ẃaabe**wolódo v** --> kolódo
Ẃaabe**wote v** [2] --> maawote
Ẃaabe**wasa v** --> maaŵasa
Ẃaabe**yili v** --> maayili
Ẃaabe**zolo v** [2] --> maazolo
Ẃaabe**zuvele n** [2] --> maazuvele
Ẃaabe**zuvũde v** [2] --> maazuvũde
Ẃake **v** [1] --> make
Ẃaku **v** --> maku
Ẃanẽ **v** [2] --> manẽ
Ẃasa **v** --> masa
Ẃasa(g) **n** [1a] --> masa(g)

ŵasakoole n --> masakoole
ŵaye v --> maye
ŵàyfóló(g) num --> màyfóló(g)
ŵādalasa n [1] --> mādalasa
ŵāde(g) n [4] malinké | Malinke (*ethnonym*)
ŵāgasa n --> māgasa
ŵeyā(g) n [1a] --> meyā(g)
ŵeyākite n --> meyākite
ŵē(g) n [1a] --> mē(g)
ŵe v [2] **1** vi rencontrer (*qn., qch. - gā*) meet (*smb., smth. - gā*) **2** vi croiser (*qch. - gā*) cross (*smth. - gā*) **3** vt joindre | link (*together*) : *Kpóbébélayiti té péléy ŵégò* ‘The workers linked the roads together’
ŵelemele n --> melemele
ŵenemene n --> melemele
ŵeni v [2] --> meni
ŵē v [1] --> mē
ŵine n [1] --> mine
ŵita n [2] --> mita
ŵɔɔ I v --> mɔɔ I
ŵɔɔni(g) I v [2] --> mɔɔni(g) I
ŵɔɔni(g) II v [2] --> mɔɔni(g) II
ŵɔɔni(g) III n [2] --> mɔɔni(g) III
ŵɔ v [1] --> mɔ I
ŵuli n --> muli
ŵuyaŵo n [1] --> muyaŵo
ŵuyā v --> muyā
ŵuye n --> muye
ŵuyevele n [1] --> muyevele

Y - y

-y mrph *marque déterminative* | *NP definiteness marker* || L -i; B -i
ya I n [1] **1** paume | palm **2** main | hand || L ziye, zia
ya II pp [1] **1** sur | on, upon : *Kóláyiti tátá wè fólòy yà* ‘The clothes are drying in the sun’ **2** à (*en possession*) | at (*smb property*) : *Kólá vā dàylò nè-kééyè yà* ‘My father has nice clothes’
ya III n [2] --> ja
ya IV pred *marque habituelle* | *habitual verb marker* : *É yà bóyígiti zúgúlá gā pā dā* ‘He tells stories well’
ya V pred *marque conjointe* | *conjoint verb marker* : *Nā gázìyà gè yá gúlèy lò* ‘I am walking and singing’
ya VI pred [1] *marque personnelle du 2sg. (sér. irréelle et prohibitive)* | *2sg. PPM (irrealis and prohibitive series)* tu | you
ya VII pred [2] *marque personnelle du 2sg. (sér. imperfective)* | *2sg. PPM (imperfective series)* tu | you
ya VII pron [1] *pronom personnel du 2sg. (sér. focalisée)* | *2sg. personal pronoun (focalised series)* toi | you
yababa n [5] --> jababa
yabela n [1] --> jabela
yabibi n [5] --> jabibi
yabili n [1] --> jabili
yálà pp sans | without
yalodama n --> jalodama

ÿ - ÿ

ŷaale **n** [2] --> ɲaale
 ŷaani **v** [1] --> ɲaani
 ŷaŋa **n** [2] --> ɲaŋa
 ŷāde **v** --> ɲāde
 ŷāge **v** --> ɲāge
 ŷe **n** [1] --> ɲe
 ŷele **v** --> ɲele
 ŷi **v** --> ɲi
 ŷifo **v** [2] --> ɲifo
 ŷikeye **v** --> ɲikeye
 ŷiya(g) **v** --> ɲiya(g)
 ŷiyaɲiya(g) **v** --> ɲiyaɲiya(g)
 ŷī I **n** [2] --> ɲī I
 ŷī II **v** [2] --> ɲī II
 ŷīya **n** [2] --> ɲīya
 ŷɔkpɔ **n** [2] --> ɲɔkpɔ
 ŷɔ **v** [1] --> ɲɔ
 ŷɔɔ(g) **n** [2] --> ɲɔɔ(g)
 ŷuŋã **v** --> ɲuŋã
 ŷē **v** [1] --> mē

Z - z

za I **adv** [1] aujourd'hui | today || L zaa; B háa
 za II **n** [2] --> sa I
 za III **v** [2] --> sa II
 zabo **n** [2] --> sabo
 zaɓa **n** [2] --> saba
 zaɓalaya **n** [1] --> saɓalaya
 zaɓe **n** [2] lièvre, lapin | hare, rabbit || L zaɓe
 zaɣa **v** [1] --> saɣa
 zaɣa(g) **v** [1a] --> saɣa(g)
 zaɣila(g) **n** [1a] --> saɣila(g)
 zakɔ I **n** [1] --> sakɔ I
 zakɔ II **n** [1] --> sakɔ II
 zakpa **n** [1] --> sakpa
 zakpa(g) **n** [1a] --> sakpa(g)
 zakpala(g) **n** [2] --> sakpala(g)
 zakpe(g) **n** [1a] --> sakpe(g)
 zala I **n** [1] --> sala I
 zala II **v** --> sala II
 zala III **n** [2] lion | lion || L zála; B njala
 zalaya **n** [2] sacrifice | sacrifice || L záláyá
 zali **n** [1] --> sali
 zama(g) **n** --> sama(g)
 zamakolo(g) **n** [2] --> samakolo(g)
 zani **n** [1] agouti | agouti (*species of cane rat*)
 zanu(g) **n** [4] or | gold || L zanu(g)
 zape **n** [2] --> sape

- zasa n** [2] --> sasa
zavala(g) n [1a] --> savala(g)
zawaza adv [1] jusqu'à présent | still, until now : *Zawaza a la ne vaani* 'He still has not come'
zawu n [3] raison, cause | reason, cause || M sábu
zaŋa n [2] --> saŋa
zaŋõnu(g) n [2] --> saŋõnu(g)
zazagulo n [1] civette | civette
zāba(g) n [1a] --> sāba(g)
zādetowolo n [1] ficus | ficus
zātini(g) n [1a] --> sātini(g)
zeebe n [2] --> seebe
zeela n [1] sibling du sexe opposé | sibling of opposite sex || L bazile, bazela, siyela
zele n [1] --> sele
zeŋa I n [2] --> seŋa I
zeŋa II v [2] --> seŋa II
zeŋala I n [2] --> seŋala I
zeŋala II v [2] --> seŋala II
zey(g) v [2] --> sey(g)
zeynowo n [1] --> seynowo
zēgaazu n [1] --> sēgaazu
zebasema n [2] --> sebasema
zeeli v 1 vi arriver | arrive **2** vi revenir | return : *Kpīdiy zeeliya* 'The night has come'
zeyɛ I n [1] --> seyɛ I
zeyɛ II v --> seyɛ II
zeka(g) n [1a] --> seka(g)
zele v --> sele
zelebeti n [1] --> selebeti
Zelekpele n N'Zérékoré (*toponyme*) | N'Zérékoré (*toponym*)
zeve I n [1] --> seve I
zeve II v [1] --> seve II
zevebaku n [1] --> sevebaku
zēdiili n [5] --> sēdiili
zēge n [2] --> sēge
zi I n sorte | kind, variety : *Dé gúlú zì wà sî?* 'What kind of tree is this?' || L zi
zi II v vi être différent | be various
zi III v --> si II
ziɓo n [2] insecte (*esp.*) | insect (*sp.*)
ziga n [1] --> siga
ziya v --> siya
ziyi(g) n [1a] --> siyi(g)
ziko v vi rugir | growl
zile v [1] --> sile
zili v [1] --> sili
zilipoŋo n [1] --> silipoŋo
ziolo zivalo, ziyolo n [4] zialo | Zialo (*ethnonym*)
zipõ n [3] robe | dress (*European style*)
ziya(g) I v --> siya(g) I
ziya(g) II v [2] --> siya(g) II
ziyalo n --> ziolo
ziyavele n [2] --> siyavele

ziyědo n [1] --> siyědo
ziyě(g) n [2] --> siyě(g)
ziyěmɔɔni(g) v [2] --> siyěmɔɔni(g)
zizigulo n --> sizigulo
zīgo n [2] araignée | spider (*generic*) || L zègo ‘chameleon’
zīgolēde n toile (*d’araignée*) | web (*of a spider*)
zo I pron [2] **1** l’un | one of the two **2** certain | certain || L zo ‘another’
zo II n [1] --> so
zokɛ n [2] --> soke
zokezina n [1] grenouille | frog
zoko(g) n [4] coin | corner
zokpa n [1] --> sokpa
zokpalowa n [1] --> sokpalowa
zolo v --> solo
zoo v [2] --> soo
zoolo(g) n [1a] --> soolo(g)
zota n [2] --> sota
zota(g) n [1a] --> sota(g)
zovaale(g) n [1a] --> sovaale(g)
zowo n [4] féticheur | fetisheer (*traditional*)
zoŵã v [1] --> soŵã
zōbo n [1] --> sōbo
zōwo n [1] --> sōwo
zɔle(g) v --> sole(g)
zɔlɔ v [2] --> soɔlɔ
zɔɔwɔ n [2] --> soɔwɔ
zɔwɔ n [1] --> sowɔ
zu I v *vi* jouer | play
zu II pp [1] --> su
zuba v [1] --> suba
zugula(g) I n [2] --> sugula(g) I
zugula(g) II v [2] --> sugula(g) II
zuyɛ v --> suyɛ
zulubu n [6] hyène | hyena || M suluku; L zulubu; B sulúbu ‘tiger’
zulu(g) I v --> sulu(g) I
zulu(g) II n [1a] --> sulu(g) II
zupu v --> supu
zuti v --> suti
zuwa n [2] --> suwa
zuwe(g) v [1a] --> suwe(g)
zuwooza v [2] --> suwooza II
zuwɔwɔ v --> suwɔwɔ
zùyáká adj --> sùyáká

Contents

0. Introduction	3
a. Subject and purpose	3
b. Structure.....	3
c. Transcriptional conventions.....	4
d. Acknowledgements.....	4
1. The South-West Mande languages	5
1.1. Mende	6
1.2. Loko.....	6
1.3. Bandi.....	7
1.4. Kpelle	7
1.5. Looma.....	8
1.6. Comparative research	9
2. The Zialo people	11
2.1. Location and population	11
2.2. Culture	11
2.3. Self-identification and prehistoric migrations	14
2.4. Neighbours and contacts.....	14
3. The Zialo language	16
3.1. Data sources.....	16
3.2. Earlier mentionings and affiliation hypotheses.....	16
3.3. Dialects	17
4. Phonetics and phonology	19
4.1. Metric foot and syllable structure	19
4.2. Root structure.....	20
4.3. Vowels.....	20
4.3.1. Short vowels	21
4.3.2. Long vowels	21
4.3.3. Nasal vowels.....	22
4.3.4. Nasal vowels before voiced obstruents.....	23
4.3.5. Vowel sequences	24
4.3.6. Vowel reduction	24
4.3.7. Vowel length variation.....	25
4.3.8. Vowel assimilation	25
4.4. Consonants.....	26
4.4.1. Explosives	26
4.4.2. Implosive.....	28
4.4.3. Fricatives	29
4.4.4. Affricate	31
4.4.5. Nasals	31
4.4.6. Approximants	31
4.4.7. Lateral	32
4.4.8. Consonant clusters.....	32
4.5. Consonant assimilations	33
4.5.1. Nasalisation of the liquid	33
4.5.2. Spirantisation.....	33
4.5.3. Intervocal elision	33
4.6. Phonetic correspondences between Zialo, Looma and Bandi	33
4.7. Tonal system.....	34

4.7.1.	Introduction and terms	34
4.7.2.	Basic tone rules.....	35
4.7.3.	Tone and stress	38
5.	Morphonology	39
5.1.	Morpheme / word phonological structure	39
5.2.	Phonological opposition of morphological categories	39
5.3.	Initial consonant alternations	39
5.3.1.	General phonological rules.....	39
5.3.2.	Syntactic positions	43
5.3.3.	Irregularities	44
5.3.4.	Bound morpheme alternations.....	45
6.	Nominal system	46
6.1.	Root structures	46
6.2.	Morphological categories and classifications	46
6.3.	Tone classes	48
6.4.	Morphological marking	52
6.5.	Syntactic positions.....	52
6.6.	Noun phrase structure.....	53
6.6.1.	Full NP	53
6.6.1.1.	adjective.....	53
6.6.1.2.	numeral	54
6.6.1.3.	other noun / NP	54
6.6.1.4.	verbal noun / participle	54
6.6.2.	Pronoun phrase	54
6.6.3.	Vocative NP	55
6.6.4.	Coordinative group	55
6.6.4.1.	juxtaposition.....	55
6.6.4.2.	conjunction ðð / yðð.....	55
6.6.4.3.	conjunction tá.....	56
6.6.4.4.	conjunction nãbð wà.....	57
6.6.4.5.	disjunction.....	57
6.7.	Referentiality.....	58
6.8.	Determination	58
6.9.	Plurality	59
6.9.1.	General remarks.....	59
6.9.2.	Definite plurality marker -ti(g).....	60
6.9.3.	Associative plurality marker -ni(g).....	60
6.9.4.	Indefinite plural affix -gà / -yà / -wà.....	61
6.9.5.	Relative plural affix -wà / -gà.....	62
6.9.6.	Agentive plural affix -bela	63
6.9.7.	Non-referential (generic) plural.....	63
6.9.8.	Collective pluralia tantum nouns	63
6.10.	Possession	63
6.10.1.	Genitive syntagma.....	63
6.10.2.	Pronominal alienable possession	64
6.10.3.	Pronominal inalienable possession.....	64
6.10.4.	Possessive word dá.....	65
6.11.	Word formation	65
6.11.1.	Syntactic derivation (conversion)	65
6.11.2.	Reduplication	66

6.11.3.	Affixation.....	67
6.11.3.1.	abstract suffix -fá.....	67
6.11.3.2.	locative suffix -dà.....	67
6.11.3.3.	substantivising prefix gè-.....	67
6.11.4.	Compounding.....	68
6.12.	Adjectives.....	69
6.12.1.	Morphological and syntactic criteria.....	69
6.12.2.	Syntactic positions.....	70
6.12.3.	Morphology.....	70
6.13.	Quantifiers.....	71
6.13.1.	Cardinal numerals.....	71
6.13.2.	Ordinal numerals.....	73
6.13.3.	Distributive numerals.....	74
6.14.	Determinatives.....	74
6.14.1.	Quantificational determinatives.....	74
6.14.2.	Demonstratives.....	75
6.14.2.1.	deictic pronouns.....	75
6.14.2.2.	anaphoric / cataphoric pronouns.....	78
6.14.2.3.	deictic nouns.....	78
6.14.2.4.	deictic adverbs.....	79
6.14.2.5.	intensifiers.....	80
6.15.	Discourse function markers.....	80
6.15.1.	Focus marker ya.....	80
6.15.2.	Topic marker bá.....	81
6.15.3.	Topic marker dòbá.....	81
6.15.4.	Emphatic morpheme gélé.....	81
6.16.	Postpositives.....	81
6.16.1.	General remarks.....	81
6.16.2.	Postpositive nouns.....	83
6.16.3.	Postpositions.....	87
6.17.	Prepositions.....	90
7.	Pronominal system	93
7.1.	Personal pronouns.....	93
7.1.1.	General remarks.....	93
7.1.2.	Focalised series.....	95
7.1.3.	Emphatic series.....	98
7.1.4.	Comitative series.....	98
7.1.5.	Contracted series.....	99
7.2.	Non-personal pronouns.....	99
7.2.1.	Reflexive / reciprocal pronoun bɔ̀yɔ̀.....	99
7.2.2.	Interrogative pronouns.....	101
8.	Verbal system	105
8.1.	General remarks.....	105
8.2.	Syllabic structures.....	105
8.3.	Tone classes.....	106
8.4.	Verb classifications.....	107
8.4.1.	Actional type and lexical aspect.....	107
8.4.2.	Transitivity.....	108
8.5.	Morphological categories.....	108
8.6.	Morphological markers.....	110

8.6.1.	Auxiliary verbs	110
8.6.2.	Clitics	111
8.6.3.	Affixes.....	112
8.7.	Argument structure of the clause	113
8.8.	Conjugation.....	116
8.8.1.	Dynamic verbs.....	116
8.8.1.1.	basic series	118
8.8.1.2.	dependent	122
8.8.1.3.	irrealis	123
8.8.1.4.	conditional	126
8.8.1.5.	imperative	127
8.8.1.6.	prohibitive.....	127
8.8.1.7.	prospective negative	128
8.8.1.8.	conditional negative	129
8.8.1.9.	imperfective	129
8.8.2.	Statal verbs	131
8.9.	Diathesis and actant derivation	133
8.9.1.	Passive.....	134
8.9.2.	Causative	135
8.9.3.	Decausative	136
8.10.	Word formation	137
8.10.1.	Reduplication	137
8.10.2.	Prefixation.....	137
8.10.3.	Compounding.....	140
8.11.	Nominalisation	141
8.11.1.	Basic verbal noun	141
8.11.2.	Verbal noun / participle in -go	143
8.11.3.	Verbal noun in -fa	144
8.11.4.	Supine in -ma	144
8.11.5.	Process noun in -pélé.....	144
8.11.6.	Agentive noun in -mo / -bela	145
8.11.7.	Agentive noun in -ɲání	145
8.12.	Clause types.....	145
8.12.1.	Negation.....	145
8.12.2.	Serialisation	146
8.12.3.	Impersonal clauses	147
8.12.4.	Existential clauses	148
8.12.4.1.	zero-predicate existential constructions	148
8.12.4.2.	existential verb ké	149
8.12.4.3.	copula bà.....	150
8.12.4.4.	affirmative copula tɔ	150
8.12.4.5.	negative copula ta	151
8.12.4.6.	existential verb le	152
8.12.5.	Adverbs and intensifiers.....	153
9.	Sentence-level syntax.....	155
9.1.	Non-clause sentential actants.....	155
9.2.	Clause sentential actants.....	156
9.2.1.	Juxtaposed and conjoined clauses	156
9.2.1.1.	conjunctive.....	156
9.2.1.2.	disjunctive.....	157

9.2.1.3.	contrastive.....	158
9.2.2.	Relative clauses	159
9.2.3.	Reported speech and quotative indexes.....	160
9.2.4.	Adverbial clauses.....	162
9.2.4.1.	condition	162
9.2.4.2.	time	163
9.2.4.3.	concession.....	164
9.2.4.4.	purpose.....	165
9.2.4.5.	cause	165
9.2.4.6.	replacement.....	166
9.3.	Interrogative sentences	166
9.4.	Epistemic modality indicators.....	166
9.5.	Phrasal idioms.....	167
Abbreviations		169
Literature		171
Appendix 1. 100-item Swadesh List for Zialo		179
Appendix 2. Text samples		183
Appendix 3. Zialo - English / French Vocabulary		193
	General observations.....	193
	Vocabulary structure and technical notes.....	193