

Aspects of the Grammar and Lexicon of Sɛlɛ

Yvonne Agbetsoamedo



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*luwonye kafu Yehowa,
eye nusianu siwo le menye la,
mikafu efe ηko kəkœ la,
luwonye kafu Yehowa,
eye meganlo efe nyuiwɔwɔwó
katã be o.*

Psalm 103:1-2

Abstract

This thesis is a description of some aspects of the grammar of Selee, a Ghana-Togo-Mountain (GTM) language, based on my own fieldwork. The thesis consists of an introduction and five papers.

Paper (I), *Noun classes in Selee*, describes the noun class system of Selee. It consists of eight noun class prefixes, four marking singular and four plural. They are paired in irregular ways to form eight genders (singular-plural pairs). Nouns agree with determiners, numerals and interrogative qualifiers within the noun phrase and can be indexed on the predicate. Nouns are allocated to classes/genders based partly on semantic notions.

Paper (II), *Selee* (with Francesca Di Garbo), details the morphological encoding of diminution in Selee either by the suffixes *-bi*, *-bii*, *-mii*, *-e* or *-nyi* alone or in combination with noun class shift. Augmentation is not expressed morphologically.

Paper (III), *The tense and aspect system of Selee: A preliminary analysis*, shows that Selee, unlike most Kwa languages, has a rather elaborate tense system encompassing present, hodiernal, pre-hodiernal and future tenses. The aspectual categories are progressive, habitual and perfect. Both categories often amalgamate with first person singular subject clitics.

Paper (IV), *Standard negation in Selee*, deals with the negation of declarative verbal main clauses. This is primarily encoded by a high tone, sometimes combined with segmental morphemes, portmanteau negative tense-aspect morphemes and vowel lengthening. Each tense-aspect category has at least one particular negation strategy.

Paper (V), *Unravelling temperature terms in Selee* (with Francesca Di Garbo), investigates the grammatical constructions employed for temperature evaluations. Personal feeling is only encoded via subjects, while ambient and tactile evaluations are construed attributively and predicatively.

A comparison of Selee and other GTM languages revealed similar noun morphologies but very different verbal morphologies.

Contents

Acknowledgements.....	iii
Foreword.....	vii
List of papers	viii
Abbreviation	ix
Map 1: Ghanaian language families	x
Introduction.....	1
1.1 The Baleɛ	2
Map 2: Location of Seleɛ speakers within Ghana	3
1.2 Language classification.....	4
Map 3: Distribution of GTM languages.....	5
1.3 Previous studies on Seleɛ	7
1.4 The scope of the present study.....	7
1.5 Methodology and data	8
2. Typological overview	10
2.1 Phonology.....	10
2.1.1 Consonants.....	10
2.1.2 Vowels	12
2.1.3 Vowel harmony	13
2.1.4 Tones	14
2.1.5 Comparison of the vowel systems in some GTM languages	15
2.2. Morphology	18
2.3. Syntax	23
3. Summaries of the papers and comparison.....	28
3.1 Summary of paper I: <i>Noun classes in Seleɛ</i> and comparison with other GTM languages	29
(a) The individual noun classes	32
(b) The number of individual noun classes vs. the number of genders across the languages.....	34
(c) The genders/class that represent certain semantic types.....	43
3.2 Summary of paper II: <i>Seleɛ</i> (Evaluative morphology) with notes on Ewe and Akan.....	46

3.3 Summary of paper III: <i>The tense and aspect system of Selee: A preliminary analysis</i> and comparison with other Kwa languages	48
3.4 Summary of paper IV: <i>Standard negation in Selee</i> and comparison with other Kwa languages	50
3.5 Summary of paper V: <i>Unravelling temperature terms in Selee</i> and comparison with three Kwa languages: Ewe, Sekpele and Siya	55
4. Closing remarks	61
4.1 Assessment of the methodology	61
4.2 Future research.....	62
References:.....	63
APPENDIX A.....	68
The papers.....	72
Swedish summary	255

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If you have lived in Stockholm for a long enough time, you know how difficult it is to find shelter, most especially as a foreigner. In my case, I was blessed enough to meet a wonderful lady, Marjatta Sikström, whose house provided me a home for three and a half years. Marjatta, thank you for your friendship, the comfort you provided and for everything for all these years.

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er, resulting in the publication of two of the articles in this dissertation. Ben on the other hand selflessly taught me how to swim, and now I can swim like a fish!

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*kɔpɛ ye sefa, bilafe!!
akpe na mi katã!!
Thank you all!!*

Foreword

My thesis took several different forms over the period that I wrote it. I started out with the aim of describing the 'Tense, Aspect and Mood system of Sɛlɛɛ'. Along the way, I realized I needed to understand the basic syntax of the language and also learn about the forms that nouns, verbs and other word classes in the language take in isolation before I could go on to describe the tense and aspect system. My most difficult challenge was understanding my data, since I could not speak the language. In consultation with my supervisors, I decided to write a grammar of Sɛlɛɛ. In this pursuit, I started writing on certain topics concerning the grammar of Sɛlɛɛ and presenting my analyses at conferences and workshops. Soon, I realized I had spent so much time on the articles that I did not have sufficient time for writing the grammar! Once again, I consulted my supervisors, and we agreed on a compilation-based dissertation comprising the articles I had written.

There are certain discrepancies in the glosses used for certain tense and aspect categories. In all the articles besides the article on the tense and aspect system of Sɛlɛɛ, three glosses are used that are better glossed in the tense and aspect article: RP 'recent past' in papers I, II, IV and V is glossed as HOD 'hodiernal past' in paper III; DP 'distant past' in I, II, IV and V is glossed as PHOD 'pre-hodiernal' in III and PROG 'present progressive' in I, II, IV and V is glossed as PPROG in III. Two subject markers are also glossed differently in different articles. The subject marker 3PK 'third person known' was adapted from Harflett and Tate (1999a) and used in papers II and V but was later glossed as LSM 'lexical subject marker' in I, II and V. In addition, 3SG.NS 'third singular noun specific' was later analyzed as noun class markers that are co-indexed on the verb. However, they are described in papers I and III as AAM 'anaphoric agreement markers' but glossed in the examples as CLX, where X refers to the noun class.

List of papers

This thesis is based on the following papers:¹

I. Noun classes in Sɛlɛɛ (2014). *Journal of West African Languages*. Volume XLI. Number 1, page 95 - 124.

II. Sɛlɛɛ (together with Francesca Di Garbo). Forthcoming in N. Grandi and L. Körtvélyessy (eds.), *Edinburgh Handbook of Evaluative Morphology*. Edinburgh University Press.

III. The tense and aspect system of Sɛlɛɛ: A preliminary analysis. (under review).

IV. Standard negation in Sɛlɛɛ (in press). *Afrika und Übersee*.

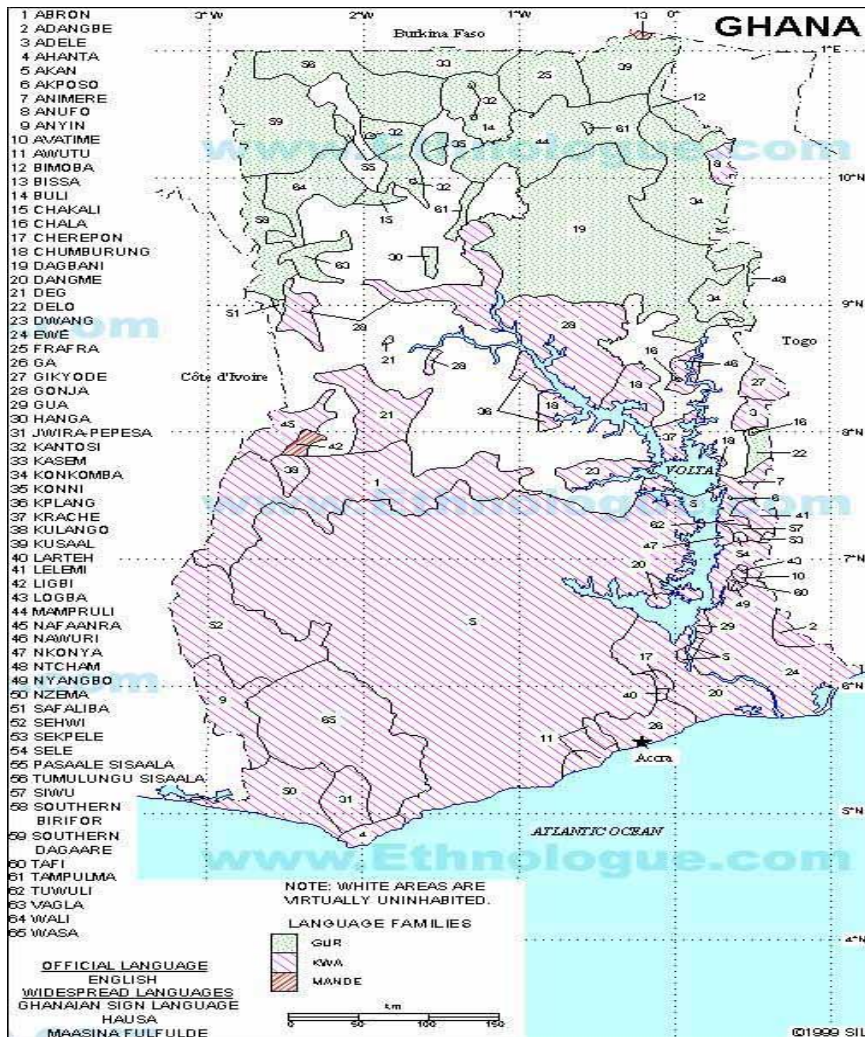
V. Unravelling temperature terms in Sɛlɛɛ (together with Francesca Di Garbo) (in press). In M. Koptjevskaja-Tamm (ed.), *Linguistics of Temperature*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

¹ The page numbers of the articles in the thesis may differ from the numbering in the articles and the book chapters.

Abbreviation

1	first person
2	second person
3	third person
ADJ	adjective
ADJR	adjectivizer
AGSUFF	agentive suffix
ATR	advanced tongue root
CL	class marker
DEF	definite marker
DET	determiner
DIM	diminutive suffix
FUT	future
GTM	Ghana-Togo-Mountains
HAB	habitual
HOD	hodiernal
IDEO	ideophone
INT	intensifier
LSM	lexical subject marker
NEG	negation
NP	noun phrase
PART	particle
PL	plural
POSS	possessive
PP	preposition
PPROG	present progressive
PREHOD	pre-hodiernal
PRF	perfect
QUANT	quantifier
SG	singular
SVO	subject verb object
TA	tense and aspect
TAM	tense, aspect and modality

Map 1: Ghanaian language families



Introduction

This thesis concerns the description of some grammatical features of Sɛlɛɛ (iso 639-3: snw), a Ghana-Togo Mountains (GTM) Kwa language of the Niger-Congo family. The speakers are known as the Balɛɛ, who live in the three towns, Benua, Bume and Gbodome of the Santrokofi area, in the Volta Region of Ghana. This thesis consists of an introduction and five articles. The introduction is divided into four sections. In section 1, I provide background information about the people who speak Sɛlɛɛ as well as some notes on methodology. Section 2 provides a typological overview of the language and compares a pair of phonological features found across languages of the area. In section 3, I provide a summary of the papers as well as a comparison of features found in Sɛlɛɛ and some selected GTM languages and also two non-GTM Kwa languages Ewe and Akan, where necessary. Some closing remarks are presented in section 4.

After the introduction, the five articles that comprise this thesis are presented. The first article, *Noun classes in Sɛlɛɛ* (I), and the second, *Sɛlɛɛ* (II), discuss noun morphology, emphasizing the types of inflectional as well as derivational morphemes a noun can take and how nouns in the language are assigned to the various noun classes. The third article, *The tense and aspect system of Sɛlɛɛ: A preliminary analysis* (III), and the fourth, *Standard negation in Sɛlɛɛ* (IV), discuss verb morphology in simple declarative main clauses. The papers discuss how verbal affixes are marked on three basic predicate types, namely, stative locative, stative non-locative and dynamic predicates. The papers also discuss the meanings that are derived when both affirmative and negative verbal affixes are used. The fifth paper, *Unravelling temperature terms in Sɛlɛɛ* (V), describes a specialized lexical domain. The paper discusses how three word classes - *verbs*, *nouns* and *adjectives* - are used predicatively and attributively to express temperature evaluations with the major domains of temperature evaluation and experience. All five papers combine to describe fundamental grammatical features of the language. Next to a number of shared features, their findings show certain features that are unique to Sɛlɛɛ in the context of its genealogically related neighbors.

In addition to Sɛlɛɛ, ten languages were selected for the comparative analysis: two non-GTM Kwa languages, Ewe and Akan, and eight GTM languages, namely, Sekpele, Siwu, Logba and Lelemi, which are NA-Togo languages, and Tafi, Tuwuli, Siya and Tutrugbu, which are KA-Togo languages. The selection of these languages was based on convenience because

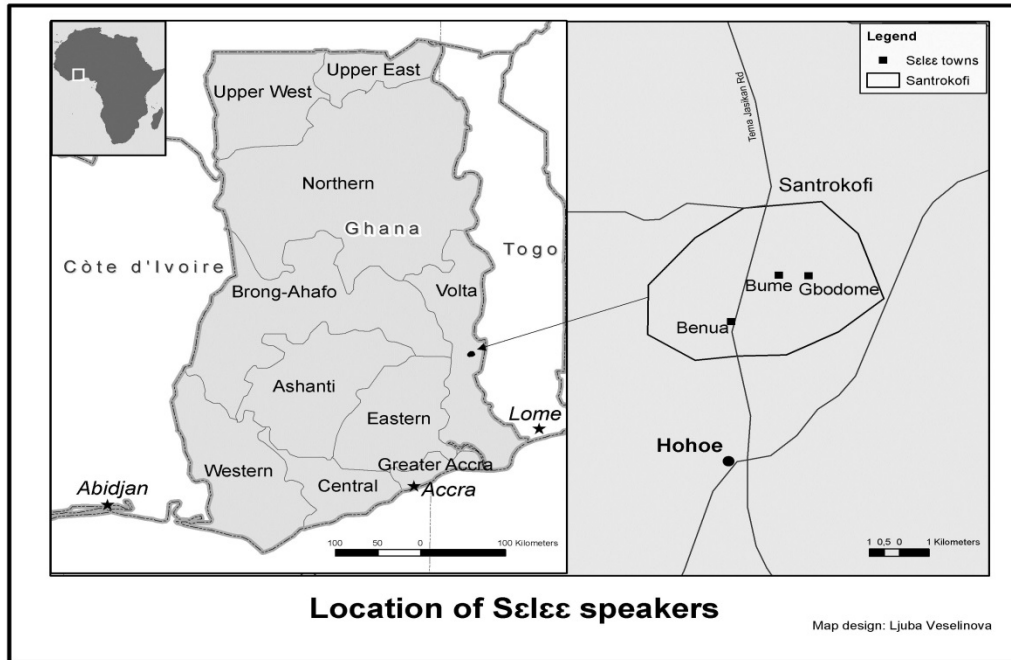
they are languages that have been more extensively documented or at least those whose documentation was more accessible to me. The materials used for the comparative work were grammars and research articles. There is an asymmetry in the comparative analyses due to lack of comparable scholarly work in other GTM languages. Notably, the comparative work on the noun class system is more elaborate than the work that formed the basis for the other articles. This is also partly due to the fact that the comparative work on the noun class system is an attempt at establishing a numbering system for the GTM noun classes, which is otherwise non-existent at the moment.

1.1 The Balɛɛ

The Balɛɛ are the speakers of Sɛɛɛ, the language under study. They live in the Santrokofi area in the Volta Region of Ghana, which is located five to seven miles north of Hohoe, the district capital. The population of the Balɛɛ as at 2000 was about 11,300 with a growth rate of 3.5%. The people are fairly distributed in three towns: Benua, Bume and Gbodome (see Map 2 below). The community is largely multilingual. The Balɛɛ mainly use Sɛɛɛ for communication in daily life. Ewe is their major second language and is used as a lingua franca. It is also the language of instruction at the basic level of education. Some Balɛɛ also speak Akan and English.

Historically, the Balɛɛ were iron workers, but they are currently occupied as subsistence farmers. They mainly cultivate rice and maize, even though they also grow other food crops and cocoa. The Balɛɛ are religious, with the majority being Christian, while others practice traditional African religions or Islam. Certain cultural practices were conducted by practitioners of traditional African religions but were later inherited by the local forms of Christianity. For instance, *bakafɔɔ*, which is the initiation into womanhood for girls, used to be performed at the shrine, but with the advent of Christianity, it is now typically performed in a church.

Map 2: Location of Sɛɛɛ speakers within Ghana



1.2 Language classification

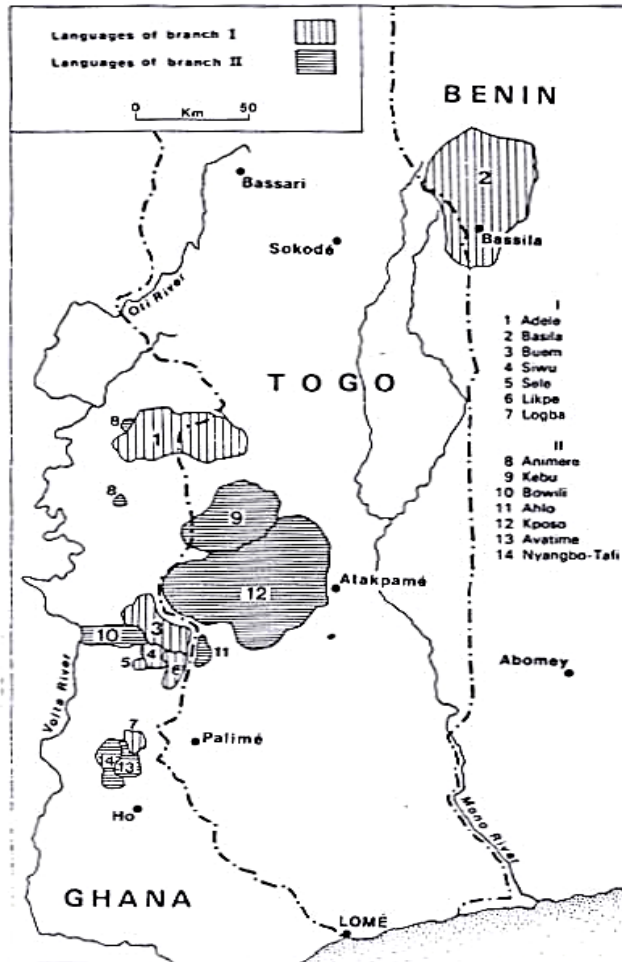
Seleɛ is a member of a group of languages spoken mainly in an area ranging from the central to the northern part of the Volta region of Ghana, along the Ghana-Togo mountain ridge and across to northern Benin. This group of languages is currently known as “Ghana-Togo-Mountain” (GTM) languages following Ring (1995) and Ameka (2002). This term is preferred because it more or less defines the geographical area where these languages are spoken, even though the Benin region is not included in the name. The genealogical classification of these languages is quite problematic. The GTM languages were referred to earlier as “Togorestsprachen” by Struck (1912). Westermann and Bryan (1952) consider them to be an isolated group that cannot be unequivocally identified with either Kwa or Bantu languages. They also referred to these languages as “Togo Remnant languages,” thus simply translating Struck’s terminology into English. This group was later called the “Central Togo languages” by Kropp Dakubu and Ford (1988).

Greenberg (1963) classifies the GTM languages as part of the Kwa subgroup B of the Niger-Congo family. Heine (1968a) sub-classified them into two groups, referred to as “KA” and “NA”, based on the word for ‘meat’ (see Map 3). For instance, the root for ‘meat’ in Seleɛ is *si-na*, and therefore Seleɛ belongs to the NA group. Stewart (1989) submits that the two groups belong to two different branches of Kwa: the KA belongs to the Left Bank branch, together with Gbe, which includes Ewe, and the NA group makes up what he calls the “Nyo branch.” Blench (2001) points out the difficulty in establishing the GTM languages as a group in relation to Kwa and suggests that these languages may be better seen as a mixture of single-branch languages and small clusters. Kropp Dakubu (2009), in turn, argues for a proto-GTM node for this group of languages. Figure 1 illustrates a family tree of Kwa, showing the position of GTM languages.

Seleɛ (Santrokofi),² spoken by the people of Santrokofi, is closely related to Siwu (Akpafu), Sɛkpele (Lipke) and Lelemi (Buem) (Stewart 1989), its sister languages in the NA group. The other members of the NA group are Logba (Ikpana), Basila (Anii) and Adele. The languages in the KA group are Animere, Kebu, Tuwuli (Bowili), Igo (Ahloe), Ikposo (Kposo), Siya (Avatime), Tafi (Tɛgbɔ) and Tutrugbu (Nyagbo). Even though Logba, for example, is geographically closer to Siya, Nyagbo and Tafi than its geographically closest NA sisters, it is grouped together with the NA languages based on Heine’s (1968a) classification.

² Alternative names of the languages appear in parentheses. Most of the alternative language names are also the names of the areas where the languages are spoken.

Map 3: Distribution of GTM languages



Distribution of the Central Togo Languages
 (Source: Bernd Heine, *Verbreitung und Gliederung der Togoestsprachen*
 Dietrich Reimer Verlag, Berlin, 1968)

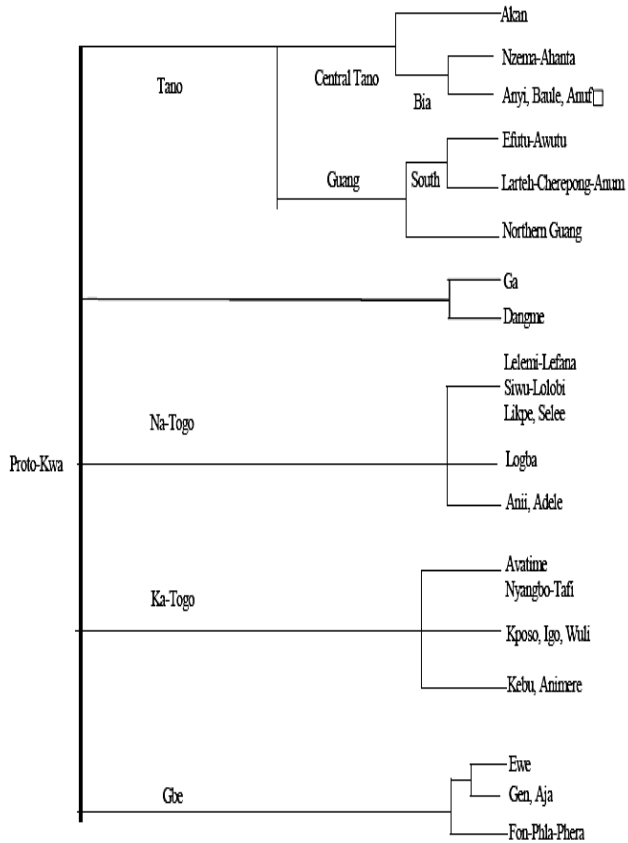


Figure 1: Recent classification of Kwa languages
(taken from Blench 2001)

1.3 Previous studies on Sɛlɛɛ

Previous work on Sɛlɛɛ can be divided into two categories. The first group involves researchers who mentioned Sɛlɛɛ in passing as constituting one of the fourteen GTM languages. This research group is not of interest here. The second group comprises researchers who did some work on Sɛlɛɛ to varying degrees.

The majority of scholars in the second group produced comparative work on the GTM languages, acknowledging the importance of treating them as a group of their own within the Niger-Congo family. Notable among these scholars are Heine (1968a, 2013); Williamson and Blench (2000); Blench (2001; 2009); Kropp Dakubu and Ford (1988); Ford (1973) and Ring (2000). Until April 2014, the only research work dedicated to Sɛlɛɛ that I knew about were by Allen (1974) and Harflett and Tate (1999a). In April 2014, I had the opportunity to access additional scholarly works on Sɛlɛɛ including Funke (1911), Maddieson and Gordon (1996) and Harflett and Tate (1999b), which was given to me by Mark Dingemans.

In ascending chronological order, Funke's (1911) 'Die Santrokofisprache' is the earliest descriptive work on Sɛlɛɛ. Funke provides a grammatical description of Sɛlɛɛ that focuses on the major word classes in the language. Allen's (1974) MA dissertation *Studies in the phonology of Sele - The language of Santrokofi* focuses mainly on the tonal system. She describes the tonal classes of verbs and nouns and how the tones change in context. Maddieson and Gordon (1996) provide some notes on the phonetics of Sɛlɛɛ with particular attention paid to the vowels. Harflett and Tate present a sketch of Sɛlɛɛ grammar (1999a) and some aspects of Sɛlɛɛ phonology (1999b).

1.4 The scope of the present study

The present study provides the first detailed analyses on several chosen aspects of the grammar of Sɛlɛɛ. These include (1) standard negation in Sɛlɛɛ, (2) evaluative morphology in Sɛlɛɛ, and (3) the expression of temperature evaluation in Sɛlɛɛ. It also describes more elaborately certain topics concerning the grammar of Sɛlɛɛ that have been previously investigated, which include "noun classes in Sɛlɛɛ" and "Tense and aspect system of Sɛlɛɛ." As previous works discussed a great deal of Sɛlɛɛ phonology, the current study only briefly mentions some aspects of Sɛlɛɛ phonology that are salient for

the understanding of the examples presented. None of the articles comprising this thesis are based only on phonology, and therefore a comparative analysis of the phonology of the GTM languages is presented in section 2.1, whereas others are presented in section 3.

1.5 Methodology and data

In 2008, I attended a workshop on GTM languages that was held in Ho, where I met a native speaker of Sɛlɛɛ, Mr. Albert Ofori, and discussed my interest in doing research on his language. The first contact was cordial and positive and led to my first visit to Santrokofi to meet Albert. The first time we (my husband and I) visited the town, Albert was not in the Santrokofi area, but we met a friend of my husband's friend, Mr. Fred Kanyente, who introduced us to Mr. Franklin Togah. Without any hesitation, Franklin agreed to assist in my research. Due to the nature of his work, Fred was not able to involve himself in the research as much as he would have liked to, but occasionally, when our visits to the village coincided, he would make time to give some input. After that first visit, Albert and Franklin became my main language consultants.

Albert is 61 years old and born in Gbodome. He works with the Ghana Institute of Linguistic, Literacy and Bible Translation (GILLBT) and the Volta Regional Multiple Project (VRMP). Albert was involved in the translation of the New Testament into Sɛlɛɛ. His role in my research was mainly transcribing audio recordings into Sɛlɛɛ. Franklin is 44 years old and hails from Benua. His knowledge of Sɛlɛɛ and of the culture and history of the Balɛɛ is very admirable. Some historical facts that are narrated by him are not common knowledge, even among certain elderly people in the Santrokofi area. I worked closely with Franklin, translating and annotating the texts transcribed by Albert. Both consultants speak English and Ewe; therefore, our working languages were both English and Ewe.

During my first three visits to the town, I did not live in the speech community but traveled the distance of about 26 km from Wli, my husband's hometown, in order to come to Santrokofi and meet my language consultants. However, on the final fieldtrip, I decided to live in Santrokofi and found accommodation at Maame Nkrumah's house, which is rented out to GILLBT/VRMP and run by Mr. Serchie. This enabled me to gain a much better understanding of the language than during the previous visits.

Data collection involved five months of fieldwork in Santrokofi, divided into a total of four fieldtrips. The first fieldtrip was from June 2010 to July 2010; the second was from December 2010 to February 2011. The third was

from May 2011 to July 2011, and the final trip, which was the longest, lasted two months, from December 2012 to March 2013.

My corpus comprises seven hours of transcribed audio recordings. The data consists of narratives of various sorts: folk stories, procedural texts, the pear story, and the narration of puberty rites among the Balɛ. I recorded two conversations, too, but both are entirely about football - the 2012 African Cup of Nations (CAN 2012) and the 2010 FIFA world cup - and are thus fairly skewed. The corpus also contains a Bible translation from the book of Acts, chapter 1, and Matthew 20. Different questionnaires were also used in the data collection process. The questionnaires used were a TMA questionnaire (Dahl 1985); a questionnaire on temperature evaluation (Koptjevskaja-Tamm 2007); two questionnaires on negation by Bond (2006) and Veselino-va (2007) and a picture questionnaire for eliciting spatial relations compiled by Bernhard Wälchli.

Some of the questionnaires were adapted to the nature of the area and depended on the responses the informants provided. For example, the temperature questionnaire was used in the form of a focus group discussion instead of asking informants how to say this or that. This was necessitated by the fact that speakers either gave the same answer to most of the questions or did not know what to say. The focus group discussion was held in Selee and moderated by Albert. For example, Albert would ask ‘What kind of water do you use to bathe your children?’ which in turn led to other related issues regarding temperature expressions associated with the use of water, etc. Speakers then took turns answering questions according to their experiences.

2. Typological overview

This section provides a brief overview of some salient features of Selee. The individual papers should be consulted for more information on the topics discussed in each paper.

2.1 Phonology

While some phonological information on Selee is provided in (I) and (V), as well as, rather briefly, in (IV), this section provides a somewhat more elaborate description of Selee phonology and also compares the system with other GTM languages.

2.1.1 Consonants

The inventory of consonants is given in table 1 below.

Table 1: Consonant phonemes in Selee

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Alveolar	Palato-Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Labio-velar
Plosive	p b		t			k	kp
Fricative		f	s				
Affricate				tʃ			
Nasal	m		n		ɲ	ŋ	
Lateral			l				
Approximant					j		w

Some of the consonants in the table above have a different orthographic representation. The sounds /tʃ/, /ɲ/, /ŋ/ and /j/ are written orthographically as

<ky>, <ny>, <nw> and <y>, respectively. An interesting characteristic of the consonant inventory is the presence of the voiced bilabial plosive /b/ despite the absence of the voiced counterparts of other voiceless phonemes.

Allen's (1974) analysis of the consonant inventory is very similar to mine, but it assesses the status of the Seɛɛ phones [d] and [l] differently. Allen holds that [l] is a variant of the phoneme /d/. Her line of reasoning is three-fold. Firstly, Allen states that her analysis allows for greater simplification at the systematic-phonemic level in that if there is an opposition between +/- voiced alveolar stops, fewer features will be required. Secondly, Allen holds that the simplification alluded to in the first point implies that phonetic rules will add features rather than subtract. Finally, Allen suggests that the lateral [l] probably derives historically from an underlying non-lateral voiced stop and that her analysis is able to reflect this fact.

My analysis, on the other hand, identifies /l/ as the phoneme and [d] as its allophonic variant. This is solely based on distribution and the environmental conditions for the realization of both sounds. A sound may be classified as a phoneme if it has a wider distribution compared to its variant, which has a predictable and restricted environment. [d] only occurs before high vowels, whereas /l/ occurs before all vowels except *u*.

Interestingly, in their article *Notes on the phonetics of Sele, with particular attention to vowels*, Maddieson and Gordon (1996) also suggest that the post-alveolar plosive /d/³ is a phoneme that occurs before high vowels /i, u/ but is realized as [l] before mid and low vowels. They argue in favor of the phoneme status of /d/ based on the fact that the noun class prefix /di-/ , a cognate of the proto-Bantu class 5 prefix *di or *li, occurs in environments with high vowels but is realized as [le-] or [lɛ-] in a non-high environment.

Even in some so-called restricted environments where /d/ occurs, some speakers do not think the environment is complementary but is instead free. Thus, for most speakers, the word for 'stone' and 'knee' are *di-fuwɔ* and *di-kunkyi*, respectively, and *li-fuwɔ* and *li-kunkyi* for others, where /l/ occurs before a high vowel. Yet again, the sound /d/ seems to be in free variation with the approximant /j/. For example, the negative perfect marker is known to some speakers as *di* and to others as *yi*. So for instance, the sentence *a-di-loo* 'he is not done yet' is the same as *a-yi-loo* for some other speakers (see paper I for more examples of words with /l/ and [d]). They do not make any distinction between them. However, one could argue that there is no dialectal variation per se given that there are no significant differences in the speech of the different speakers from the three towns of Santrokofi.

Comparing Seɛɛ consonant phonemes with those of other related GTM languages, it appears Seɛɛ has the least number of consonants, at 15, while languages such as Logba, Siwu, Tafi, Siya, Tuwuli and Nyagbo have conso-

³ Maddieson and Gordon did not include the voiced alveolar stop /d/ in their inventory, but rather, the post-alveolar stop /d/.

nant inventories ranging from at least 20 to 32, displaying the large number of consonants that is a prototypical Kwa feature. Sɛlɛɛ's closest neighbor Sɛkpɛlɛ is said to have about 18 consonant phonemes, which is still more than those of Sɛlɛɛ, whereas Tafi shows the maximum number of 32 consonant phonemes, partly because there are labializations that are in phonemic opposition. Sɛlɛɛ, on the other hand, does not have phonemic labialization. Sɛkpɛlɛ also presents some interesting dialectal variation with regard to its consonant inventory. Sekwa, a dialect of Sɛkpɛlɛ, uses voiced plosives in the contexts where the non-Sekwa dialects would use the voiceless counterparts (Tornu 2007, 50). Besides its limited number of consonant phonemes, Sɛlɛɛ has the unusual feature of having only one voiced stop, /b/, the counterpart of the voiceless bilabial stop. Interestingly, all the languages mentioned above have more voiced counterparts of all the stop consonants, but a few of them rather seem to lack the voiceless bilabial stop. In such languages, the voiceless bilabial stop is only found in loan words and ideophones. The consonants /b, t, k, f, s, m, n, ŋ, w, j/ are found in the inventories of all the GTM languages mentioned thus far. In a sense, the plosive inventory of Sɛlɛɛ looks like that of the non-Sekwa dialects and is a mirror of Sekwa.

2.1.2 Vowels

Sɛlɛɛ has seven oral vowel and two nasal vowel phonemes, as shown in figure 2 below.

Oral vowels		Nasal vowels	
i	u	ĩ	ũ
e	o		
ɛ	ɔ		
a			

Figure 2: Oral and nasalized vowels in Sɛlɛɛ

All seven oral vowels are phonemic, but only two out of the five nasalized vowels /ĩ/, /ũ/, /ã/, /ẽ/ and /õ/ are phonemic. The vowels /o/ and /e/ are never nasalized in the language because they never follow nasal consonants. The nasalized vowel /ĩ/ and /ũ/ are arguably the most frequent nasal vowels, occurring after oral consonants as well as nasal consonants. The vowels /ã/ and /ẽ/ are marginal. They are found in very few interjections and ideophones. In my corpus, there is only one occurrence of /ã/ in the word *kpã*. Due to the rare occurrence of this nasalized vowel in non-nasal contexts, one could

argue that it only holds phoneme status in loanwords. *kpã* may be a borrowing from Ewe *kpãkpã* ‘plenty,’ ‘many,’ as is *ɔfã* ‘half,’ the only word reported by Maddieson and Gordon (1996) to contain /ã/. /ẽ/ is only found in *ẽẽ* ‘yes’ and *ehẽe* (interjection). /ɔ̃/ is not attested in my corpus. Maddieson and Gordon mention that the word *obisɔ̃* can have a nasalized /ɔ/, but they add that not all speakers nasalize it. My suggestion is that the perceived nasalization might have been found in the context where the word *obisɔ* is followed by the definiteness marker *nwu*. Otherwise, speakers reject any nasalization when the word is produced in isolation.

Thus, there are two nasal vowel phonemes /ĩ/ and /ũ/ and three nasalized vowels [ã], [ẽ] and [ɔ̃]. All five can follow nasal consonants, but only the nasal vowels can follow oral consonants. (See APPENDIX A for examples of combinations of all consonants and vowels.)

Vowel length is phonemically distinctive in Selee. All vowels can be lengthened. Table 2 shows minimal pairs of contrastive vowel length.

Table 2: Vowel length contrast in Selee

Contrast	Short vowel	Long vowel
i/i:	<i>ni</i> ‘it, then’	<i>ni:</i> ‘tie’
u/u:	<i>bù</i> ‘think’	<i>bù:</i> ‘wet’
e/e:	<i>kpe</i> ‘to be’	<i>kpe:</i> ‘put into, impregnate’
o/o:	<i>lo</i> ‘kill’	<i>lo:</i> ‘finish’
ɛ/ɛ:	<i>sê</i> ‘fry’	<i>sê:</i> ‘to ripe’
ɔ/ɔ:	<i>yɔ̃</i> ‘pick up, marry’	<i>yɔ̃:</i> ‘soft, cool’
a/a:	<i>ɔ-la</i> ‘a branch’	<i>ɔ-la:</i> ‘matter’

2.1.3 Vowel harmony

Subject clitics, pronouns, noun class prefixes, agreement markers and tense-aspect markers are subject to vowel harmony with the vowel of the first syllable of the stem. The harmony involves the feature ATR (advanced tongue root). Thus, the first syllable of a root with a +ATR vowel will co-occur with prefixes with +ATR vowels, and conversely, the first syllable of a root with a -ATR vowel will co-occur with prefixes with -ATR vowels (see paper I for details).

2.1.4 Tones

Niger-Congo languages typically have two or three basic-level tones (see among others, Clements 2000; Welmers 1973; Williamson 1989), with a few languages, including some GTM languages, having four basic-level tones (Aboh and Essegbey 2010). According to Allen (1974, 111), Seleɛ has four distinctive phonetic tones: high (H), mid (M), low (L²) and extra low (L¹), and “there is no phonologically significant downstep or downdrift” (see Allen 1974, for an extensive discussion of tonal behavior in context). Lexical words in isolation may contain one, two or three of these tones but the possible sequences are restricted.

Tones are used in Seleɛ for lexical contrast, as illustrated by the sets of minimal pairs in (1), and also for grammatical function, as in (2) and (3) below.

(1)	<i>fè</i>	‘blow’	<i>fé</i>	‘where’
	<i>ɔ-sā</i>	‘husband’	<i>ɔ-sá</i>	‘towel’
	<i>ɔ̄-kà</i>	‘sister-in-law’	<i>ɔ̄-ká</i>	‘chief’
	<i>bè</i>	‘mature’	<i>bé</i>	‘what/which’
	<i>búú</i>	‘to rot’	<i>bùù</i>	‘be wet’
	<i>kùdù</i>	‘squat’	<i>kudú</i>	‘noise’

(2)	a.	<i>bùo-lòo</i>	b.	<i>búo-lóo</i>
		1PL.PREHOD-finish		1PL.NEG.PREHOD-finish
		‘We finished.’		‘We did not finish.’
		(before today)		(before today)

(3)	a.	<i>fāa-lòo</i>	b.	<i>fáá- lóo</i>
		2SG.HOD-finish		2SG.NEG.PREHOD-finish
		‘You (sg) finished.’		‘You (sg) did not finish.’
		(today)		(before today)

It is evident from the above examples that tones function in ways similar to grammatical morphemes in the language.

Currently, Sɛlɛɛ is the only language among the GTM languages known to me to have four tones. It would be interesting to find out if Sɛlɛɛ is unique among its neighbors in this respect or if there are other GTM languages that also have more than three non-derived tones.

2.1.5 Comparison of the vowel systems in some GTM languages

In addition to Sɛlɛɛ, I have selected seven GTM languages – Sɛkpele, Siwu, Logba, Tafi, Tuwuli, Siya and Tutrugb – and one non-GTM Kwa language – Ewe – based on accessibility for the purpose of this comparison. All nine languages have a symmetrical set of front and back vowels and a low central vowel /a/. As a result, many of them have a set of seven oral vowels. Two out of the eight languages (Tafi and Siya) have nine to ten vowels, which conforms to Blench’s (2001) GTM vowel inventory. This is quite interesting because the other five languages have phoneme inventories with seven vowels, similar to what is found in Ewe, a non-GTM Kwa language, which also corresponds to a typically Kwa phenomenon. Sɛkpele has eight, which is peculiar as it seems to be the only language with a schwa. It would be interesting to know about the vowel inventory in the remaining GTM languages to compare and see whether we can establish a GTM type vowel inventory and set them aside from other non-GTM Kwa languages or whether the GTM languages as a group conform to the Kwa prototypical vowel inventory of seven vowels. The historical argument is that there were a higher number of vowels and that the various languages lost them in different ways. Ford (1973) accounts for the reduction in the vowel inventory of the Western Kwa languages as result of the loss of the -ATR high vowels. A similar observation has been made in the case of Logba (Dorvlo 2008).

Sɛkpele is the only language in the sample that is reported to have ten vowel phonemes (Delalorm 2008). However, earlier works on its phonology by Tornu (2007), Ring (2000) and Heine (1968a) assume eight vowel phonemes in Sɛkpele. Delalorm (2008) includes the high, -ATR vowels /ɪ/ and /ʊ/, which the earlier works excluded.

Phonetic nasalization of a vowel in the environment of nasal consonants is a widespread phenomenon across languages and also in the GTM groups of languages except in Siya, where there is no current liable information on vowel nasalization. Defina (2009) points out the difficulty in establishing nasality in vowels because some speakers of Siya accept nasalization in certain contexts, while others reject it in the same contexts. In this respect, Schuh (1995) had mentioned 14 years earlier that phonological distinction

between nasalized vowels and their oral counterparts were disappearing in Siya, which was confirmed by Defina.

Generally, in the seven-vowel system languages in the sample (Sɛlɛɛ, Siwu, Logba, Tuwuli and Ewe), /e/ and /o/ are usually not nasalized, but in languages with greater than seven vowels, /e/ but not /o/ turns out to be nasalized in most cases, as shown for Tafi. In table 4,⁴ the half-close mid vowel /o/ seems to be the only vowel that is not nasalized across the languages in the sample. In languages where it is said to be nasalized, only one to five examples are provided to support the claim. In Ewe for instance, all seven vowels are nasalized; however, /õ/ is found in only very few words, such as *fõ* ‘sugar cane’ and *lõ* ‘to take something off the fire.’ Not all speakers of Ewe, however, accept the nasalization of the vowel in *lõ*. Speakers of the Peki dialect, for instance, lower the vowel and nasalize it so there is a nasal vowel stem lexically. Thus, *lõ* is *lõ̃* for Peki speakers.

What seems to be missing in the discussions on vowel nasalization is the distinction between phonologically nasalized vowels and phonetically nasalized vowels. As mentioned earlier for Sɛlɛɛ, only two of the former are attested. Important information that is again left out of the grammars or papers is whether or not vowel length is phonemic in the languages under study. Most authors who report on vowel length only mention syllable structure of the type CVV.

In view of the consonant and vowel inventories of the GTM languages as a group compared to other Kwa languages within the Kwa genus, there is no typological diversity between the GTM languages discussed here and Ewe, a non-GTM Kwa language, for example. Nonetheless, the diversity in the GTM languages lies in the details presented in the individual languages, where Tafi and Nyagbo, for instance, have three bilabial sounds with one being aspirated or breathy, an uncommon feature in most if not all other GTM languages.

⁴ Only phonetically nasalized vowels are provided in the table.

Table 3: Summary of vowel inventory and tone in eight GTM languages and Ewe

vowel description	Na-Togo				Ka-Togo				Non-GTM KWA
	Sɛlɛɛ	Sɛkɛɛle	Siwu	Logba	Tafi	Tuwuli	Siya	Tutrugbu	Ewe
no. of vowels	7 ORAL 5 NASAL	8 ORAL 7NASAL	7 ORAL 5 NASAL	7 ORAL 5 NASAL	9 ORAL 7 NASAL	7 ORAL 5 NASAL	9 ORAL 7NASAL	7 ORAL 5NASAL	7 ORAL 5 NASAL
oral	i e ɛ a ɔ o u	i e ɛ a ɔ o u ə	i e ɛ a ɔ o u	i e ɛ a ɔ o u	i i e ɛ a ɔ o u u	i e ɛ a ɔ o u	i i e ɛ a ɔ o u u	i e ɛ a ɔ o u	i e ɛ a ɔ o u
nasal-ized	ĩ ẽ ǎ ɔ̃ ũ	ĩ ẽ ẽ ǎ ɔ̃ ũ	ĩ ẽ ǎ ɔ̃ ũ	ĩ ẽ ǎ ɔ̃ ũ	ĩ ẽ ẽ ǎ ɔ̃ ũ ũ	ĩ ẽ ǎ ɔ̃ ũ	Z	ĩ ẽ ẽ ǎ ɔ̃ ũ	ĩ ẽ ǎ ɔ̃ ũ
long vowel ⁵	Y	Z	Z	Z	Y	N	Y	Z	N
tone	H, M, L, EL	H, M, L	EH, H, L	H, L	H, M, L	H, L, (F)	H, M, L	H, M, L (F), (R)	H, M, L

⁵ Y means vowel length is phonemic, N means it is not and Z means no information has been provided

2.2. Morphology

Selɛɛ has agglutinating morphology with some degree of fusion. It is predominantly prefixing with an identifiable amount of suffixation. Four major word classes - noun, verb, adjective and adverb - are identified. Nouns in isolation consist of a class marker and a stem. Verbs are inflected for person, number and TAM. Adjectives and adverbs are largely expressed by ideophones, which “are marked words that depict sensory imagery” (Dingemanse 2011, 133). Ideophones in Selɛɛ may function as adjectives (ideophonic adjectives), adverbs (ideophonic adverbs) and nouns (ideophone nouns).

Selɛɛ has eight morphological noun classes identified by the forms of their prefixes and of their concordial agreement, analogous to the Bantu noun class systems. The eight noun classes are paired in irregular ways to form eight genders, i.e., singular and plural pairs (see paper I on noun classes for more information). Table 4 shows the eight classes, their markers and examples of nouns that occur with the class prefixes.

Table 4: Noun classes with examples

Classes	class prefixes	Eg. of nouns	English gloss
CL1	o-/ɔ-/∅	<i>o-bi</i> <i>ɔ-sɔfɔ</i> <i>∅-bɛɛsi</i>	child wife plate
CL2	ba-	<i>ba-wewee</i>	dogs
CL3	ka-	<i>ka-nya</i>	mouth
CL4	si-/se-/sɛ-	<i>si-si</i> <i>se-le</i> <i>sɛ-tɔ</i>	yams language fires
CL5	di-/ni-/le-/lɛ-	<i>di-si</i> <i>ni-nu</i> <i>le-yo</i> <i>lɛ-fata</i>	head eye house leaf
CL6	n-	<i>n-tu</i>	water
CL7	ku-/ko-/kɔ-	<i>ku-kũ</i> <i>ko-fɛ</i> <i>kɔ-tɛ</i>	book farm sand
CL8	a-	<i>a-pipi</i>	sweat

Two groups of nominal suffixes have been identified in my corpus. One group includes the diminutive suffixes *-bi/bii*, *-mii*, *-e* and *-nyi* used in diminution, as in (4a - f).

- (4a) *o-sanko* *-bi* \longrightarrow *o-sankobi* ‘girl’
 CL1-woman -DIM CL1-girl
- (4b) *o-si* *-bii* \longrightarrow *di-sibii* ‘small yam’
 CL1-yam -DIM CL5-small yam
- (4c) *o-nwu* *-mii* \longrightarrow *ka-nwumii* ‘small nose’
 CL1-nose -DIM CL3-small nose
- (4d) *le-yo* *-e* \longrightarrow *ka-yoe* ‘hut/small house’
 CL5-house -DIM CL3-hut
- (4e) *o-ti* *-nyi* \longrightarrow *ka-tinyii* ‘tiny person’
 CL1-person -DIM CL3-tiny person
- (4f) *kɔ-nɛɛ* *-nyi* \longrightarrow *ka-nɛɛnyii* ‘tiny arm’
 CL7-arm -DIM CL3-tiny arm

The other group involves the agentive suffix *-te*, which is used for deriving agentive nouns from verbs (5a - c) and also as a VP compound consisting of a verb and a noun complement, which first undergoes permutation to yield a nominal stem before the agentive suffix is attached to it, as illustrated in (5d - f).

- (5a) *tikanko* + *te* \longrightarrow *ba-tikankote*
 follow AGSUFF followers
- (5b) *tuo* + *te* \longrightarrow *ba-tuote*
 show/teach AGSUFF ‘teachers’
- (5c) *bɔmbɔ* + *te* \longrightarrow *ba-bɔmbote*
 love AGSUFF ‘lovers’

Agentive nouns from VP compounds

- (5d) *toko* *tīi* + *te* \longrightarrow *ba-tokotīite*
 ear close AGSUFF ‘deaf people’

(5e) *bɔɔl* *pe* + *tɛ* → *ba-bɔɔlpete*
 CL1-ball play AGSUFF ‘footballers’

(5f) *a-saa* *tekete* + *tɛ* → *ba-saateketete*
 CL8-things learn AGSUFF ‘disciples’

These derived nominals are assigned to gender I, where the singular forms are prefixless, while the plural forms take the prefix *ba-*.

Certain finite verbs inflect for tense and/or aspect. Table 5 shows the morphemes that express the various tense-aspect categories (see paper III).

Table 5: TA markers for first and third person singular forms⁶

Category	person	TA markers
present stative	1	<i>le-/le-</i>
	3	<i>(a-) e-/ɛ-</i>
hodiernal past	1	<i>le-/le</i>
	3	<i>(a-) e-/ɛ-</i>
pre-hodiernal past	1	<i>la-</i>
	3	<i>(a-) a-</i>
perfect	1	<i>(n-) + tóò-/tɔ̀ɔ̀-</i>
	3	<i>(a-) + tóò-/tɔ̀ɔ̀-</i>
future	1	<i>ma-</i>
	3	<i>(a-) + ba-</i>
perfective	1	<i>le-/le-</i>
	3	<i>(a-) e-/ɛ-</i>
present progressive	1	<i>ko-/kɔ̀-</i>
	3	<i>o-/ɔ̀-</i>
hodiernal progressive	1	<i>le- + tòò-</i>
		<i>le + tɔ̀ɔ̀-</i>
	3	<i>(a-) e- + tòò-</i>
		<i>(a-) ɛ + tɔ̀ɔ̀ -</i>
pre-hodiernal progressive	1	<i>la- + tɔ̀ɔ̀-</i>
	3	<i>a- + tɔ̀ɔ̀-</i>
present habitual	1	<i>n-</i>
	3	<i>(a-) n-</i>
past habitual	1	<i>n- + tòò-/tɔ̀ɔ̀-</i>
	3	<i>(a-) n- + tòò-/t</i>

⁶ The second person singular and the plural forms behave in the same way as the third person singular.

Reduplication of verbs indicates an iterated action denoted by the verb stem. For example, the verb *budi* ‘to cut’ and *nyu* ‘to see’ may be partially or fully reduplicated as *bubudi* and *nyunyu* to form the verbs ‘chop’ or ‘to cut into smaller pieces’ and ‘look around,’ respectively. Dixon (2004, 1) suggests that a distinct word class ‘adjective’ can be recognized in most every human language, but their grammatical properties differ from language to language. Segerer (2008) acknowledges the difficulty in establishing a universal definition for the adjective class based on the fact that the class of words have different morphosyntactic properties in different languages. This group of words can be grouped into two classes: non-derived and derived. The non-derived adjectives can be further grouped into categories: primary adjectives and ideophonic adjectives.

In the GTM languages, non-derived primary adjectives tend to form a very small set varying from only one member, as in Logba, to three members, as in Tafi, and four members, as in Siwu. Selee has two non-derived primary members: *kplè* ‘big’ and *biene* ‘good.’ Adjectives may be derived from stative predicates by the suffixation of an adjectivizer *-le*. Thus, the notion ‘to be ripe/red’ can be expressed by the stative predicate *seè* both predicatively (6a) and attributively (6b).

(6a) *ku-kũ* *nwu* *le-seè*
 CL7-book DET LSM.HOD-be red
 ‘The book is red.’

(6b) *ku-kũ* *seè-le* *nwu*
 CL7-book be red-ADJR DET
 ‘the red book’

Adjectives may also be nominalized, in which case they are assigned a default class, which is class 5. In context, however, they may take the class prefix of the noun in reference.

Ideophonic adjectives form the bulk of property words within the adjectives class in Selee. They consist of stems with long vowels as well as stems with reduplicative structure, as shown in (7). It is, therefore, not surprising that all the property words that express temperature evaluation, as discussed in paper V, are all ideophonic adjectives.

(7) *púú* ‘protruding’
tìì ‘stife’
bùù ‘wet’
betebete ‘very soft’
nyenene ‘cold’
mbamba ‘salty’
pɔɔpɔɔ ‘smooth’

Ideophonic adjectives are equally used for adverbial purposes. However, there are very few ideophonic adverbs that are exclusively used as modifying verbs. Adjectives do not generally attract agreement markers, but demonstratives and numerals do agree with the head noun within an NP. However, two adjective lexemes are found to agree in number and gender with their head noun in an NP (see paper I for details).

2.3. Syntax

SVO is the most common word order pattern in the Niger-Congo language family (see among others, Heine 1976; Watters 2000; Welmers 1973). Selɛ is an SVO language with both subjects and objects unmarked for case. According to Creissels (2000, 233), “an overwhelming majority of Niger-Congo languages do not exhibit any marking distinguishing noun phrases in subject or object function.” Thus, grammatical relations are determined by constituent order supported by subject cross-referencing on the verb. There are two types of subject cross-referencing. One type includes markers that signal agreement with the subject with respect to gender/class. This type (glossed as CL) comprises noun class agreement markers that only signal long distance anaphora. The second type of subject cross-reference markers is neutralized with respect to the number value of the subject. This type, referred to as the Lexical Subject Marker (LSM), which is referred to as 3PK in papers II and V, immediately follows its antecedent. Their realization, which is similar to the first person singular subject pronominal clitic, depends on the tense and aspect (TA) inflection on the verb. Observe the occurrence of the CL in (8a), LSM in (8b) and the first person singular subject pronominal clitic in (8c).

- (8a) *si-sí* *nwu* *la-ya* *ni*
CL4-yam DET 1SG.PHOD-buy PART
si-laba-bùù
CL4-NEG.FUT-be rot
‘The yams I bought will not rot.’
- (8b) *si-si* *nwu* *le-kóso*
CL4-yam DET LSM.HOD-dry
‘The yams are dry.’
- (8c) *le-le* *a-lesaa* *ku* *o-lese* *wɔ*
1SG.HOD-eat CL8-food PP CL1-morning CL1
‘I ate this morning.’

The LSM and the CL subject cross-reference markers differ from the other subject pronominal clitics and the independent pronouns. Relative clauses are introduced by the relative pronoun *ni-*, which also neutralizes with respect to number.

- (9) *o-si nwu ni-e-kóso ni*
 CL1-yam DET LSM-HOD-dry PART
 ‘the yam which is dry...’

Verb serialization is commonly found in the Kwa and Gur languages of Niger-Congo. It involves the concatenation of two or more verbs sharing the same subject, but the verbs may take different objects. Sɛlɛɛ, just like most of its neighbors, also employs serial verb constructions (SVCs). In Ewe, for example, the subject in an SVC is expressed only once (see Agbedor 1994; Ameka 2006, among others). In Sɛlɛɛ, and also Sɛkpele (Ameka 2009, 244), the subject may be marked on all the verbs in a sequence by the subject pronominal clitics, as in (10).

- (10) *a-too-wola di-bi ɛ-ɛ-ka e-e-se*
 3SG- PRF- carve CL5-drum 3SG-HOD-fix 3SG-HOD-put
 ‘He has carved a drum and set it aside.’

In (10), the three verbs share the same object *dibi* ‘drum,’ but the subject is expressed on all the verbs.

Possessive structures fall into two categories: nominal possessive construction and predicative possessive constructions. In nominal possession, both alienable and inalienable constructions (see Ameka 2012; Claudi and Heine 1986; Nichols 1988) involve the juxtaposition of the possessed and the possessor. Pronominal possessors follow the possessed (11a) and (11b), while lexical possessors precede the possessed, as in (11c) and (11d).

- (11a) *le-yo nii le-muɔ*
 CL5-house 1SG.POSS LSM-be big
 ‘My house is big.’
- (11b) *ba-sa loo n-tɔɔ-wa*
 CL2-wife 3POSS LSM-PRF-come
 ‘Their wives have come.’
- (11c) *Ama a-wu le-fututu*
 Ama CL8-dress LSM-be white
 ‘Ama’s dress is white.’
- (11d) *Kofi o-te le-yo le-sɛɛ*
 Kofi CL1-father CL5-house LSM-be red
 ‘Kofi’s father’s house is red.’

In predicative possessive constructions, on the other hand, the possessor and the possessed are linked by the locative predicate *kpe* ‘be at.’ The order of the possessor and possessed is reversible, as illustrated in (12a) and (12b).

(12a) *Edikimi n-kpe le-yo*
 Edikimi LSM-be at CL5-house
 ‘Edikimi has a house.’

(12b) *le-yo n-kpe Edikimi*
 CL5-house LSM-be at Edikimi
 ‘Edikimi has a house.’

Negative predicative possessive constructions also exhibit similar structures, but in this case the possessor and the possessed are linked by the negative existential predicate *naa* ‘not exist.’ Consider (13a) and (13b).

(13a) *Ama n-naa babi*
 Ama LSM-not.exist CL2-child
 ‘Ama has no children.’

(13b) *ba-bi n-naa Ama*
 CL2-child LSM-not.exist Ama
 ‘Ama has no children.’

A simple declarative clause consists of a subject and a predicate that is preceded by a TAM marker and then followed by an object. Adjuncts and adverbials may precede or follow the main clause. Standard negation (negation of simple declarative verbal main clauses (see Payne 1985; Miestamo 2000; 2005)) is marked on the verb by negative TA markers that immediately precede the verb root. Each TA category has its own dedicated negation strategy. The negative forms of the affirmative sentences in (14) and (15) are given in (16) and (17), respectively.

(14) *Adzo ma-kpana ku-kũ*
 Adzo LSM.FUT-write CL7-book
 ‘Adzo will write a letter.’

(15) *a-a-ya baagi nwu kɔsɛ*
 3SG-PHOD-buy CL1.bag DEF yesterday
 ‘She bought the bag yesterday.’

(16) *Adzo nɔma-kpana ku-kũ*
 Adzo LSM.NEG.FUT-write CL7-book
 ‘Adzo did not write a letter.’

- (17) *a-ta-ya* *baagi* *nwu* *kɔsɛ*
 3SG-NEG.PHOD-buy CL1.bag DEF yesterday
 ‘She did not buy the bag yesterday.’

Noun modifiers follow their heads in a phrase. For example, the determiner and the adjective follow the head, as in (18) and (19).

- (18) *o-suɔtɔ* *nwu*
 CL1-man DEF
 ‘the man’

- (19) *o-suɔtɔ* *kaana-le*
 CL1-man be.tall-ADJR
 ‘a tall man’

In numerical quantification, however, the order of the head noun and the quantifier depends on the numerical value of the quantifier. The head noun may either precede a number or be sandwiched between the parts of a quantifier. The choice depends on the number value of the quantifier. Observe (20) to (22).

- (20) *ba-tii* *ba-tiɛ*
 CL2-person CL2-three
 ‘three people’

- (21) *lefosi* *ba-tii* *ba-tiɛ*
 ten CL2-person CL2-three
 ‘thirteen people’

- (22) *ba-tii* *a-fosi* *a-na* *ba-nɔɔ*
 CL2-person CL8-ten CL8-four CL2-five
 ‘forty-five people’

Numerals from one to ten agree with the head nouns that precede them, as in (20). Numerals from 11 to 19 behave differently in that the head noun is preceded by tens and then followed by the ones, as in (21). Numerals from 20 to 99 also behave differently in the sense that only the ones agree with the head noun, as shown in (22).

In a maximal NP structure, the head noun is followed by an ADJective, DETerminer/QUANTifier and INTensifier, as represented in the phrase structure below:

NP \longrightarrow N (ADJ) {(DET) (QUANT)} (INT)

An exponent of an NP phrase structure may yield the following in (23).

(23a) *ba-sanko kunkuru ba-nɔɔ ba-mle ko*
CL2-woman short CL2-five CL2-this INT
'only those five short women'

(23b) *ba-sanko kunkuru ba-mle ba-nɔɔ ko*
CL2-woman short CL2-this CL2-five INT
'only those five short women'

The order of the determiner and the quantifier is flexible. Speakers say that both (23a) and (23b) are possible. It appears that (23a) is the preferred order since it is always the first form given by informants before (23b) is added as another possibility.

3. Summaries of the papers and comparison

In section 3.1, I present a summary of paper I (Noun class system of Sɛlɛɛ) and a comparative work with other GTM languages. A summary of paper II (Sɛlɛɛ - diminution and augmentation) is given in §3.2 with notes on similar features comparing the language with Akan and Ewe, which are both non-GTM languages. Section 3.3 contains a summary of paper III (The tense and aspect system of Sɛlɛɛ) and also shows certain comparable features in tense and aspect categories with some GTM languages. I provide a summary of paper IV (Standard negation in Sɛlɛɛ) in §3.4 with a typology of negation in declarative main clauses across Kwa languages. Finally in §3.5, paper V (Unravelling temperature terms in Sɛlɛɛ) is summarized and compared with Sekpele, Siya and Ewe.

3.1 Summary of paper I: *Noun classes in Selee* and comparison with other GTM languages.

In paper I, I describe the noun class system of Selee. I show that there are eight morphological classes designated by a prefix to which nouns are assigned. These eight individual classes are referred to as noun classes. According to the Niger-Congo tradition, the individual noun classes are paired according to the type of number value that they convey. Thus, a noun class pair consists of one singular class and one plural class. I refer to the singular and plural pairings as *gender*. Coincidentally, there are eight genders: five frequent and three *inquorate* genders. Inquorate genders according to Corbett (1991, 170) are “the controller counterpart to over-differentiated targets. [...], inquorate genders are those postulated on the basis of an insufficient number of nouns, which should instead be lexically marked as exceptions.”

Odd numbered classes indicate singular and even numbered ones plural. Nouns often agree with certain modifiers in the nominal phrase. These modifiers are the agreement targets, and they take noun class agreement markers. These targets are definiteness markers, demonstratives, numerals and interrogative qualifiers. For example, *o-suɔtɔ* ‘man’ and *o-si* ‘yam’ belong to the same class and, as such, they use the same agreement marker on their modifiers, as in *o-suɔtɔ wɔ-mle* ‘this man’ and *o-si wɔ-mle* ‘this yam.’ The plural forms of these nouns belong to different classes and, therefore, take different agreement markers on their modifiers, as in *ba-suɔtɔ ba-mle* ‘these men’ and *si-si se-mle* ‘these yams.’ Adjectives as noun modifiers do not take agreement markers. Outside the noun phrase, the noun class agreement marker may be used as subject pro-clitics signaling long distance anaphora. The class agreement markers also serve as object pronouns, but they are rarely used by speakers, as only five occurrences of such object pronouns were found in the entire corpus. Speakers mainly use the lexical items instead. Assignment of nouns to a particular gender or class is partly arbitrary and partly semantically motivated. Thus, each gender can be semantically characterized to some extent but also has nouns that seem arbitrarily assigned to it. Table 6, reproduced from paper I, shows a summary of the eight genders and their semantic characterization

Table 6: Semantics of the genders

Gender	Pairs	Frequency	Prefixes	Semantics
I	1/2	26.6%	<i>o-/ɔ-; ba-</i>	Human terms (identity, kinship)
			<i>∅- ; ba-</i>	Mostly derived human referents, some animals, and borrowed nouns
II	5/8	28.7%	<i>dɪ-/li-/ni-/le-/le- ; a-</i>	Animal offspring; body parts, food and other things with round/circular, oval or concave shapes
III	7/8	10.1%	<i>ko-/kɔ-/ku- ; a-</i>	Long things with flat surfaces, farm and farm-related concepts
IV	1/4	15.7%	<i>o-/ɔ- ; se-/se-/si-</i>	Domain of some human experiences, some plants (edible and non-edible)
V	3/6	16.4%	<i>ka- ; n-</i>	Most external body parts, mass nouns, location/places
VI	3/7	1.1%	<i>ka- ; ko-/kɔ-/ku-</i>	Diminutives. The noun for 'fish' and 'ant'
VII	7/6	0.7%	<i>ko-/kɔ-/ku- ; n-</i>	Limbs: hand and leg
VIII	1/8	0.7%	<i>o-/ɔ- ; a-</i>	Running stone and corn

Gender shifts can also be semantically constrained: nouns change their gender when more marked interpretations of their referents are entailed (see Aikhenvald 2003; Corbett 1991, for a general discussion on the semantics and function of noun class systems across the languages of the world). One such markedness strategy is diminution, which is coded by suffixation accompanied by gender shift, unless the suffixed noun already belongs to the same gender to which the diminutive marker would assign it. However, there are a few exceptions. Finally, prepositions may be incorporated in a noun showing location by lengthening the vowel of the noun class prefix, as such, (24) and (25) can be rendered as (26) and (27), respectively.

- (24) SSP_07
kandie n-te di ka-sɔ
 lantern LSM-lie PP CL3-ground
 'a lantern lies on the ground.'

- (25) SSP_08
kandie n-saka di ko-kloo
 lantern LSM-hang PP CL7.door
 ‘a lantern hangs on the door.’
- (26) SSP_07
kandie n-te kaa-sɔ
 lantern LSM-lie CL3.PP-ground
 ‘a lantern lies on the ground.’
- (27) SSP_08
kandie n-saka koo-kloo
 lantern LSM-hang CL7.PP-door
 ‘a lantern hangs on the door.’

Comparison

The GTM languages are very well known for their active noun class systems, a feature that sets them apart from other KWA languages (Ewe, Ga and Akan), which lack them, though Akan still has a limited form of the class system (Osam 1993, 1994, 1996). Given that the GTM languages have noun class systems, there is no established numbering convention that could facilitate the comparison of the system across. In effect, my intention in this overview is to compare the following:

- a) The individual noun class prefixes across selected languages with a Proto-GTM, as reconstructed in Heine (2013),
- b) The number of individual noun classes vs. the number of genders across the languages, and
- c) The genders/classes that represent certain semantic types.

The third aim is quite challenging because the languages considered in this overview may differ a great deal in the semantic basis of their noun class system. Additionally, the assignment of nouns to the different classes in most languages is said to be largely arbitrary. However, certain common features can be established and are therefore highlighted. Languages sampled include Sɛkpele (Tornu 2007; Delalorm 2008); Siwu (Dingemans 2011); Logba (Dorvlo 2008); Lelemi (Allan 1973); Tafi (Bobuafor 2013); Tuwuli (Harley 2005); Siya (Watkins 2010, and Saskia Van Putin p.c) and Tutrugbu (Essegbey 2009).

(a) The individual noun classes

The numbering system adopted for the noun class system in the GTM languages differs from one language to the other. The convention followed by most authors is to pair singular and plural noun classes and number them as one class, while the individual classes are named according to the morphological form of the noun class prefix. The pairings are numbered either by cardinal numbers or Roman numerals. Often, the sequence in which the classes are numbered is arbitrary. However, the animate class is usually numbered as class 1 and anything else follows afterwards. Consequently, it is quite difficult to compare the noun classes across languages. I follow the principle according to which singular class prefixes are assigned odd numbers while the plural classes are assigned even numbers. Table 7 shows a distribution of the class prefixes according to Heine's (2013) reconstruction of the proto-GTM noun classes.

The singular class 1 in all languages is marked by a vowel prefix. Similarly, the plural class 2 is marked by *ba-* or its variant *ma-*, except Logba, which has no CV- type class prefix. Languages that have the class 3 *o-* prefix use a different vowel for marking class 1, except Siya, which has *o-* prefix for both classes 1 and 3. As the Siya classes 1 and 3 have different agreement forms, they are retained as separate classes.

Classes 4 and 13 are quite similar in their marking, but whereas class 4 is a regular plural class, class 13 has a rather special function that will be discussed later. Seleɛ and Siwu have a form of the class 4 prefix *si-* that is different from the proto-GTM class 4 marker, while Logba, Tafi, Siya and Tutrugbu have the same form *i-* as proto-GTM. All languages except Logba have the singular class 5. The prefixes across the languages are similar in the sense that they all have a front high vowel /i/ but differ in the types of consonant they comprise. All the languages with class 5 except Tafi and Tutrugbu have alveolar consonants, whereas Tafi and Tutrugbu have a velar consonant.

Class 6 *a-* is a plural class in all the languages of the sample again with the exception of Logba. Logba has two singular classes marked by the prefix *A-*. They are therefore assigned to class 1 and 7. Class 7 in proto-GTM is marked by **ki-*, whereas class 12 is marked by **ka-*. To avoid any ambiguity in the numbering systems, I have consistently assigned odd numbers to singular class prefixes and even numbers to plural classes. Consequently, I have the *ka-* prefix functions as a singular class in all the languages that have it to class 7 instead of class 12, which differentiates it from the proto-GTM class 7 (see Heine 2013).

Table 7: Numbering of individual classes in the nine languages

proto-GTM		Na-Togo					Ka-Togo			
		Seɛɛ	Sɛkpɛle	Siwu	Logba	Lelemi	Tafi	Tuwuli	Siya	Tutrugbu
1	*o-	o-	u-	o-	a-	o-	a-	o-	o-	a-
2	*ba-	ba-	ba-	ma-		ba-	ba-	ba-	ba-	ba-
3	*o-				o-		o-		o-	o-
4	*i-	si-		si-	i-		i-		i-	i-
5	*li-	di-	di-	i-	e-	li-	ki-	li	li-	ki-
6	*a-	a-	a-	a-		a-	a-	a-	a-	a-
7	*ki-	ka-	ka-	ka-	a-	ka-	ka-	ka-	ka-	ka-
8	*bi-		bi		e-	li-				
9	*ku-	ku-	ku-	ku-	u-	ku-	ku-	ku-	ki-	
10	*a-						a-	tu-		
11	*N-	N-	N-	N-	N-	N-		N-		
12	*ka-								ku-	
13	*ti-		si-	mi-			ti-	si-	si-	tu-
14	*bu-						bu-	fu-	ba-	bu-

All the KA-Togo languages and two of the NA-Togo languages, Sɛlɛɛ and Siwu, lack plural class 8. Sɛkpele has the same form as proto-GTM **bi-*, whereas Logba and Lelemi have different forms. All languages except Tutrugbu have the singular class 9 *ku-*, which is the same as proto-GTM class 9 **ku-*. Siya has a KU- class, but it is used only in plural marking and is therefore placed in class 12, which no other language has. All the NA-Togo languages consistently lack the classes 10, 12 and 14, while all the KA-Togo languages have the classes 13 and 14. The N- class, even though it functions as a plural class in all the NA-Togo languages, also represents a special class of nouns. Primarily, the N- class hosts most nouns used for liquids in these languages. Thus for the sake of this additional function of the N- class, it is assigned an odd number, class 11. Class 13 is also special in the sense that it does not usually have any corresponding plural class. Also, it contains mostly non-individuated nouns but not liquids. This makes it a class of its own. Finally, class 14 is a regular plural class in the KA-Togo languages, and their realization is similar to proto-GTM **bu-*, except Siya which has *ba-*.

Even though the noun prefixes are grouped into singular and plural classes, they are not absolute in their function. Certain singular classes serve as plural classes for other singular classes and vice versa.

(b) The number of individual noun classes vs. the number of genders across the languages

Individual noun classes in the languages of the sample range from eight to a maximum of thirteen noun classes. Sɛlɛɛ and Lelemi have the lowest number, and Siya has the maximum of 13 noun classes. The vast majority of the languages have nine classes and Sɛkpele and Tutrugbu have ten classes each.

The task of counting the individual classes was quite challenging. It was not always obvious from the way the individual classes are grouped together by some authors as to what counts as a separate class and what counts as part of a class. The figures provided in table 8 are based on two considerations, namely, (a) the morphological forms of the class prefixes and (b) the agreement forms of the individual classes. This approach is not exhaustive, but it can be used to eliminate some potentially redundant classes.

Sɛkpele (Delalorm 2008), for example, has six class pairs and certain nouns are put in a class of their own: mass noun (class 7), single unit nouns (class 8) and abstract nouns (class 9). However, by virtue of the agreement forms these nouns take, they could be redistributed over the nine morphological classes. For instance, the noun *le-kpo* ‘sea’ is classified as class 7, but for definite marking it takes class 5 agreement marker *nə* on the definite

determiner *mə*. Thus, the noun *le-kpo* could be reanalyzed as belonging to class 5.

Siwu (Dingemanse 2011) has ten morphological classes with eight agreement forms. The zero prefix class and the O- class take the same agreement markers on the different modifiers. The MI- class and the N- class also take the same agreement markers. However, the O- class could be merged with the zero prefix class because nouns belonging to both classes share similar semantic features and also pair up with the same plural class. The MI- and N- classes, on the other hand, even though they have the same agreement forms, cannot be merged together because (a) they are not allomorphic variants of each other and (b) they do not pair up with the same singular class prefixes. I propose nine individual classes for Siwu, as indicated in table 8.

In some languages, some classes are listed twice because they function as a singular class as well as a plural class and both forms have the same agreement markers. The BU- class in Tafi is projected as two different classes, one form functioning as a singular class and the other a plural. However, these two separate classes take the same agreement prefix on all agreement targets. This kind of analysis overpopulates the number of individual noun classes. The A- classes, on the other hand, are two separate classes because their agreement markers are different. From what we know about the BU-class as a singular class prefix, it contains a small set of nouns (Bobuafor 2013, 56). For this reason, it is counted as only one class but not two different classes. As such, Tafi has eleven individual classes, as shown in table 8.

Table 8: Number of noun classes and genders in the sample

Some comparable features	Na-Togo					Ka-Togo			
	Sɛlɛɛ	Sɛkpele	Siwu	Logba	Lelemi	Tafi	Tuwuli	Siya	Tutrugbu
No. of class	8	9	9	8	8	11	10	11	9
No. of genders	8	6	9	5	9	8	15	6	5
Additional plural marking	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N

Logba has the smallest number of genders, and it is the only language that has borrowed a separate plural suffix, namely, *-wo* from Ewe. There is a plural marking developing for a subset of nouns in the kinship domain in Sekpele (see Ameka 2006, for discussion). By virtue of the number of individual classes found in each language, one would presume a rather low number of genders across the languages, with a one-to-one correspondence between the singular classes and the plural classes. Heine (2013, 1982) distinguishes between two types of gender systems: paired versus crossed gender systems. In paired gender systems, there is one-to-one correspondence between singular classes and plural classes. In crossed gender systems, there is an overlap of correspondence between singular and plural classes, where two or more singular classes correspond to one plural and vice versa. According to Heine (2013, 3), “GTM languages are primarily paired but tend to follow the crossed type.”

I group the languages in my sample into three different categories:

- (1) Paired system languages,
- (2) Crossed system languages,
- (3) Heavily crossed system languages.

The crossed system languages can further be grouped under type 2a and type 2b. The type 2a system languages rather tend to look more like the paired system. In the type 2b system, the system is very crossed but not as heavily crossed as the languages of category 3. The languages that belong to the paired system are Siya (fig. 3.1a) and Tutrugbu (fig. 3.1b). Sekpele (fig. 3.1c) and Logba (fig. 3.1d) belong to crossed type 2a, while Selɛɛ (fig. 3.1e), Siwu (fig. 3.1f) and Tafi (fig. 3.1g) belong to crossed type 2b. Lelemi (fig. 3.1h) and Tuwuli (fig. 3.1i) belong to the heavily crossed gender system. The dotted lines represent *inquorate genders*, whereas the solid lines represent regular genders.

Figure 3.1a: Siya gender

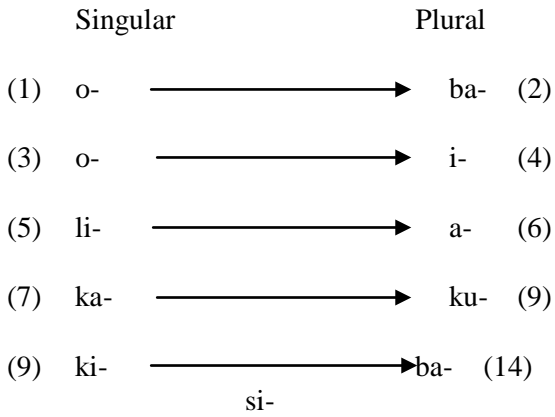
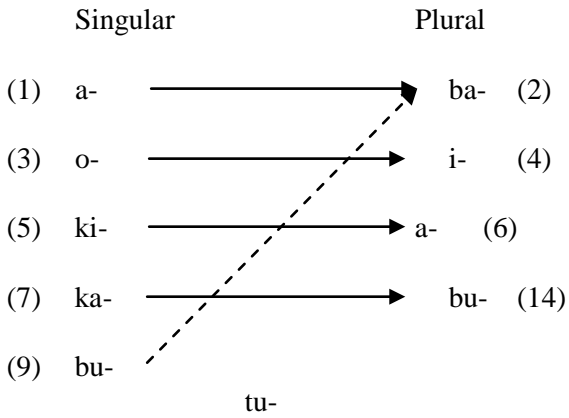


Figure 3.1b: Tutrugbu gender



Crossed type 2a languages (Sɛkpele and Logba)

Figure 3.1c: Sɛkpele gender

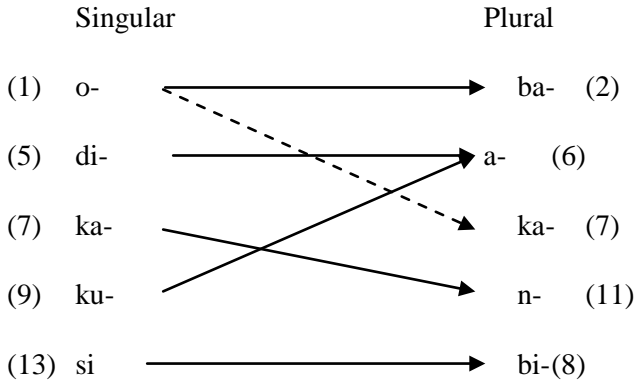
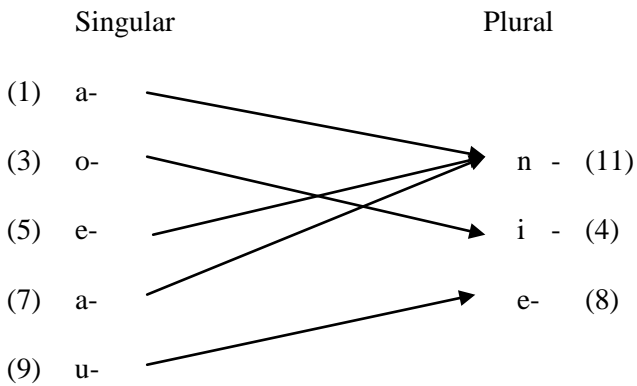


Figure 3.1d: Logba gender



Crossed type 2b languages (Sɛlɛɛ, Siwu and Tafi)

Figure 3.1e: Sɛlɛɛ gender

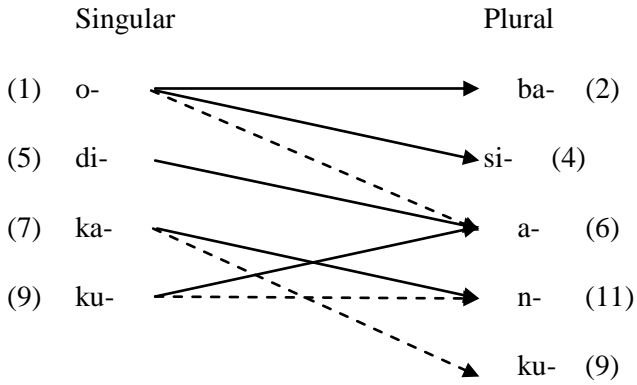


Figure 3.1f: Siwu gender

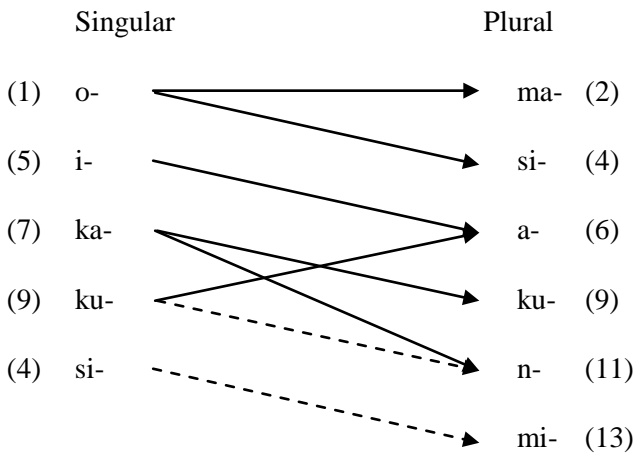
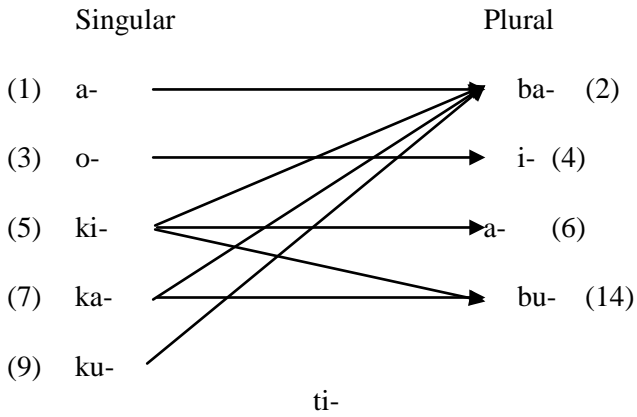


Figure 3.1g: Tafi gender



Heavily crossed gender languages (Lelemi and Tuwuli)

Figure 3.1h: Lelemi gender

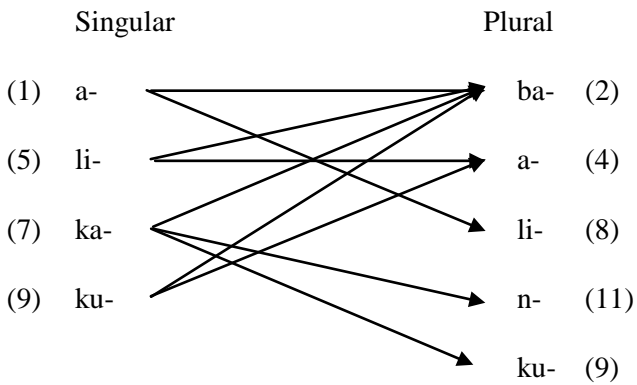
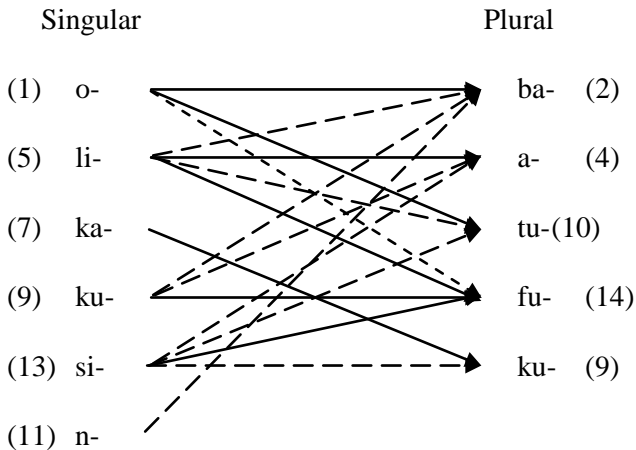


Figure 3.1i: Tuwuli gender



In some languages, some genders are predictable. In others, it is very difficult to predict any gender. In paired languages such as Siya and Tutrugbu, for instance, the pairings are obvious, but in crossed type systems, only some level of prediction can be made. In Selee, a number-sensitive noun will belong to the singular class *o-* whenever the plural is *ba-*. Heine (2013) provides four gender predictions for Siwu based on Dingemanse (2009). According to Heine, a number-sensitive noun in Siwu will belong to:

- (i) The plural class *a-* whenever the singular class is *i-*
- (ii) The singular class *ka-* whenever the plural class is *ku-*
- (iii) The plural class *si-* whenever the plural class is *mi-*
- (iv) The singular class *ɔ-* or zero whenever the plural class is *ma-*.

Similar predictions can be made for Sekpele, Logba and Tafi. Heavily crossed languages such as Lelemi and Tuvuli are unpredictable with multiple correspondences. At most, one gender can be predicted for Lelemi, that is, a number sensitive noun will belong to the singular class *ka-* whenever the plural class is *n-*. Tuvuli, on the other hand, has the maximum number of genders, with more than half of the genders being *inquorate* genders.

(c) The genders/class that represent certain semantic types

All the NA-Togo languages have the nasal prefix in the class of nouns for liquids. The KA-Togo languages, on the other hand, do not seem to use the nasal prefix as a class marker. They all use different prefixes for this specific semantic class. Tafi and Tutrugbu are said to be closely related, and they both use the prefix BU- for liquids. Liquid nouns in Tuvuli have no class prefix. Siya uses SI- for mass nouns, including liquids. Interestingly, Heine (2013) listed the nasal prefix as the class marker for liquids and mass nouns in Tafi, but nowhere in the grammar of Tafi (Bobuafor 2013) is the nasal considered a class marker.

There are certain nouns, typically non-count nouns that do not have number values as a result of their semantics. However, they are assigned to a particular class but do not participate in gender allocation, hence the need to differentiate between genders and individual classes. Table 9 presents noun class markers or genders that are associated with certain semantic features.

It is rather significant that it is often the plural classes that host the majority of non-count and abstract noun. Perhaps the very nature of non-count nouns by default indicates ‘plurality.’

Table 9: Noun classes/genders that correlate with certain semantic types

Semantics	Na-Togo										Ka-Togo							
	Sɛlɛɛ		Sɛkpɛlɛ		Siwu		Logba		Lelemi		Tafi		Tuwuli		Siya		Tutrugbu	
	SG	PL	SG	PL	SG	PL	S	PL	SG	PL	SG	PL	SG	PL	SG	PL	SG	PL
ANIMATE	o-	ba-	u-	be-	ɔ-	ma-	u-	e-	o-	ba-	a-	ba-	o-	ba-	o-	ba-	a-	ba-
							a-	n-										
LOANS	∅	ba-			∅	ma-			∅	ba-	∅	ba-	∅		∅	ba-	∅	ba-
INANIMATE: food items, tools, things	di-	a-	di-	a-	i-	a-	a-	n-	le-	a-	bɔ-	ba-	li-	a-	li-	a-	ke-	a2-
Long things, farm and farm related concepts	ku-	a-	ku-	e-	ku-	a-	ɔ-	i-	ko-	a-	o-	i-	ku-	fu-	o-	i-	o-	i-
Domain of hu- man experienc- es and practices, household items, parts of plants (also of animals)	o-	si-	u-	ke-	ɔ-	si-	a-	n-	o-	le-	ki-	a-	se-	fu- ?	ki-	bi-		
			si-	bi-														
Places, external body parts, some animals	ka-	n-	ke-	n-	ka-	n-	e-	n-	ka-	n-			ka-	ku-	ka-	ku-	ka-	bɔ-

Diminutives (small things)	ka-	ku-	ka-	ku-	ka-	ku-	e-	n-					ka-	ko-	ka-	ku-	ki-	a-
Limbs	ku-	n-	same as long things		ku-	n-	a-	n-	same as long things		ka-	bu2-			ku-	ba-		
Liquid/mass nouns	n-		n-		n-		n-		n-		bu-		∅		si-		bu-	
abstract	si-		si-		si-		i-				ki-		ti-		si-		bo-	
Language name	si-		si-	bi-	si-		?		le-		ti-		ti-		ku-?		ti-	

3.2 Summary of paper II: *Sɛlɛɛ* (Evaluative morphology) with notes on Ewe and Akan

Paper II is closely related to paper I in the sense that they both discuss noun morphology, especially as it concerns noun classes. However, it focuses mainly on evaluative constructions (diminutive and augmentative constructions). The paper shows that evaluative meaning can be expressed morphologically in *Sɛlɛɛ*. While augmentative meaning can only be expressed analytically and by the use of the adjective *kple* ‘big’ and the verb *muɔ* ‘to grow/be big,’ diminution is expressed in both ways. Morphological encoding of diminutives involves the use of the diminutive suffixes *-bi*, *-mii*, *-ɛ* and *-nyi*. The diminutive suffix *-bi* originated from *obi* ‘child.’ This conforms to the most common grammaticalization path for diminutive constructions across languages (Jurafsky 1996). While *-mii*, *-ɛ* and *-nyi* diminutive suffixes, whose origins are not known, only express small size, the suffix *-bi* has more varied uses including the expression of: (1) small size, (2) offspring of an animal, and (3) quantification with non-countable nouns, as in (28), (29) and (30), respectively.

(28)

- | | |
|---|---|
| a. <i>ɔ-sánko</i>
CL1-woman
‘woman’ | b. <i>ɔ-sánko-bi</i>
CL1-woman-DIM
‘girl’ |
|---|---|

(29)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| a. <i>wéwée</i>
CL1.dog
‘dog’ | b. <i>le-wéwée-bi</i>
CL5-dog-DIM
‘puppy’ |
|-------------------------------------|---|

(30)

- | | |
|--|---|
| a. <i>blòblo</i>
CL1.bread
‘bread’ | b. <i>le-blòblo-bi</i>
CL5-bread-DIM
‘a slice of bread’ |
|--|---|

The use of *-bi* may entail gender shift, as exemplified in (29) and (30) above. The suffixes *-mii* and *-ɛ* can only co-occur with shift to gender IV (3/7). The suffix *-nyi* is only attested with two nouns *o-ti* ‘person’ and *kɔ-nɛɛ* ‘hand,’ which might suggest that it may not actually be a diminutive marker but

some form of personalized marking; however, more research is required to confirm this hypothesis. One issue not taken into account in the paper is analytical evaluative constructions. Analytical diminutives involve ideophonic adjectives with the basic meaning ‘small.’ Tonal alternation is used to show a speaker’s positive or negative attitude towards a referent. The asymmetry that exists between the marking of diminution and that of augmentation reflects a general cross-linguistic pattern whereby diminutives are the most frequent and least marked component of the grammatical domain of evaluation.

Comparison

This overview compares the forms, origins and meanings associated with diminutive marking in Sɛlɛɛ with two other Kwa languages; Ewe (Agbedor and Agbetsoamedo forthcoming) and Akan (Appah and Amfo 2011).

Derivational diminutive morphology is suffixal in Sɛlɛɛ, Ewe and Akan. Like in Sɛlɛɛ, the diminutive suffixes *-vi* in Ewe and *-ba/-wa* in Akan developed from the word ‘child,’ i.e., *vi* and *ɔba*, respectively. Although other GTM languages are not in focus here, it is nonetheless worthwhile to point out that ‘child’ seems to be the source of their diminutive markers except for Tutrugbu markers. Tafi, which is closely related to Tutrugbu, has a diminutive compound as one strategy that uses the word for child *eyi*. The use of *eyi* ‘seed/child’ may combine with the use of the prefix *ki-/ki-*, and it only co-occurs with animal names to derive animal offspring. However, Tafi has the diminutive suffix *-i/-ɛ*, similar to Ewe *-i*. There is a division of labor between *-bi* and the other three suffixes in Sɛlɛɛ, where the former is productive in word formation but not the latter.

Even though the origin of the main diminutive suffixes in all three languages is ‘child,’ their precise usages vary from one language to the other. The basic semantics of the diminutive suffix is ‘small.’ Thus, ‘a small bird’ will be *ka-kansie-bi* (Sɛlɛɛ) and *xe-vi* (Ewe), but in Akan, *anomaa-ba* refers to ‘a baby bird.’ In Ewe, though, *xe* is used as a generic term for ‘bird,’ and there is a subdomain of small birds *xevi* vs big birds. Thus, *dɔku* ‘turkey,’ for example, can be referred to as *xe* but not *xevi*. Analogous to Ewe, Akan has a noun class of small birds designated by the prefixes *á-* for singular nouns and *ń-* for their plural counterparts (Boadi 2004).

For animates, the diminutive suffix is typically used to denote offspring, as shown in (31), (32) and (33).

- (31) Sɛlɛɛ
di-tie-bi
 CL5-goat-DIM
 ‘baby goat’

(32) Ewe
gbɔ̃-vi
goat-DIM
'baby goat'

(33) Akan
aponkye-ba
goat-DIM
'baby goat'

While examples (31) and (32) could also mean 'a small goat,' this meaning cannot be accessed in (33). It appears the co-occurrence of the diminutive suffix with animate entities in Akan can only yield 'offspring' meaning. The meaning 'member of X' is also felicitous when *-ba* (Akan) and *-vi* (Ewe) co-occur with place names. The Selɛɛ diminutive suffix *-bi*, on the other hand, does not have such a function.

The Akan suffix *-wa* and the Ewe suffix *-vi* can be found in proper names. *-wa* only co-occurs with female names and designates them as such. Thus, Akan has general diminutive suffix *-ba* and a female diminutive *-wa*. The suffix *-vi* occurs with both male and female names. For example, *X[name]-vi* refers to a younger person with the name X. Thus, *Kɔdzɔ* and *Kɔdzovi* means there are two people, typically in the same family. In Selɛɛ, proper names do not take the suffix *-bi*.

Finally, other evaluative meanings such as admiration, contempt, affection and disdain are associated with the Akan *-ba/-wa*. Affection and admiration may also be attributed to the Ewe *-vi*, but none of these evaluative meanings are associated with Selɛɛ *-bi*.

3.3 Summary of paper III: *The tense and aspect system of Selɛɛ: A preliminary analysis and comparison with other Kwa languages*

This paper attempts to discover and describe the grammatical tense and aspect system in Selɛɛ. The discussion is delimited to positive main clauses. Selɛɛ has an elaborate tense and aspect system, which is unusual for Kwa languages, which usually lack tense but are prolific in aspectual categories. Verbs in Selɛɛ may be divided into three predicate types: locative stative, non-locative stative and dynamic predicates. A more fine-grained classification would certainly be possible, but these three basic types are sufficient for the scope of this paper.

The verb complex is made up of an obligatory subject that may be followed by a tense-aspect marker and then the verb root. Four temporal domains are identified. However, several language specific grammatical categories (grams) are found to be operative in these four temporal domains, namely, zero, present/hodiernal, pre-hodiernal and future. Unlike the other grams, the perfect is not time-sensitive. Aspectual categories observed in the language include progressive, habitual, perfect and perfective. There is no dedicated perfective gram, but the present/hodiernal results in perfective meaning in certain contexts.

The present/hodiernal marker is noteworthy due to the variety of functions it can assume depending on the predicate type it co-occurs with. The marker yields either present or hodiernal past time reference with stative non-locative predicates. When the marker occurs with dynamic predicates, however, depending on context or clause structure, there are at least three different meanings including perfective meaning, namely, perfective hodiernal past time reference, perfective future time reference and performative use.

Comparison

GTM languages are very similar in their noun morphology but differ greatly in their verb morphology. While a small number of GTM languages use three or more tense distinctions, the majority merely make a distinction between future and non-future. Aspectual categories are rather elaborate, typical of Kwa (Niger-Congo) languages. In the tense category, *Seleε* stands out as unique among GTM languages as well as non-GTM Kwa languages such as Ewe and Akan. *Seleε* has a remoteness distinction in the past, a feature that is typologically rare in Kwa languages but very common in Bantoid languages. Thus, *Seleε* has hodiernal and prehodiernal past tenses. The hodiernal marker *le-/le-* is identical with the affirmative first person singular simple past, *le-*, found in Lelemi (Allan 1973). However, there is no distinction between hodiernal and prehodiernal past in Lelemi.

Few Kwa languages make a distinction between future and non-future tense. Future is always morphologically marked, and the unmarked verb form is interpreted as either past or present depending on verbal aktionsart. Future tense in *Seleε*, *Sekpele*, *Logba* and *Tafi* is expressed by a form *bV-* where different vowels are used in the various languages. The future markers in *Sekpele*, *Logba* and *Tafi* are said to develop from the verb ‘come,’ one of the most common sources of future markers (Bybee, Perkins, and Pagliuca 1994; Bybee 2003; Heine and Reh 1984; Heine 1994; Nurse 2008; Trask 1996). *Seleε* as well as Akan (Boadi 2008; Dahl 1985) and Ga (Kropp Dakubu 2008) have perfect markers, whereas Ewe (Ameka 2008) and *Logba*

(Dorvlo 2008) have aorist, which has similar functions as the perfect markers.

In the aspectual domain, a difference is made between imperfective and perfective aspect. In Tuwuli (Harley 2005), for instance, there is a general marker for imperfect aspect and the perfective aspect is the unmarked form. Sɛlɛɛ has no dedicated marker for imperfective aspect but rather has markers for individual categories within the imperfective aspect. The progressive and habitual are identified in all languages and therefore have their own markers. The present progressive is commonly marked periphrastically in most Kwa languages. This is the case for Tuwuli, Nkonya, Dangme, Lelemi, Likpe (Sɛkpɛlɛ), Ewe and Fon (Harley 2005, 201). Sɛlɛɛ and Siwu, on the other hand, mark present-progressive morphologically.

The present habitual aspect is morphologically marked in most of the languages. Interestingly, the coding of the past habitual in Sɛlɛɛ is similar to that of Tafi (KA-Togo). In Sɛlɛɛ, to mark the past habitual aspect, the past progressive marker is combined with the present habitual marker *n-*, although the same combination expresses habitual progressive meaning. Similarly in Tafi, the verb form *ganɔ/gani* meaning ‘keep’ or ‘walk’ combines with the past progressive marker to express past habitual.

Zero-marking is found in all languages, but its function differs slightly. In Kwa languages, zero-marking has two basic interpretations: past or present. Present interpretation is normal with stative predicates. If the predicate is dynamic, a past perfective meaning is felicitous. By contrast, zero-marking in Sɛlɛɛ has only one interpretation, namely, present. What seems to permeate across all the languages is ‘present’ interpretation with stative predicates.

3.4 Summary of paper IV: *Standard negation in Sɛlɛɛ* and comparison with other Kwa languages

The paper describes standard negation in Sɛlɛɛ. Standard negation was defined by Payne (1985) as the negation of declarative verbal main clauses. Thus, negation of subordinate clauses, imperatives and existentials is outside the scope of the paper.

There are mainly three strategies for standard negation in Sɛlɛɛ. One of them involves the use of polarity tone. Changing the tone of a verbal affix from non-high to high changes an utterance from being affirmative to being negative. For example, *àn-sa si-nu* ‘she sings (always)’ becomes *án-sa si-nu* ‘she does not sing (always).’ Another negation strategy is the use of a negative variant of a tense-aspect marker. For instance, *à-à-le a-lesaa* ‘he ate’ becomes *a-tá-le a-lesaa* ‘he did not eat.’ The third possibility of negating main clauses is by adding a dedicated negative marker for that particular tense or aspect category. For example, the negative marker for future tense is

la-. Thus an affirmative future clause *a-ba-wa* ‘she will come,’ when negated becomes *a-la-ba-wa* ‘she will not come.’ Worth noting is the fact that every tense-aspect category has its own negation strategy or strategies. Interestingly, in certain tense-aspect categories, there are as many as three different ways of negating main clauses in one and the same category, and this largely depends on the pronominal forms used in the clause. For example, there are three different negation strategies for negating hodiernal past tense. The first person singular has a form negative hodiernal past, which is different from the affirmative hodiernal past, as in (34). The second and third person singular uses the negative marker *á*, which assimilates the vowel of the subject clitics (35). The plural subject clitics use only tonal alternation to express negation (36).

(34a) *le-le* *a-lesaa* *ku* *o-lese* *wɔ*
 1SG.HOD-eat CL8-food PP CL1-morning CL1
 ‘I ate (food) this morning.’

(34b) *nín-le* *a-lesaa* *ku* *o-lese* *wɔ*
 1SG.NEG.HOD-eat CL8-food PP CL1-morning CL1
 ‘I did not eat this morning.’

(35a) *è-è-le* *a-lesaa* *ku* *o-lese* *wɔ*
 3SG-HOD-eat CL8-food PP CL1-morning CL1
 ‘He ate (food) this morning.’

(35b) *á-á-le* *a-lesaa* *ku* *o-lese* *wɔ*
 3SG-NEG.HOD-eat CL8-food PP CL1-morning CL1
 ‘He did not eat this morning.’

(36a) *bùo-le* *a-lesaa* *ku* *o-lese* *wɔ*
 1PL.HOD-eat CL8-food PP CL1-morning CL1
 ‘We ate (food) this morning.’

(36b) *búo-le* *a-lesaa* *ku* *o-lese* *wɔ*
 1PL.NEG.HOD-eat CL8-food PP CL1-morning CL1
 ‘We did not eat this morning.’

Note that the example in (35b) may be translated without the time adverbial as “He ate (yesterday)” when marked with low tones. Finally, there is syncretism among the first person singular forms of the negative hodiernal past *nín*, the negative habitual *nín* and the negative perfect *nín*.

Comparison

This typological overview focuses on standard negation across Kwa languages. The issue of (a)symmetry between the different TA forms addressed in the paper will not be covered in this overview due to the fact that grammar writers do not always provide affirmative sentences with their corresponding negative ones, and it thus becomes difficult to give any reliable judgment in this regard.

Generally, non-GTM Kwa languages such as Ewe and Akan tend to use a single negation strategy for standard negation by adding a negation marker that is independent of TA. In the GTM Kwa languages, the set of negative markers vary from one language to the other.

Certain GTM languages are also found to have only one negative marker. These languages include Logba and Sɛkpele. Interestingly, Ewe (non-GTM Kwa) and Logba (NA-Togo Kwa) have similar negative markers, and Akan (non-GTM Kwa) and Sɛkpele (NA-Togo Kwa) also have the same form of the negative marker. Ewe and Logba have discontinuous negative morphemes *me-...o* and *mV-...-nu*, respectively. For example, the sentence ‘X did not beat the child’ would be rendered as (37) and (38) in Ewe and Logba, respectively. Akan and Sɛkpele both have *n* as their standard negative marker. The following examples illustrate Ewe and Logba.

- (37) Ewe
Setɔ mé-fo ɖevi-a o
Setɔ NEG-beat child-DEF NEG
‘Setɔ did not beat the child.’

- (38) Logba (Dorvlo 2008, 148)
Setɔ mo-ó-lá-nú ebítsi=é
Setɔ NEG-SM.SG-beat-NEG child=DET
‘Setɔ did not beat the child.’

The difference between the two languages lies in the placement of the second part of the negative marker. While in Logba any constituent of the clause may occur after the second marker, such an occurrence is not possible in Ewe. The difference between the Logba negative markers and that of Ewe is that both markers are affixes on the verb in Logba, whereas the second marker in Ewe is a clause-final particle that may be followed only by other clause-final particles.

There are other languages that have general standard negators as well as a dedicated negative marker for a specific tense-aspect category. Siwu (NA-Togo) and Tutrugbu (KA-Togo) belong here. Siwu has a general standard

negative marker *i-* that is used with all TA categories, except the habitual aspect, which has a separate negative marker *si-*. Tutrugbu uses *gɛ-* in clausal negation with the exception of clauses marked for past-progressive aspect. There appears to be another clausal negative marker in Tutrugbu, but it is not entirely clear what its conditions of usage are.

The third group of languages identified within the Kwa genus is languages with three or more standard negative markers. These languages include Sɛlɛɛ, Tuwuli and Tafi. As stated in paper IV, every TA category in Sɛlɛɛ has its own negative counterpart. According to Harley (2005, 225), “there are no less than six different ways of marking negation on the verbal word in Tuvuli.” In Tuvuli, too, the various negative strategies used depend on the TA marking of the verb. In addition, Tafi is particular in that there are more distinctions in negation than in the affirmative. For example, there is no morphological distinction between past and present verb forms, but in negation, two different negative markers are used: *ti-* present and *di-* in non-present context. Tafi has separate markers for negative present-progressive, past-progressive and negative perfective verb forms.

Apart from the morphological negative markers found in all the languages, tone seems to be an integral part in coding negation in most GTM languages. There is either a tonal change of tone-bearing units of the verb accompanied by a prefixal negation strategy, or negation is expressed only by tonal alternation of the affirmative declarative main verb. In all cases observed so far, negation is associated with high tone. Notably, Sɛlɛɛ and Tuvuli are typical examples of languages that, as part of their negation strategies, express negation by only tonal distinction, as shown in (39) and (40), respectively.

(39a) Sɛlɛɛ
mùn-sa *si-nu*
 1PL.HAB-sing CL4-song
 ‘We always sing.’

(39b) Sɛlɛɛ
mún-sa *sí-nu*
 1PL.NEG.HAB-sing CL4-song
 ‘We do not always sing.’

(40a) Tuvuli (Harley 2005, 226)
bú-↑ dží *nè* *kyiràhí*
 1PL-be:sitting LOC Kyiriahi
 ‘We live in Kyiriahi.’

- (40b) Tuwuli
bú-[↑]dzĩ *nè* *kyiràhí̃*
 1PL-NEGbe:sitting LOC Kyiriahi
 ‘We don’t live in Kyiriahi.’

Interesting patterns emerge when languages within the same grouping within the GTM are compared. For instance, the NA-Togo group of languages shows substantial internal differences with regards to marking negation. Logba and Sèkpèlè, both NA-Togo, behave more like typical non-GTM Kwa languages, whereas Sèlɛɛ, also a NA-Togo language, has a very elaborate negation system. With respect to other categories, Sèlɛɛ and Sèkpèlè are the closest neighbors within the NA-Togo group with many shared features.

In conclusion, in the domain of negation, some GTM languages exhibit features that are shared among non-GTM languages and also features that puts the GTM languages together a distinct group within the Kwa languages.

3.5 Summary of paper V: *Unravelling temperature terms in Selɛɛ* and comparison with three Kwa languages: Ewe, Sɛkpele and Siya

This paper surveyed the ways in which temperature evaluations are expressed in Selɛɛ. We observed that the grammatical constructions associated with temperature evaluations differ depending on the word class status of each temperature term and its context.

Notably, there are eight temperature terms, six of which play a central role within the temperature system. The six central terms relate to all the major domains of temperature experience, namely, tactile, ambient and personal feeling. The non-central terms only express tactile temperature evaluation. Temperature evaluations are expressed by adjectives (usually ideophonic), verbs and nouns. Tactile and ambient temperature evaluations are construed attributively and predicatively, while personal feeling temperature evaluation is expressed only by nouns.

We found that certain temperature terms have extended or metaphorical meanings that often apply when these terms are used to predicate something about an animate entity. We also observed asymmetries in the temperature continuum cold - warm - hot. The warm temperature zone has rather more fine-grained distinctions. In Selɛɛ, as in most other languages, “water has a distinguished status in the linguistics of temperature systems” (Koptjevskaja-Tamm 2011, 405).

Comparison

This overview compares the expression of temperature evaluations in four Kwa (Niger-Congo) languages: Ewe, Likpe (Sɛkpele) (Ameka in press), Selɛɛ and Siya (Adjei 2012). Specifically, I compare how food, water, place and personal temperature feelings are coded in terms of coldness and hotness in the aforementioned languages. I will also show that temperature evaluations have metaphorical meanings when they co-occur with animate entities. While there is a great deal to compare between these languages in this domain, I will restrict my observations to some similarities and give a generalization on their differences.

Table 10⁷ shows the various temperature terms that are found in the four languages with their word classes as well as the domain in which the terms are used. Terms that have general uses are coded (G) and personal feeling temperature terms are coded (PF).

A number of observations can be made from table 10, namely:

- i. Water has the most elaborate range of temperature terms in all four languages. Note that all the terms coded (G) also apply to water
- ii. Temperature terms are expressed by four lexical classes: Verbs (V), Nouns (N) and Adjectives (ADJ) and Ideophones (IDEO)
- iii. All personal-feeling (PF) temperature evaluations are encoded as subjects, which act as agents and the experiencers as patients, except in Siya where personal feeling temperature expressions are conveyed by a verb.

In addition to the similarities in the personal feeling temperature domain in three of the languages, their construal also appears to be the same, except again in Siya. In Ewe, Sɛkpele and Sɛlɛɛ, the temperature stimulus is construed as an agent and the experiencer as the patient. This is shown in examples (41a-c) below.

(41a) Ewe

<i>affia</i>	<i>té-m</i>	or	<i>affia le</i>	<i>wa-m</i>
sweat	sting-1SG		sweat be.at	do-1SG
‘I am hot.’			‘I am hot.’	

(41b) Sɛkpele (Ameka in press)

<i>li-wí</i>	<i>lé</i>	<i>mɛ</i>
CM-sweat	hold	1SG
‘I am sweaty’ = ‘I am hot.’		

(41c) Sɛlɛɛ

<i>a-pípi</i>	<i>kɔ-kpe</i>	<i>mi</i>
CL8-sweat	LSM.PPROG-fight	1SG
‘I am hot.’		

Siya, on the other hand, uses the verb *zi* ‘feel’ and the word for fire, *kífùùè*, to express personal temperature feeling of hotness, as in (41d).

⁷ The table is adapted from Ameka (in press) and expanded to cover all the languages.

(41d) Siya (Adjei 2012)

má zi kífùè
1SG feel fire
'I feel hot.'

The difference between Ewe, Sɛkpele and Sɛlɛɛ, on one hand, and Siya, on the other hand, is that, in the former languages, "I am hot" is inferred from a body condition, viz. sweat, while Siya codes personal feeling directly with the verb *zi* 'feel.'

Extended meanings are more common with animate nouns. For example in Sɛlɛɛ and Sɛkpele, two closely related NA-Togo languages, to say 'a man is hot' means 'he is spiritually very powerful' or in other words, 'he has black power.' Examples from both languages are given in (42) and (43).

(42) Sɛlɛɛ

o-suɔɔ nwu le-fila
CL1-man DEF LSM.HOD-be.hot
'The man has black power.' (lit: The man is hot)

(43) Sɛkpele (Delalorm, pc)

o-sani ə-mə a-yɪla
CM-man AGR-DET LSM-become.hot
'The man has black power.' (lit: The man is hot)

There are similar metaphorical extensions of certain temperature terms in Ewe and Sɛlɛɛ, as well. For example, a lazy or slow person is to say the person is cold, *amea fa* 'the person is dull.' A similar expression is also found in Sɛlɛɛ *o-suɔɔ nwu le-nyenɛnɛ se di-kunfe* 'the man is as slow as a snail.'

Finally, there appears to be some cognacy with the term *yɔ/yɔɔ* in all the languages, even though their meanings might differ. The term *yɔɔ* in Ewe is associated with dullness of a person, but it is not temperature related; consequently, it is not listed in table 10 as a temperature term. In the other three languages, Sɛlɛɛ, Sɛkpele and Siya, we find *yɔ(ɔ)* as a temperature evaluation term.

Table 10: Temperature terms in Ewe, Likpe (Sekpele), Selee and Siya

	Ewe		Likpe (Sekpele)		Selee		Siya	
HOT	TERM	DO-MAIN	TERM	DO-MAIN	TERM	DO-MAIN	TERM	DO-MAIN
	xo dzo ‘get fire’ (VP)	G	fo utó ‘get fire’ (VP)	G				
	dze dzo ‘contact fire’ (VP)	G					béfú/zífú /kìfùè/fú ‘become hot/warm’ (VP)	G
	hiha ‘heat up’ (V)	food	yila ‘be(come) hot’ (V)	G	fila ‘be(come) hot’ (V)	G	kpíkpi (IDEO)	G
	vé ‘painfully hot’ (V)	water	yila-só ‘cause to be(come) hot’ (V-CAUS)				bé ‘painfully hot’ (V)	Water
	fie ‘boil’ (V)	liquid	tú ‘boil’ (V)	liquid	bé ‘boil’ (V)	Water	fí ‘boil’ (V)	liquid
	dzudzoe ‘hot	water						

	water' (N)							
	dzóodzoe 'hot stuff' (N)	food						
	afífiá 'sweat' (N)	PF	lí-wi 'CM-sweat' (N)	PF	a-pípi 'CL8-sweat' (N)	PF	hùhù 'to be(come) warm (V)	PF
	gbágbágbá 'IDEO.red hot' (IDEO)	Intensifier of V and VP	gbégbégbé 'IDEO.hot'	Intensifier	kpánkpa (ADJ)	Intensifier, Water and food		
WARM	gblo '(luke)warm' (V)	water	yifo kpákpá 'make IDEO.warm' (V IDEO)		ninteenintee 'lukewarm' (IDEO)	Water	gblo '(luke)warm'	Water
					bióbio (ADJ) 'warm'			
					sansa			

					‘warm’ (ADJ)			
COLD	fǎ ‘become cold/cool’ (V)	G	yúǎ ‘become cold/cool’ (V)	G	yóǎ ‘be- come cool’ (V)	liquid and food	yó ‘become cold/cool’ (V)	G
					nyenene ‘cold/cool’ (ADJ)	G	ɲlɪnì ‘cold’ (ADJ)	food
	avuvǎ ‘cold’ (N)	PF	leyǎ ‘cold’ (N)	PF	lɛ-wǎǎǎ ‘CL5-cold’ (N)	PF		
	míámíámíá ‘IDEO.cool’	Intensi- fier of cold V						

4. Closing remarks

This thesis describes aspects of the grammar of Seleε by focusing mainly on nominal and verbal morphology. Patterns of attribution in a specialized domain of the lexicon - the expression of temperature evaluation - have also been discussed.

The approach followed in this thesis is mainly descriptive. Substantial fieldwork has been conducted on the language, and the data have been transcribed, annotated and analyzed as a corpus. To my knowledge at least three of the papers provide the first detailed analyses of the respective aspects of Seleε grammar, namely, (1) standard negation, (2) diminutive and augmentative marking, and (3) the expression of temperature evaluation. The two remaining papers provide improved analyses of domains of Seleε grammar that have been previously investigated: ‘Noun classes in Seleε’ and ‘Tense and aspect marking in Seleε.’ Finally, this dissertation also provides comparisons of the grammatical features described in the five articles on Seleε with corresponding features in the surrounding languages. While the comparison is most detailed for the noun class systems within the GTM, the other features discussed in the articles are compared with other GTM languages and Kwa at large as well.

4.1 Assessment of the methodology

The analyses in this thesis are based on a corpus of data collected in the field. My corpus consists of a variety of transcribed and annotated texts: folk stories, procedural texts, the description of puberty rites among the Baleε, retelling of the pear story (Chafe 1980), conversations, Bible translations and several different questionnaires.

The corpus is based largely on data drawn from speakers in Benua. To expand on the data from the speakers in the two additional cities where Seleε is spoken, Bume and Gbodome, would give a better understanding of the phenomena described and provide information on possible dialectal variation between speakers from the three cities, and, of course, also contribute to a larger dataset. Although speakers from the other two cities were included in the study, there were too few to draw generalizations from their varieties of

Sɛlɛɛ. For instance, it is unclear whether the fact that the consonants [d] and [l] are in complementary distribution for some Sɛlɛɛ speakers while in free variation for others is a dialectal or idiolectal phenomenon.

A larger corpus would have been desirable to draw firm conclusions about other phenomena being studied as well. However, this would have required additional fieldwork for which there was neither the time nor the resources for at this point and that should be dealt with in future research. All conclusions presented here should be considered as preliminary results based on the available data.

4.2 Future research

The need for a comprehensive reference grammar of Sɛlɛɛ is obvious, but there are more immediate research issues related to the topics discussed in the thesis. Each of the five areas discussed in the articles can be further explored, but the most pressing issues for further research revolve particularly around three of them:

(1) Negation

- Negation in subordinate clauses
- Negation of existentials
- Constituent negation

(2) Tense, aspect and modality (TAM)

- Marking of modality
- TAM marking in serial verb constructions
- TAM marking in subordinate clauses
- Interplay between TAM categories in narratives

(3) It would be interesting to investigate the role of ideophones in the language at large and particularly in the encoding of diminution and augmentation.

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APPENDIX A⁸

		i	u	e	o	ɛ	ɔ	a	ĩ	ũ	ẽ	õ	ã
Stops, affricates & Fricatives	p	di-pĩt 'pov- erty'	pũ 'be.white '		le-pò 'forest'	pe 'beat'	pɔ 'be happy'	pa 'knead'	opĩ 'eat slowly and leave food'	o-pũ 'cala- bash'			
	b	o-bi 'child	bu 'think bùù 'wet'	be 'be old'	bo 'crow, bend'	be 'tear, cut open'	bɔ 'have sexual inter- course with'	bakáá 'stir up' bamba 'another					
	t	o-tĩt 'person'	tù 'taste'	tè 'sleep, lie down'	tòfò 'build, know'	tè 'put, get'	to 'offer, sacrifice'	ta 'give tàà 'shoot'	tĩt 'cov- er, shut'	tũ 'dance'			
	d	di 'refuse	du 'leak, drip,										

⁸ The table is adapted from Allen (1974).

	to answer'	reach'											
ky	kyi 'go round'	di- kyūú 'pile, heap'	kye 'begin, come from'	okyō 'be far away'	kye 'go, walk'	kō-kyō 'play' kyōō 'peep, show up'	kya 'cut'	di-kyī 'trap, kind of stool used in puberty rites'					
k	diki 're-move, leave'	kunu 'put child on back'	kelé 'carry in arms'	kokáá 'bury, hide'	ke 'lean'	kō 'bend' le- kōō 'navel'	ka 'count le- kaa 'char-coal'	kū 'mix up'					
kp	kpi 'die'		kpee 'put into, impregnate'	le-kpò 'sea'	kpe 'spread, increase, multiply'	kpoko 'crawl'	kpa 'put on, fall'						
f	finì 'peel'	fùkí 'throw' fuu 'boil'	fe 'pass, go, overtake'	foto 'wash'	fò '2nd person object pro'	fa 'lay an egg' fáá 'shout'	fì 'sneeze'	fū 'get, receive'					
s	osi 'yam'	sumu 'serve,	se 'rear, breed'	soko 'wait'	se 'fry, roast'	sō 'light, plant'	sa 'sing, knock'	sī 'refuse,	sunsū 'sell,				

			worship' ku- sùù 'fog'		sòò 'de- scend'	see 'be red'		le- saa 'thing	divorce'	well'			
lateral, approximants & Nasals	l			le 'eat'	lo 'kill' loo 'finish'	le 'col- lect le- lee 'year'	lo 'quar- rel, add' lòòfò 'rub'	lela 'fat' lalaa 'spoil'					
	y	yila 'stand, stop' yii 'full'	yu 'steal'	yè 'know' yee 'for- get'	leyo 'house'	ye 'van- ish' ka- yee 'chin'	yò 'marry, pick up' yoo 'be cool'	ya 'buy, lick'					
	w	wi 'weep, cry' wii 'pour'	o-wù 'silo' o- wūù 'thorn'	o-wè 'who' wéé 'chew'	wo 'reach up'	wɛ 'find'	wòfò 'black' le- wòòfò 'cold'	wa 'boil, cook, come'					
	m								mi '1SG' le- kpomii 'stool'	mù 'fold'	mɛ 'swal- low'	mò 'do' ka- moo 'rice with husk'	ma 'laugh' ka- maa 'back'
n									ni 'PP'	nu 'hear'	kò- nee	nonyi	nafù

									nii 'thight- en, bind'		'hand, arm'	'oil' nɔɔ 'fall down'	'step on, tram- ple'
	ny								nyi 'drink'	nyu 'look'	nyèèèè 'pour'	nyɔ́ 'louse , tick'	nya 'see, notice'
	nw								onwini 'hair'	onwu 'nose'		nwɔɔ '3SG DO'	le-nwa 'hoe'

The papers

Swedish summary

Yvonne Agbetsoamedo

Aspekter av grammatik och lexikon i *Seleε*

(översättning från engelska av Eva Lindström)

Denna avhandling är en beskrivning av vissa grammatiska drag hos *seleεε* (iso 639-3: snw), ett Niger-Kongospråk i undergruppen Ghana-Togo Mountains (GTM) inom grenen kwa. *Seleε* har mer än 11 000 talare, som kallas *balεε* och bor i de tre städerna Benua, Bume och Gbodome vilka tillsammans utgör Santrokofiområdet i regionen Volta i Ghana.

Avhandlingen består av en inledande del och följande fem artiklar:

- *Noun class system of Seleε* (2014). *Journal of West African Languages*. XLI: 1, 95–124.
- *Seleε* (under utgivning). I N. Grandi and L. Körtvélyessy (red). *Edinburgh Handbook of Evaluative Morphology*. Edinburgh University Press (med Di Garbo, Francesca)
- *The tense and aspect system of Seleε: A preliminary analysis* (under granskning).
- *Standard Negation in Seleε* (under utgivning). *Afrika und Übersee*.
- *Unravelling temperature terms in Seleεε* (under utgivning). I Koptjevskaja-Tamm (red). *Linguistics of temperature*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins (med Di Garbo, Francesca).

Avhandlingens inledande del har fyra avsnitt. Det första är en introduktion med bakgrund om talarna och deras språk, och information om den metodologi som använts. Avsnitt 2 ger en typologisk översikt över språket och jämför även ett antal fonologiska drag som återfinns i många språk i området med drag i *seleε*. I avsnitt 3 presenterar jag en sammanfattning av

artiklarna samt en jämförelse mellan grammatiska egenskaper som påträffats i selee och motsvarande drag i vissa andra GTM-språk, och där så behövs med Ewe och Akan. Några avslutande observationer ges i avsnitt 4. Avhandlingens andra del består av de fem artiklarna.

De två första artiklarna, *Noun class in Selee* och *Selee* (om diminutiv och augmentativ markering) handlar om substantivens morfologi, med fokus både på böjnings- och avledningsmorfem, och hur substantiv i språket fördelas på de olika nominalklasserna. De tredje och fjärde artiklarna, *Tense and aspect in Selee: A preliminary analysis* och *Standard negation in Selee* behandlar verbmorfologi i enkla deklarativa huvudsatser. De beskriver hur verbbaffix används på tre grundläggande typer av predikat, nämligen stativa lokativa, stativa icke-lokativa, och dynamiska. Användningen av jakande respektive negerande verbbaffix diskuteras också. Den femte artikeln, *Unravelling temperature terms in Selee* beskriver en specifik lexikal domän – temperatur. I artikeln diskuteras hur tre ordklasser – verb, substantiv och adjektiv – används predikativt och attributivt för att uttrycka temperaturbegrepp, framför allt inom områdena temperaturintryck och upplevelse.

Tillsammans redogör de fem artiklarna för grundläggande grammatiska drag i selee. Förutom ett antal drag som delas med andra kwaspråk beskrivs flera drag som är unika för selee i förhållande till dess besläktade grannspråk.

Sammanfattning av artiklarna

Selees nominalklasssystem

I denna artikel visas att selee har åtta morfologiska klasser som substantiv delas in i, var och en identifierad av ett prefix, så kallade *nominalklasser*. Enligt beskrivningstraditionen inom Niger-Kongospråk paras klasserna ihop två och två enligt numerus. Ett nominalklasspar består alltså av en singularklass och en pluralklass. Jag kallar varje sådant par ett *genus*. I flera fall paras en singularklass med mer än en pluralklass, och vice versa, vilket leder till att det finns åtta genus. Fem av dessa är vanligt förekommande medan tre har mycket få medlemmar (vad Corbett 1991 kallar *inquorate*; se avsnitt 5 i artikeln). Klasserna är numrerade på så sätt att klasser med udda nummer hänför sig till singularis, och klasser med jämna nummer till pluralis.

Substantiv uppvisar ofta kongruens med bestämmningar inom nominalfrasen. Bestämningarna kan ses som kongruensmottagare, och markeras med morfem som visar vilken klass de kongruerar med. Mottagare kan vara bestämdhetsmarkörer, demonstrativer, räkneord och frågemarkörer.

Utanför nominalfrasen kan kongruensmarkörer användas som subjektspoklitkor vid anaforer med lång räckvidd.

Klasskongruensmarkörerna kan också fungera som objektspronomen, men används relativt sällan av talarna i denna funktion.

Fördelningen av substantiv på klasser eller genus är delvis semantiskt betingad, delvis godtycklig. Varje genus kan mao. ges en semantisk profil, till en gräns, men innehåller också substantiv som verkar ingå av en slump. Diminutiv markeras genom suffix och medför genusbyte om det suffigerade substantivet inte redan tillhör det genus som diminutivmarkören annars skulle omklassa det till. Det finns dock vissa undantag.

Slutligen kan lokativa prepositioner inkorporeras i substantiv genom förlängning av den sista vokalen i nominalklassprefixet.

Sɛlɛɛ (diminutiver och augmentativer)

Artikeln utforskar de sätt på vilka diminutiv och augmentativ betydelse uttrycks morfologiskt i *sɛlɛɛ*. Medan augmentativ bara kan uttryckas analytiskt, med hjälp av adjektivet *kple* 'stor' och verbet *muɔ* 'att växa/vara stor', så kan diminutiv uttryckas antingen analytiskt eller med affix. Morfologiskt markeras diminutiv av suffixen *-bi*, *-mii*, *-ɛ* och *-nyi*. De tre senare uttrycker bara litenhet, men *-bi* har ett antal betydelser och uttrycker bl.a.: (1) litenhet, (2) djurs avkomma, och (3) kvantifiering av icke räknebara substantiv. Användningen av *-bi* kan medföra genusbyte. Suffixet *-bi* har sitt ursprung i ordet *obi* 'barn'. Detta stämmer väl överens med den typologiskt vanligaste grammatikaliseringsskällan för diminutiva konstruktioner (Jurafsky 1996). Ursprunget för de övriga tre suffixen är okänt.

Ett ämne som inte behandlas i artikeln är analytiska diminutivkonstruktioner. Dessa använder sig av ideofoniska adjektiv med grundbetydelsen 'liten'.

Modifiering av tonkurvan används för att uttrycka en talares positiva eller negativa attityd till en referent.

Tempus- och aspektsystemet i sɛlɛɛ: en preliminär analys

Artikeln beskriver det grammatiska systemet för tempus och aspekt i *sɛlɛɛ*. Analysen begränsar sig till icke negerade huvudsatser. *Sɛlɛɛ* har ett rikt tempus- och aspektsystem, vilket är ovanligt bland kwaspråk som oftast saknar tempus men har en mängd aspektkategorier. Verb i *sɛlɛɛ* kan som sagt indelas i tre predikattyper: lokativa stativa, icke-lokativa stativa, och dynamiska. En mer detaljerad indelning är naturligtvis möjlig, men dessa tre grundtyper räcker för ändamålen i denna artikel.

Verb markeras obligatoriskt för subjekt, som kan följas av tempus-aspektmarkör(er) och sedan verbrotten. Fyra tidsdomäner urskiljs. Ett antal språkspecifika markörer ("gram") används för att markera dessa domäner: nollmarkering, presens/hodiernal (förfluten tid samma dag), prehodiernal, perfekt och futurum. Till skillnad från övriga markörer är perfektmarkören inte tidsbunden. Aspektuella kategorier som observerats i språket innefattar progressiv, habitualis, och perfektiv. Det finns ingen form som har den särskilda funktionen att markera perfektiv, men presens/hodiernal-markören ger perfektiv betydelse i vissa kontexter.

Markören för presens/hodiernal är speciell iom. det stora antal funktioner den kan ha beroende på vilken typ av predikat den förekommer med. Tillsammans med stativa icke-lokativa predikat ger den antingen presens- eller hodiernal-referens. När den förekommer med dynamiska predikat kan den ha åtminstone tre olika perfekтива betydelser beroende på kontext eller satsstruktur: perfektiv hodiernal, perfektiv futurum, och performativ.

Standardnegation i selee

I denna artikel beskrivs de olika sätt på vilka negation i deklarativa verbala huvudsatser kan uttryckas i selee. Negering av underordnade satser, imperativer och existentiella satser ligger alltså utanför ramen för denna artikel.

Det finns tre huvudsakliga strategier för att negera deklarativa verbala huvudsatser i selee. En av dem använder sig av polaritetston. Selee har fyra toner: extralåg, låg, mellan och hög (varav bara extralåg och hög markeras i skrift). När ett subjektsprefix med icke-hög ton på ett verb ges hög ton så förändras yttrandets polaritet från jakande till nekande. Till exempel blir *àn-sa si-nu* 'hon sjunger (alltid)' *àn-sa si-nu* 'hon sjunger inte (alltid)'.

En annan strategi är att använda en negativ variant av en tempus- eller aspektmarkör. Exempelvis blir *à-à-le a-lesaa* 'han åt' *a-tá-le a-lesaa* 'han åt inte'.

Det tredje sättet att negera en huvudsats är att lägga till en särskild negationsmarkör för den aktuella tempus- eller aspektkategorin. Negationsmarkören för futurum är till exempel *la-*. Den jakande futuronsatsen *a-ba-wa* 'hon kommer att komma' negeras på så vis till *a-la-ba-wa* 'hon kommer inte att komma'. Det bör noteras att varje tempus- och aspektkategori har en eller flera egna negeringsstrategier. I vissa kategorier finns hela tre olika sätt att negera huvudsatser, till stor del beroende på vilka pronomina former som ingår i satsen.

I första person singularis sammanfaller formerna för negerad hodiernal, negerad habitualis, och negerad perfekt.

En kartläggning av temperaturtermer i selɛɛ

I denna artikel redovisas en undersökning av hur temperaturbegrepp uttrycks i selɛɛ. Vi kunde konstatera att de grammatiska konstruktioner som används skiljer sig åt beroende dels på vilken ordklass en temperaturterm tillhör, dels på kontexten.

Det finns åtta temperaturtermer, av vilka sex spelar en central roll inom temperatsystemet. De sex centrala termerna används inom alla huvudsakliga områden för temperaturupplevelse, dvs. taktil, omgivning, och personlig känsla. De icke-centrala termerna uttrycker bara taktil temperaturupplevelse. Temperaturintryck uttrycks av adjektiv (typiskt ideofoniska), verb, och substantiv. Vid taktila och omgivningsintryck används verb och adjektiv som fungerar attributivt eller predikativt, medan personlig upplevelse av temperatur endast uttrycks av substantiv, konstruerade som agenter som agerar på upplevaren (t.ex. 'svett slår mig'); denna typ av konstruktion förekommer även för omgivningstemperatur men inte för taktil temperaturupplevelse.

Vi fann även att vissa temperaturtermer har utvidgade eller metaforiska betydelser som ofta aktiveras när termerna används om animata referenter.

Vi observerade också asymmetrier inom temperaturkontinuet kall – varm – het på så sätt att den varma delen av spektrat har mer finkorniga distinktioner. I selɛɛ, liksom i de flesta språk, gäller att "vatten intar en särställning i temperatsystemens lingvistik" (Koptjevskaja-Tamm 2011: 405).

Avslutande kommentarer

Föreliggande avhandling beskriver delar av selɛɛs grammatik genom att fokusera på framför allt nominal och verbal morfologi. Mönster vid tillskrivande av egenskaper inom en avskild lexikal domän – temperaturuttryck – diskuteras också.

Angreppsättet i avhandlingen är huvudsakligen deskriptivt. Omfattande fältarbete har genomförts på språket, och data har transkriberats, annoterats, och analyserats i korpusformat. Såvitt jag känner till utgör några av artiklarna de första detaljerade analyserna av flera teman i selɛɛs grammatik, inte minst (1) standardnegation, (2) diminutiv och augmentativ markering, och (3) uttryck för temperaturupplevelse. Några artiklar ger fördjupad insikt i grammatiska områden i selɛɛ som tidigare har beskrivits översiktligt, såsom nominalklasssystemet och tempus- och aspektmarkering. I avhandlingen ges även jämförelser av de grammatiska egenskaper som beskrivs i de fem artiklarna om selɛɛ med motsvarande drag i kringliggande språk. Särskilt nominalklasssystemet är föremål för en komparativ studie inom GTM, men

även de andra drag som behandlas i artiklarna jämförs med andra GTM-språk och kwa i stort.

Utvärdering av metodologin

Analyserna i denna avhandling baseras på en korpus av data insamlade i fält. Korpusen består av en mängd olika typer av texter mm., alla transkriberade och annoterade: traditionella berättelser, procedurbeskrivningar, beskrivning av balees pubertetsriter, återberättande av videostimuli (Pear Stories; Chafe 1980), bibelöversättningar samt enkätsvar.

En större korpus hade varit önskvärd, dvs. mer fältarbete, och därigenom mer förstahandsdata, för att kunna dra säkra slutsatser om de fenomen som avhandlas. Alla slutsatser som presenteras här bör därför betraktas som preliminära resultat baserade på tillgängliga data.

Korpusen bygger till största delen på data från talare i Benua. Att utvidga den med data från talare i de två andra städer där selee talas, Bume och Gbodome, skulle ge en bättre förståelse för de företeelser som beskrivs, och även ge en vink om dialektal variation i språkanvändningen mellan talare från de tre städerna, och naturligtvis också bidra till en större datamängd. Talare från de andra två städerna ingick visserligen i studien, men de var för få för att uttala sig om deras varieteter av selee. Exempelvis är det ännu oklart om det faktum att konsonanterna [d] och [l] står i komplementär distribution för vissa seleetalare medan de för andra är i fri variation är ett dialektalt eller idiolektalt fenomen.

Framtida forskning

Behovet av en heltäckande referensgrammatik över selee är uppenbart, men det finns mer omedelbara forskningsfrågor som anknyter till de teman som diskuteras i avhandlingen. Alla de fem områden som behandlas i artiklarna kan förstås utforskas vidare, men de mest överhängande frågeställningarna för vidare forskning kretsar speciellt kring tre av dem:

(1) Negation

- negation i underordnade satser
- negation av existentiella konstruktioner
- negation av andra konstituenten än verb

(2) Tempus, aspekt och modalitet (TAM)

- markering av modalitet
- TAM-markering i seriella verbkonstruktioner
- TAM-markering i underordnade satser
- interaktion mellan TAM-kategorier i narrativ diskurs

(3) Det vore av intresse att studera ideofoners roll i språket i allmänhet, och i synnerhet vad gäller uttryck för diminutiva och augmentativa betydelser.

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This thesis is a description of some grammatical features of *Seleɛ*, an under-described language Niger-Congo language of the Kwa branch which is spoken by the *Baleɛ* of the Santrokofi area in the Volta Region of Ghana. *Seleɛ* is one of fourteen Ghana-Togo Mountain (GTM) languages that make up a generic or merely areally defined subgroup of Kwa.

The thesis consists of an introduction and five articles. The articles address topics such as noun class, diminutives, standard negation, tense, aspect, and temperature terms in *Seleɛ*. The introduction is comprised of a brief typological overview of *Seleɛ*, summaries of the five articles and comparative analyses of the grammatical features described for *Seleɛ* in the individual articles with some selected GTM and Kwa languages.



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