RICE UNIVERSITY

A grammar of Gã
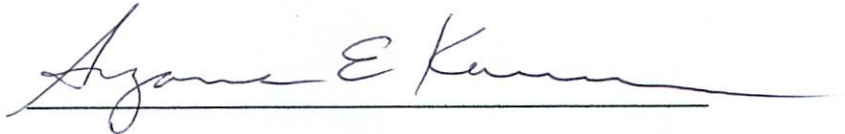
by

Akua Asantewaa Campbell

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
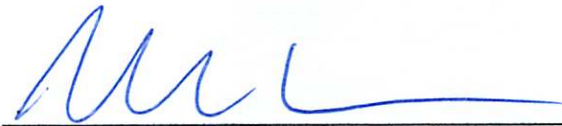REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

Doctor of Philosophy

APPROVED, THESIS COMMITTEE:

Masayoshi Shibatani
Deedee McMurtry Professor of Humanities and
Professor of Linguistics

Suzanne Kemmer
Associate Professor of Linguistics and Cognitive
Sciences

Jeffrey Fleisher
Associate Professor of Anthropology

HOUSTON, TEXAS
MAY 2017

ABSTRACT

A Grammar of Gã

by

Akua Campbell

This dissertation constitutes a description of the grammar - mainly the morphology and syntax - of Gã, a Kwa language spoken in Accra, Ghana by about 700,000 people. The aim is to present a comprehensive, usage-based account of Gã as it is spoken currently, while incorporating diachronic evidence where available to further understand and account for the synchronic data. In the first chapter, background information is given on the Gã people, their history and culture. There is also a brief description of basic phonetics and phonology.

Chapter 2 looks at the concept of the word, word classes and their associated morphology. Gã has all the major word classes: nouns, verbs and adjectives. It has bound subject pronominal clitics and free object pronominals. Property concepts are expressed mainly by verbs and nouns. Ideophones are very common and belong to the adverb, adjective and noun classes. Chapter 3 is dedicated to verbs. Verbal categories are conveyed primarily by affixation. Gã is an aspectual language with a recently established future time

prefix that is becoming more tense-like. Gã is nominative-accusative with highly transitive clauses and an indispensable subject. Chapter 4 discusses serial verb constructions. These were found to be pervasive and an important means of achieving valency changes and carrying out aspectual functions. As a result, morphological operations to alter valency are few. Major voice categories are manifested mainly through periphrastic means (Chapter 5). Chapter 6 looks at nominalizations generally. In Gã, grammatical nominalizations have functions ranging from relativization to complementation and adverbial modification. Topic and focus constructions are examined in the final chapter. Focus constructions are utilized for contrast and emphasis. Topic constructions are made up almost entirely of left-dislocated constructions. They may also mark contrast, and are used discursively to highlight background information.

Acknowledgements

Table of contents

List of Tables

List of figures

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.0 Overview, scope and aims of the study

The aim of this dissertation is to provide a thorough description and analysis of a wide range of

morphological and syntactic phenomena in the Gã language. Gã is a language of the Niger-

Congo family, the largest language phylum in the world with 1,436 languages (Williamson and

Blench 2000:11). It belongs to the Kwa sub-branch, which is the predominant branch in West

Africa. Gã is spoken primarily in Accra, the capital city of Ghana. Native speakers are also

referred to as Gã (people) or Gãs.

The target audience for this dissertation is primarily linguists, especially Africanists and

specialists of Kwa languages. But this work would be invaluable for morphologists,

syntacticians and grammarians of any language family, because its broad, in-depth description

of the Gã language could inform them of innovations in aspects of grammar that have been

attested in only a limited number of languages. Typologists, especially, will find that this

grammar tackles a great majority of the grammatical topics that constitute fertile ground for

cross-linguistic comparison and research, and they will find that such topics are analysed in

considerable syntactic and semantic detail. For this same reason, theoretically-oriented linguists will find this work a good resource in their investigations.

In certain regards, this grammar bucks the prevailing grammatical theories in linguistics today, and shows that grammar descriptions need not simply consume and propagate the theoretical trends already established, but can be critical of theoretical achievements in the field and correct errors, and in so-doing advance theoretical studies. This is in the spirit of Robert Dixon's and his students's many descriptive studies.

A much smaller target audience of this grammar is the body of scholars and teachers of Gã in Ghana. These comprise teachers of Gã at all levels of the education system as well as Gã experts responsible for policies on pedagogy such as setting criteria for instructional materials, creating curricula etc. It is my hope that this grammar will provide them with new insights into familiar pedagogical topics of the grammar as well as open them up to hitherto backgrounded aspects of the grammar, and that this spurs them to modify their teaching materials and approaches in order to more effectively impart onto their pupils and students the state of the grammar of present-day Gã.

All in all, this grammar is symbolically valuable to native speakers of Gã because it shows that Gã, like other more prestigious languages e.g. English, is amenable to scientific

studies and is at par with English and other European languages in having a documented

grammar which can make important theoretical contributions to the field of linguistics.

This first, introductory chapter will give background information on the Gã language

and people (§1.1), their history (§1.1.2) and culture (§1.4), and the current sociolinguistic

situation (§1.3). §1.5 will discuss previous work on Gã, while §1.6 and §1.7 will focus on the

theoretical framework and data collection methods employed in this work. §1.8 will give a

short overview of Gã phonetics and phonology.

1.1 The Gã people

The Gã are a relatively small group of people who inhabit the south-eastern coastal region of

Ghana from the Densu river valley in the west to Kpone in the east, and to the borders of the

Akyem and Akwapim regions to the north and north-west (Dakubu 1988:102). Gãs can be

found as far north as Oyibi (north-east) and Ajenkotu (north-west), as far west as Nleshie

Amanfrom and as far east as Kpone. This area is known as the Accra Plains. The traditional

homeland of the Gãs and the area with the highest population of Gãs is the city of Accra, which

since 1877 has also been the capital city of Ghana.

According to Reindorf (1966:24), the name Gã is derived from *gaga,* which is the name

of a type of big, black ant with a severe bite. He writes that the natives call themselves

Loeiabii. Loei is the name of another type of ferocious ant. This name must have fallen out of

use as it is hard to find any Gã person who refers to themselves by that. The Akan name for

loei is *nkrang* and this also became the name used by Akan-speakers to refer to Gãs. This name

also lent itself to the capital city and home of the Gãs, Accra. As with folk etymologies, one

cannot be too sure of their veracity. However, it seems the Gãs admired aggressive ants and

likened themselves to them, thereby referring to themselves using names of various species of

ants.

The number of Gã speakers cannot be accurately ascertained because census

information asks about ethnic affiliation and not languages spoken, and there are members of

the Gã ethnic group who may not speak Gã, as well as several non-Gã peoples who speak Gã

with native or near-native proficiency. Also, studies and statistics of Gã tend to be lumped up

with those of its closest relative, Dangme. This tight relationship is reflected in the hyphenated

term Gã-Dangme that is used to refer to the group. The 2010 national census puts the

population of Ga-Dangmes at 1,824,753 representing 7.4% of the population of the country,

which stood at 24,658,823 (Ghana Statistical Services 2013:62). Of these, a little over a third

are estimated to be Gãs (about 700,000), and a majority of these reside in the Greater Accra

Region. It is safe to assume that a very sizeable majority of these also speak Gã natively. The

census also puts the percentage of Ga-Dangmes in the Greater-Accra Region at 27%, with the

vast majority of the population of the region comprising different non-Gã ethnic groups.

Several thousands of these non-Gãs are fluent in Gã, especially those of the older generation

who settled in Accra at a time when Gãs were the majority ethnic group.

The traditional occupation of the Gãs is farming and sea-fishing. Men fish and women

smoke or salt fish for sale in the market. The modern city of Accra is big and cosmopolitan,

billed by the government as "the gateway to Africa". It is the seat of government and also the

financial capital of the country, with many banks and other financial institutions. There are also

many schools at the primary and secondary level and a healthy number of universities. As a

result of this urbanization, many Gãs are formally educated and have jobs as tradesmen, civil

servants or in other white-collar jobs.

The Dangmes neighbour Gãs to the east and north-east. The two peoples have a history

that is inextricably-linked and they speak languages that are very similar in every aspect.

Dakubu (1988) provides evidence to show that both languages descended from an ancient

ancestor – Proto-Gã-Dangme. However, they are not mutually intelligible. The two languages

have carved separate paths of development, mainly due to migration and contact with other

languages. Dangme was greatly influenced by Ewe while Gã was influenced early on by Guan,

and later by Akan (Dakubu 2005). Dangme is the more conservative of the two. Below is a

map taken from Bibiebome (2011:6), showing the Gã-speaking area.[1] Below that is a language

map of Ghana, with the Gã-Dangme-speaking area in the south-east coastal region of the

country being represented by short horizontal dashes.
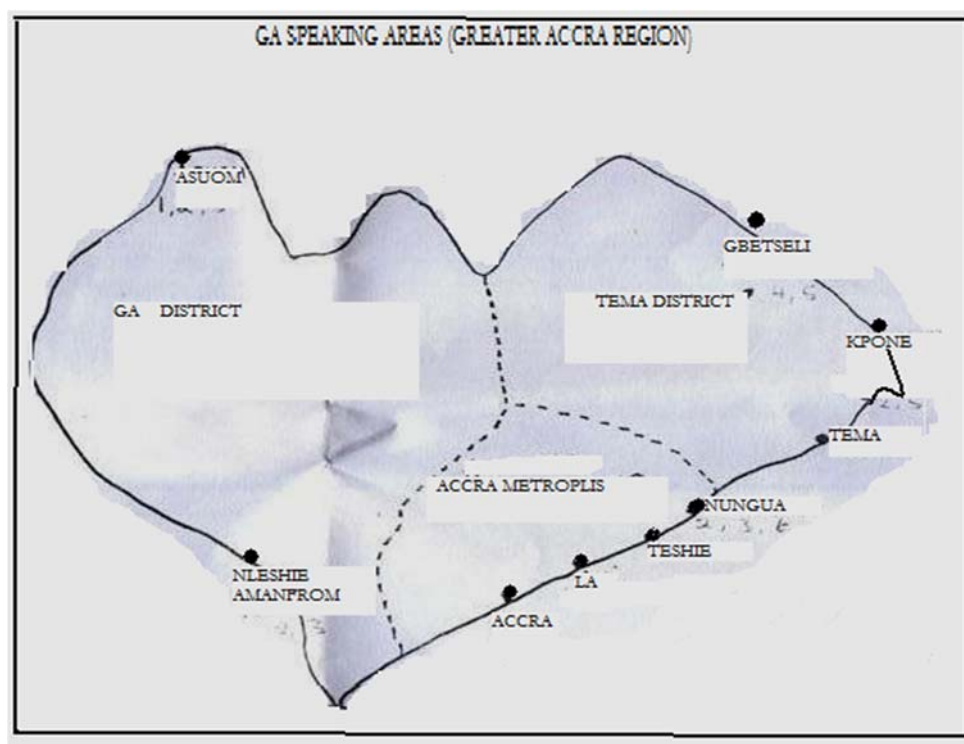
Figure 1: Gã-speaking area showing some major towns

---

[1] According to Dakubu (1988:102) Nungua, Tema and Kpone used to be Dangme-speaking areas till about 150 years ago.
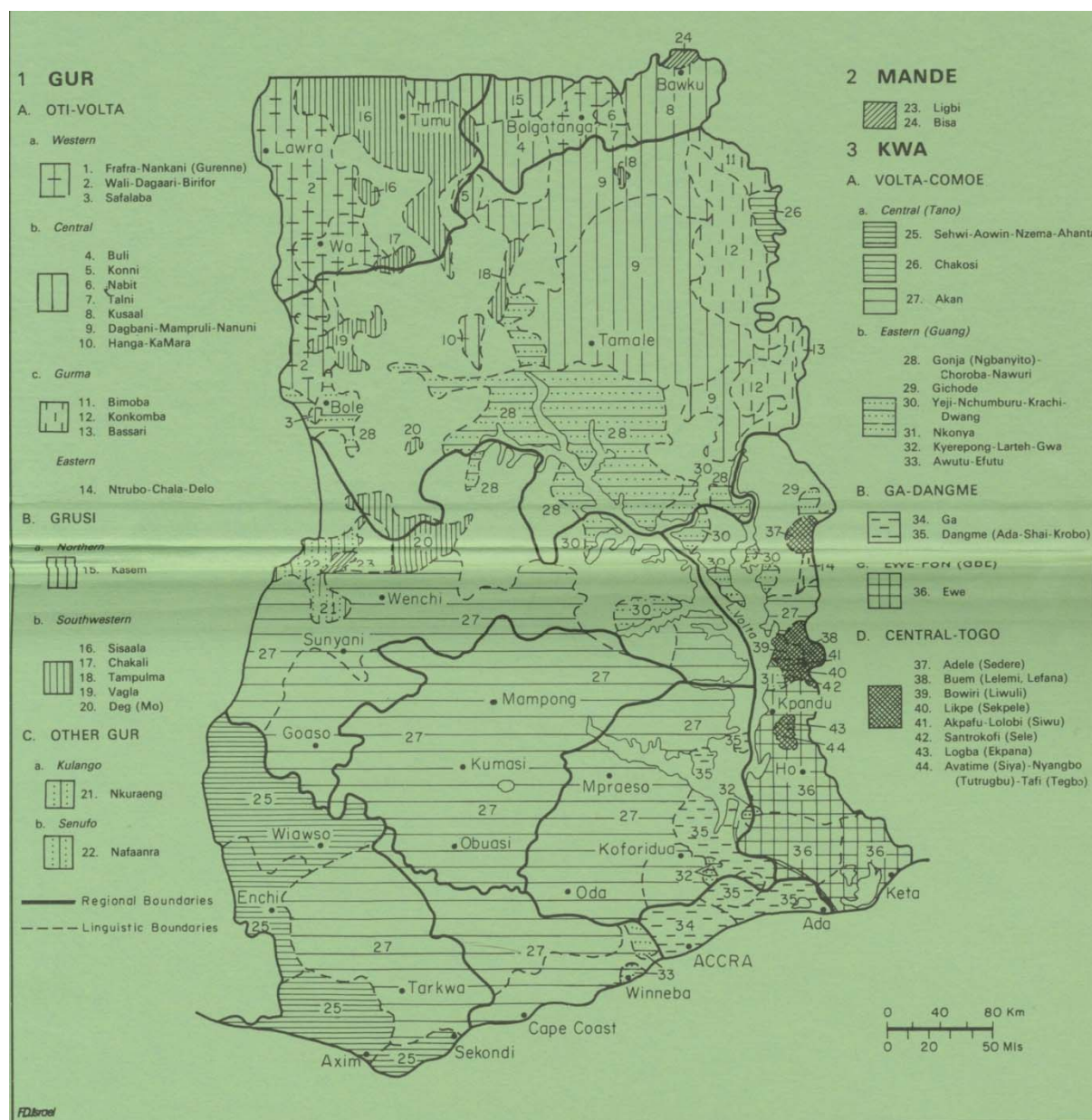
Figure 2: Language map of Ghana

1.1.2 History of the Gã people

Like most African people, the Gã-Dangme have no written record of their history, so what is

known of their early origin is gleaned from oral traditions. Most historians agree that the Ga-

Dangme came from an area east of the Volta River. Reindorf (1966:21) writes that oral history

has is that the Ga-Dangme originated from Same, between the rivers Efa and Kpola near Oyo in Nigeria. The exact location of this town however is disputed. It is believed that from Same the Gã-Dangme travelled through Benin, to Tetetutu in Togo, then finally crossed the Volta River, a small stream at the time, to their present settlement in the Accra Plains. Other people, especially Ga traditionalists, believe that their origins can be traced much further than Nigeria. They believe that the Gã-Dangme are descended from Jews, who migrated from Israel, through Egypt and Sudan and finally settled in an area bordering the River Niger, west of Lake Chad. From this region they migrated through Nigeria, to Benin, Togo and finally to the Accra Plains. Reindorf (1966:35) supports this Jewish origin story with a few examples of Hebraism in Gã culture. He notes that Gãs perform an important naming ceremony on the eight day after a child's birth, while Jews perform male circumcisions on the eighth day after birth. Before this day, the child is not considered a proper human. Gãs also have males circumcised but not necessarily on the eight day after birth. Also, during the annual festival, *Homowo,* door posts of each home are painted with red clay, just as was done by the Israelites for Passover.

Unfortunately, none of this can be easily verified. What is certain is that the Gã-Dangmes emigrated to their present day settlement from somewhere in the east. It is not certain when and where the two groups separated. C. Painter's Lexicostatistical Analysis (1966) mentioned in Dakubu (1988) puts the time of this separation at a little over 1000 years ago. It

is probable that the two languages became dialectally diverse before they crossed into the

Accra Plains (Henderson-Quartey 2001:42). Without a doubt, the early Gãs and their language

and culture were heavily influenced by the Guan people whom they met at Kpeshi and lived

amongst for a period before crossing into the Accra Plains. Some morphological features, for

example, which are not found in Dangme, can be traced to Guan influence. Later influence on

Gã language (mainly vocabulary) and culture came from the Akans further west. According to

Dakubu (1981:63), words borrowed into Gã from Akan include words related to the state and

military (*òtsàá!mɛ̃́* 'linguist', *àsàfò* 'company'), religion (*m̀pá!í* 'prayer', *òkòm̀fó* 'priest'), food

(*ŋkĺákĺá* 'light soup', *àm̀pèshí* 'plain boiled food') and music (*òdònó, àtùm̀pã́ŋ* 'types of

drums').

1.2 Genetic classification

Gã is classified as Niger-Congo, Kwa. The Kwa family comprises about 30 languages spoken

"along the Atlantic coast of West Africa from the south-eastern quadrant of Cote d'Ivoire to

the extreme southwestern corner of Nigeria" (Williamson and Blench 2000:27). Though the

grouping of other Kwa languages has presented some challenges to linguists, Gã and Dangme

have always uncontroversially been grouped together, which is indicative of their very close

genetic relationship (See: Greenberg 1963; 1983, Stewart 1989 and Williamson and Blench

2000). Gã displays typical Kwa characteristics such as having mainly monosyllabic verbs,

severely reduced noun class system or no noun class system (in the case of Gã, no traces

whatsoever remain of the noun class system associated with Proto Niger-Congo), and an

isolating and analytic syntactic structure in which there are few verbal affixes. Arguments are

indicated by adpositions or serial verbs (serial verbs in the case of Gã), rather than by valency-

changing affixes. As a result, the verb stem is phonologically reduced and small in size as

compare to the agglutinating morphology of many other Niger-Congo families, most famously

the Bantu family. Gã-Dangme has no further sub-classification within Kwa which suggests that

genetically, Gã and Dangme are as closely related to any one Kwa language as they are to

another e.g. Gã is just as closely (or distantly) related to Abidji, spoken in neighbouring Cote

d'Ivoire, as it is to Akan or Ewe which are spoken only a few hundred kilometres away from

Accra. Typologically, however, this is not the case, as proximity and resulting contact between

languages can lead to borrowing of vocabulary and syntactic structure. This is the case with

Akan and to a lesser extent, Ewe – the two languages that are geographically closest to Gã

(apart from Dangme). Agyei-Owusu (2007:8) notes that about 8% of the words in Dakubu's

(1998) Gã-English dictionary are of Akan origin. This massive borrowing is not surprising

because the Gã have since ancient times come into contact with various Akan groups. They

have simultaneously and alternately traded with them, lived with them, fought them, married

them, ruled over them and been ruled by them (Reindorf 1966). This cultural and linguistic

contact is bound to continue for years, as Accra is currently the most developed city in the

country and therefore the prime destination for migration of other ethnic groups in search of

jobs and a better life. Figure 3 below shows the classification of Kwa languages by Williamson

and Blench (2000:29).
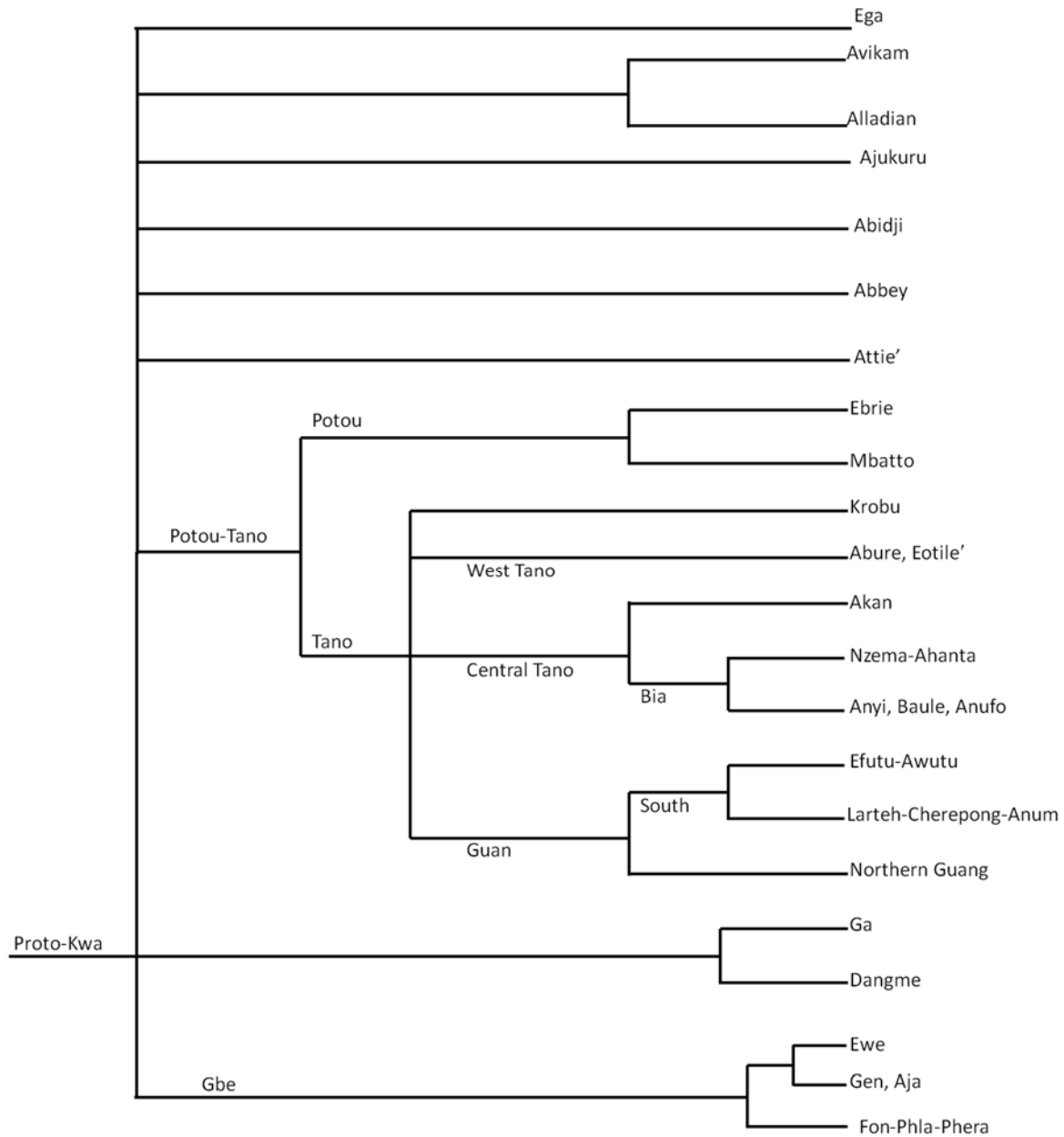
Figure 3: Kwa family tree

1.3 Sociolinguistic situation

The following sections explore some of the social dynamics that affect the use and

development of the language.

1.3.1 Dialects

Gã is relatively homogeneous. Dakubu (1988:105) reports that for Gã there is not much

regional variation. In addition Allotey (2004) notes some minor lexical, phonological and

syntactic differences between the Gã spoken in central Accra to that spoken on the periphery of

the Gã-speaking area (in towns such as Asuom, Gbetseli and Kpone). However, he concludes

that these are not significant enough to establish distinct dialect areas. It is interesting that even

at the boundaries of Gã land where one might expect some dialect differentiation due to

relative isolation and distance from the majority of the Gã populace, this is not the case.

Allotey (2004:77) surmises that this may be because the Gã community is more cohesive since

it occupies a very limited area as compared to other communities like the Akan and Guan

which are much more widely distributed.

1.3.2 Language attitudes, language shift and language maintenance

Gãs are famously multilingual. As mentioned earlier, Gãs have always been in contact with

various Akan goups. The result is that many native Gã speakers also speak Akan or at least one

other language. Indeed Dakubu (1996b:12) states that "it is very probable that no time in its

history has Accra been a linguistically homogeneous community in which everybody spoke

only Ga." It is thus a credit to the Gã people that although they have been bilingual throughout

much of history they have maintained the use of their language. As Sasse (1992:14) observes,

bilingualism or multilingualism may result in situations that cause one group to give up their

language for another. Gã speakers however have managed to cultivate a state of stable

bilingualism which has as yet not led to a shift. In a recent study by Bibiebome (2011) on

language shift and maintenance among Gãs, all the Gã respondents (200 to be exact) in the

survey reported varied degrees of fluency in another language. For many of them this language

was Twi (a dialect of Akan). No one was monolingual. He also found that Gã was increasingly

becoming restricted to use in the home domain, with almost half of respondents reporting that

rather than their native language Gã, they would use Twi in the market, at church and when

talking to a stranger, the reason being that Accra is a very multi-ethnic city and Twi has

become a defacto lingua franca because of the large population of Akan migrants to the city.

Indeed, Akans make up 39.7% of the population of the Greater Accra Region while Gã-

Dangmes make up 27.4% of that population, according to the 2010 census (Ghana Statistical

Service 2013:62). This is not surprising as Akan groups make up a little less than half of the

population of the entire country. In the face of these social dynamics, there is the sad

possibility that in the future Gã speakers may be unable to sustain this bilingualism.

Presently, however, this situation seems unlikely, as the factors that lead communities to

abandon their language simply do not exist in the Gã situation. One of these factors, as set forth

in the Gaelic-Arvanitika model of language death, is that the recessive group comes under

intense social and economic pressure to give up their language (Sasse 1992:14). Bibiebome

(2011) reports no such social or economic pressure. Rather, Gã speakers' use of Twi is for

utilitarian purposes rather than any wish to use a perceived more prestigious or economically

advantageous language. Positive attitudes towards Gã abound, with all native speakers

reporting a desire to see the language flourish. Most crucially, the language is still being

actively transmitted to children and so the threat of a shift to Twi is still far off. (Bibiebome

2011:57).

　　　　Perhaps, a bigger threat is posed by English, which as the language of prestige,

education and social advancement is viewed as the most important language in one's repertoire.

English is the national and official language of Ghana and the sole medium of instruction in

school at all levels. The extent of codeswitching in some of the recorded data gives one an idea

of how common and pervasive the English language is, even when people are speaking their

native languages. I have also casually observed that young middle-class parents (mostly in their

20's, 30's and 40's) often speak to their children in English rather than in their native language,

with the result that these children grow up understanding but not communicating in their native

language. This observation is in opposition to Bibiebome's findings that the language is being

passed on to children. If this trend continues then these languages, and Gã is amongst them, are

at some point going to become endangered as the economy develops and as more people

become educated and adopt the ideology that giving your children a head-start in the English

language will aid their future success.

Dakubu (2005:52) also reports that there continues to be a contraction in once important

registers such as hunting, traditional religion, fishing and traditional weaving. This has been

caused by the urbanization and Christianization of the Ga-speaking area. Many animals have

lost their habitat due to human expansion and along with their disappearance comes the loss of

vocabulary related to them. International fishing by big fishing companies means traditional

fishing is no longer as lucrative, and going to church for many means praying and worshipping

in English. The urbanization of Accra means that many Gãs have white-collar jobs, all of which

are conducted almost entirely in English. Therefore, while Gã is not in any immediate danger,

there is certainly reason to worry about the distant future and whether it will still be a viable

language then. Dakubu (2005:54) goes as far as to predict that the survival of Gã into the 23rd

century is not completely assured. This state of affairs makes works such as this one even more

important, as a way of preserving the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gã people.

1.4 Cultural background

This section gives a brief description of the social structure of Gã towns as well as a

description of three of their most important cultural rites - the annual *Homowo* festival and its

accompanying twin festival, and the naming ceremony (*kpòjìémɔ̃́*) held for newborn babies.

Every Gã person comes from one of six Gã towns, all found along the coast. These are Ga Mashi, Osu, La, Teshie, Nungua, Tema and Kpone. Even Gãs who have lived for generations inland, in Gã villages as far north as the foot of the Akwapim Hills, will identify one of these coastal towns as their hometown. The Ga Mashi are believed to be the first group of Gãs to have settled on the coast and hence are seen as the original settlers. When Gã natives speak of Gã (the place), they mean Ga Mashi. Similarly, when some people speak of Accra, they are referring to Ga Mashi and its immediate environs and not necessarily to the entire metropolitan area of Accra. Within each town, there are various "quarters" to which several families belong.

Unlike the neighbouring Akans and Ewes, traditionally, Gã society is not headed by a chief or king but rather by a high priest, the chief/head *wúlɔ̀mɔ̀*. According to Field (1961), the *wúlɔ̀mɔ̀* is the caretaker or guardian of the gods of the people. Each god has its *wúlɔ̀mɔ̀* and the head *wúlɔ̀mɔ̀* or high priest is the priest to the most important god. Gã government, therefore was an absolute theocracy, according to Field. The *wúlɔ̀mɛ̀ì* 'priests' were tasked with keeping the peace, resolving disputes, as well as feeding the gods, praying to them and performing the necessary rites and rituals. Field (1961:3) writes that due to the need to form military alliances to fend off attackers and negotiate with foreigners, the high priest had to relinquish some of his less-spiritual duties to the lesser priests. These lesser priests thus were empowered with

important matters of governance in a parallel role to the chiefs of the Akan tribes. They were given the title *mãŋtsè* (lit: father of the town) and were referred to by other tribes as 'chiefs'. Many of the royal symbols of chieftaincy associated with the Akans (such as royal stools, umbrellas, riding in palanquins etc.) were adopted for them.

Owing to this history, chieftaincy among the Gã is not as strong and respected an institution as among other tribes, and there are constant disputes whenever one chief dies, over who to succeed him. The high priest or chief *wúlɔ̀mɔ̀* is still viewed as a sort of "keeper of the soul" of the people and is accorded the utmost respect. At national ceremonies held in Accra, such as independence day celebrations, it was the *wúlɔ̀mɔ̀* who represented the Gã people and offered prayers.

1.4.1 Some important cultural observances

Three important rites observed by the Gãs will be discussed in this section. The first two are linked in that they occur within a day of each other. These are the twin festival - *hàã̀ĩàyèlèyélí* (twins' yam-eating) and *Homowo,* the annual festival that marks the harvest and the beginning of the new year. The third is *kpòjìémɔ̃́,* the naming ceremony performed for babies eight days after birth.

The Gãs believe that twins are a blessing from God and are also supernatural creatures with magical powers. Therefore, every year, a day before *Homowo,* a ritual celebration is held

in their honour. On the day of the twin festival, a special preparation of herbs is made together with goat and chicken blood, yam peels, schnapps, eggs and sea water. This mixture is left in the compound of the twins' home. It is believed that anyone who puts money into the pot containing the herbal preparation and washes their face and rinses their mouth with it will have their desires fulfilled by the twins. It is believed that the spirit of the twins resides in the herbal preparation. On the day of the twin festival, many people come and make supplications through the herbs. In the evening, women carry the pots containing the herbs from the home of the twins to the seaside, in a large procession involving singing and dancing. The women who carry the pots become possessed and act wildly but do not endanger themselves or anyone else. The twins are bathed and dressed in all-white clothes and their faces are painted with white clay. They follow the procession to the seaside, where the herbal preparation is thrown away. The procession itself is a joyous and raucous affair with huge crowds pouring into the narrow old streets of Gã Mashi, as I witnessed a couple of years ago. People who do not join the procession nevertheless celebrate in their homes or line the streets to watch the procession. The day is a boon for restaurant and bar owners as people go all out to partake in the merry-making. After the procession, the people all go to their various homes and enjoy meals specially requested by the twins.

The following morning is the day for celebrating *Homowo,* a festival to remember a time in the past when there was a great famine, which eventually ended amidst abundance of food. A few weeks before *Homowo,* the *ŋmàǎ̀dǔ!mɔ́* ceremony takes place, where the priests and people sow the first seeds of corn. After this ceremony and before *Homowo,* there is a ban on all drumming and other forms of noise-making, so as not to disturb the gods at this critical time. The ban is lifted on the day of *Homowo. Homowo* celebrations generally involve cooking of a special corn meal called *kpèkplè,* together with palm nut soup. Some of the food is sprinkled on the ground as a way of feeding the ancestors. The people also ask for blessings from the gods and the ancestors and generally engage in eating and merry-making. *Homowo* takes place at different times for the different Gã towns but they generally occur in the months of July and August for most towns.

The third important cultural practice to be discussed is *kpòjìémɔ́.* The following account is largely taken from Field (1961:171). According to her, when a Gã child is born, he is kept indoors for seven days, and during these seven days he is not considered a proper, living person. A baby who dies within these seven days is treated the same as one who was born dead. Very early in the morning on the eighth day, when the moon is still visible, the child, if he is still alive, is finally "out-doored" and taken from his mother's house (where he was born) to his father's house, where family and friends gather to welcome him. Before this day, the

child has no name, since no one is sure whether he is there to stay or not. During the out-

dooring ceremony, an elder in the family whose character the parents wish the child would

emulate, blesses the baby by raising him high three times and reciting some formulaic prayers.

He also pours libation. He then places the child naked on the ground and pours a calabash of

water on the roof three times so that some of the water trickles onto the baby. This, according

to Field (1961:173) is to introduce the child to the rain and to the earth. More blessings and

prayers are offered, followed by eating and drinking of corn beer. Some describe this ceremony

as "introducing the child to the moon."

These and other ceremonies and rituals have been observed by the Gã people for

centuries, but in modern times their popularity has fallen, owing mainly to the surge in Gãs

leaving orthodox churches such as the Anglican, Catholic and Methodist churches (which

appeared more tolerant of these indigenous practices, or at the very least refused to condemn

them) to Pentecostal or charismatic churches, whose leaders are virulently opposed to

participation in some of these rituals because they see them as unbiblical and as forms of

heathen-worship. Even some leaders of the orthodox churches are now expressing opposition to

these rituals, perhaps in order to be seen by their flock as more spiritually-minded, so as to

stem the departure of their members to the Pentecostal churches, which are often viewed as

more actively and openly spiritual and more attuned to the teachings of the Bible. Even if

people do observe some of these rites, in many cases it is a watered down version that barely resembles the traditional thing. I got a first-hand experience of this when I attended one *kpòjĭé!mɔ̃́.* In keeping with the parents' religious beliefs as Christians, the ceremony was conducted by an Anglican priest from their parish, rather than an elder in the family. What made this even more incongruous was that the priest was not a Gã speaker, so he conducted the ceremony in English and Twi. There were no exhortations and blessings in the archaic Gã that is characteristic of traditional worship, neither was there any libation to the gods nor feeding of the ancestors. Instead, passages were read from the Bible (in English) and Christian prayers were offered. In a part of the ceremony that requires the celebrant to put a couple of drops of whiskey or schnapps on the baby's tongue, the schnapps was replaced with Sprite, presumably because alcohol consumption is viewed as sinful or inappropriate within a religious gathering.

The decline in enthusiasm for traditional rites cannot be blamed on Christianization alone. People's attitudes and views on various issues have changed over time as a result of formal education and a shift towards being more open-minded. Very few modern parents believe that their babies are not real human beings in the first seven days after birth. Baby names are picked even before the babies are born. And since most women give birth in hospitals or health centres and leave to go home after a couple of days, it is impossible to keep a baby indoors for seven days. With regard to the twin festival, many young, modern parents of

twins do not believe that their twins possess magical powers and the ability to grant wishes,

therefore a big annual ceremony to honour them might not seem justified. Neither do young,

educated Gãs believe that dead ancestors need to be fed with physical food or prayed to. There

have also been tensions between traditionalist Gãs and the non-Gãs who live among them over

the observance of the pre-*Homowo* noise ban, with some non-Gãs refusing to adhere to the

ban.

The result is that, for many Gãs, especially those who reside outside the six main Gã

towns, *Homowo* is simply a time to enjoy *kpékplè* and palm-nut soup; baby "out-doorings"

(kpòjìé!mɔ́) can take place as long as six months after the baby is born, and twin festivals are

unknown to them. While some may view this as cultural degradation, others see it as a natural

turn of events as a society becomes more urbanized and educated.

1.5 Previous work on Gã

Early work on Gã was carried out by missionaries, some of whom were associated with the

European colonizers. The most famous of these is the dictionary and grammatical sketch by the

German missionary, Zimmerman (1858). Zimmerman's dictionary is quite comprehensive and

accurate for a non-native speaker and has the added advantage of having been written in

English. It contains an almost 400 page vocabulary, descriptions of pronunciation, morphology

and syntax, as well as proverbs, histories, speeches, two songs, two traditional stories and

transcribed texts of a meeting (carried out in Gã) between Gã leaders and the British colonial

leaders, over the refusal of the Gãs to pay a tax. In short, it is a wealth of linguistic information

decently presented.

Another important early writer of Gã, earlier than Zimmerman, was Christian Protten,

the son of a Gã woman and a Danish soldier and a native speaker himself. His 1764

'Introduction to the Fante and Gã language' is written in Danish and translated into English by

Truteneau (1971). His work consisted of a word list, a short grammar and a catechism and is

especially impressive for its accurate phonological description.

Other works of this early period were less rigorous and consisted of word lists and texts

e.g. Bowdich (1819). Others are inaccessible to me because they are written in Danish and kept

in libraries in Denmark or Germany that do not lend out. Examples are Rask (1828) and

Oldendorp (1777). The Danish influence on the development of Gã was particularly strong due

to the belief of the Moravian Brethren missionaries (many of whom were Danes) that the

Christian gospel should be preached in the ordinary language of the people and that religious

texts should be in the vernacular (Dakubu p.c).

Written in relatively modern times, Wilkie (1930) is a notable publication in English

comprising a modern traditional grammar-based description of basic Gã syntax. Berry (1951) is

an accurate but short account of Gã phonology. Independence in 1957 and the establishment

thereafter of the University of Ghana and its linguistics department, as well as the

establishment of the Bureau of Ghana Languages (BGL), encouraged the proliferation of works

on Gã. Many of these works were pedantic and prescriptive in nature and were aimed at

teaching Gã to non-native speakers or to pupils in schools who had to study Gã as part of the

requirements of the curriculum. Most were written in English but a few were written in Gã.

Examples are Ablorh-Odjija (1961, 1968), Amartey (1970), Bannerman (1948) and Berry and

Kotei (1969). Ankrah (1966) is a collection of proverbs. Anteh (1953) gives a brief description

of greetings in Gã.

Linguistic work on Gã in very recent times has undoubtedly been dominated by Mary

Esther Kropp Dakubu. Her work has focused mainly on the verb complex e.g. Kropp (1968),

Dakubu (1970, 2004a, 2004b, 2008a), and phonology (especially tone) e.g. Dakubu (2002). Her

Ga-English dictionary, most recently edited and reprinted in 2008 has over 7,000 entries and is

an invaluable resource for anyone working on the language. She has also published extensively

on anthropological and cultural issues related to the Gã-Dangme people.

Other works on Gã, comprising mainly of BA long essays, master's theses and a couple

of Ph.D. theses on specific linguistic topics have been produced by students of linguistics at

universities in Ghana.

Although there have been quite a number of publications on Gã, there are significant

gaps in these studies. Important aspects of syntax such as grammatical relations, voice, valency

and grammatical nominalizations have received very little to no attention in the literature. In

addition, there are some morpho-syntactic phenomena that have been unsatisfactorily

addressed. An important difference between this grammar and many previous works on Gã is

that the analyses are going to be empirically-based. Data will be that obtained from current

native speakers interacting with each other as they would in everyday life. This minimizes the

chances of using data from people's reports about their own use of the language, a practice that

often results in inaccuracies. It also minimizes considerably the problem of speakers reporting

to field linguists what they think should be the "correct" usage, rather than what they and

others actually say.

Another reason why this grammar is valuable is that it relies on an approach to

language analysis that is couched in the communicative purpose that language serves. This

approach is known as functionalism, and it contrasts with more formal approaches to language

study, which have dominated the field of linguistics, and consequently the analyses of Gã

syntax by other authors. This theoretical framework will be discussed in detail in the following

section.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

This grammar will be based on the functionalist approach to language advocated by Givón

(2001), Kuno (1975), various works by Shibatani, Sandra Thompson and her co-authors and

other notable functionalists. Functionalist approaches to language stress the need to look

outside of language structure to account for data. They emphasise the need to look at

communicative function, human experience and discourse-pragmatic factors in explaining

language. Nichols (1984:97) writes that "functionalists maintain that the communicative

situation motivates, constrains, or otherwise determines grammatical structure..." Therefore,

advocates of this approach emphasise the importance of studying actual discourse rather than

relying on intuition. They also seek, wherever possible, to explain grammatical structure, and

this explanation must necessarily derive from the communicative situation. In this way,

functionalist approaches to language attempt to bridge the gap between linguistics and

anthropological linguistics (Nichols 1984:98).

This approach is in contrast to formal theories of language, which construct models of

language, without any reference to communicative or cultural factors. The model often

becomes the main focus of study. This stems from the belief among formalists, specifically

those of the generative tradition, that all languages have the same underlying structure, a

"universal grammar", which is pre-wired in the brain. Formalist linguists therefore try to show

by means of transformation rules how each language, in production, deviates from universal grammar. Formal theories lead advocates to focus on certain aspects of grammar such as syntax that are considered more important, to the exclusion of others e.g. pragmatics. A lot of the previous work on Gã has leant toward formalist linguistics with its disregard for "non-core" aspects of grammar. This work is the first to look at Gã from the functionalist perspective, and wherever possible its tenets will be adhered to.

1.7 Data collection

The data used in this work comes from three main sources. First, audio recordings were made of natural interactions between Gã speakers. These were transcribed and translated. The recordings included face-to-face conversations, a phone call, a traditional prayer, a church sermon and two procedural narratives. See Appendix B for details on metadata. These recordings were made in Accra in 2013 and 2014. The second source of data comes from a collection of oral narrations of Mercer Mayer's (1969) picture book, "Frog, where are you?" by both adults and children, numbering 14 in all. These recordings were made in 2011 and 2012 in Accra and were also transcribed and translated. In total, there were about 3 hours of naturally-occurring speech to inform my analyses and draw examples from. A majority of the examples in this thesis are taken from this small corpus of Gã language use. The third source was my native speaker's knowledge and intuition buttressed by consultations with other native

speakers. Such constructed examples were used sparingly, but were found to be useful,

especially when trying to demonstrate a paradigm and how a change in just one morpheme

affects the interpretation of an utterance.

As a native speaker of Gã and a resident of Accra, access to other native speakers was

relatively easy. Consultants included relatives, neighbours, friends, acquaintances and friends of

friends. The problem that plagued my attempts at data collection was that some people who

were otherwise willing to help did not like being recorded, and would back out once they

discovered recording was involved. Nevertheless, a few did agree to go along with it. All

consultants were told about the recordings prior to the start of the recordings. They were also

made aware of the purpose of the recordings.

The examples in this work consist of three lines. The first line contains the Gã example

with morpheme breaks. Affixes are marked with '-' and clitics with '='. The sole exception is

the indefinite article, *ko,* a clitic which conventionally is written as a separate word. The

convention will be obeyed in this work. In some of the natural data, speakers use English or

Twi words or phrases. These are written as they would be in English or Twi orthography in

italics. Other words are borrowings from English or another European language that were

added to Gã vocabulary decades or even centuries ago. These have been nativised to conform

to Gã phonetics and phonology and will be spelt with Gã orthography. An asterisk (*) against

an example indicates an ungrammatical sentence or phrase. A question mark (?) indicates that

the example borders on ungrammatical but some speakers may not reject it wholly. Basically,

its grammaticality cannot be confidently adjudged. The purpose of ***bolding and italicizing***

certain words or phrases in the Gã examples is to focus the reader's attention on the parts of

the sentence that are pertinent to the topic under discussion. The second line of the examples

gives the corresponding English glosses of the Gã morphemes. For code-switching involving

English words, no gloss is provided, since this will merely constitute repetition. The third line

gives an English translation. As much as possible effort is made to give an English translation

that matches the Gã syntax as much as possible. If that will result in an English sentence that

sounds too awkward, a free translation is given without any regard to matching the two

syntaxes. This free translation is then followed by a literal translation (marked 'Lit') which

much more closely resembles the Gã syntax. With some conversational data, there are instances

where the speech of two or more speakers overlap i.e. they are produced at the same time. As

per the transcription conventions of Dubois et al (1993), overlapping talk will be indicated by

square brackets [] around the stretch of speech of each speaker.

1.8 Phonetics and Phonology

This section will provide a brief overview of basic phonetic and phonological knowledge

needed to understand the syntax of Gã.

1.8.1 Vowels

Gã has seven oral vowels and five nasal vowels. It makes a phonemic contrast between nasal

vowels and oral vowels. This brings to 12 the total number of phonemic vowels in Gã. Figure 4

below from Dakubu (2002:50) shows the vowel chart of Gã vowels. The mid-high vowels /e/

and /o/ do not have nasal counterparts. Front vowels are unrounded while back vowels are

rounded. The low central vowel /a/ is unrounded.

	Front Spread	Central Spread	Back Spread
Close	ĩ i		ũ u
Half-close	e		o
Half-open	ɛ̃		ɔ̃
	ɛ		ɔ
Open		ã	
		a	

Figure 4: Gã vowel chart

1.8.2 Consonants

Below is a chart showing the Gã consonant phonemes. Consonants containing the superscript

/ʷ/ are labialised.

Table 1: Ga consonant inventory

	Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Lab. Palat.	Lab. Postalveolar	Palatal	Velar	Labialised Velar	Labiovelar	Glottal
Plosive	p b		t	d					k g	kʷ gʷ	kp gb	
Nasal	m			n				ɲ	ŋ		ŋm	
Fricative		f v		s z	ʃ		ʃʷ			hʷ		h
Affricate					tʃ dʒ		tʃʷ dʒʷ					
Approx				ɹ		ɥ		j			w	
Lateral approx.				l								

The alveolar approximant, /ɹ/ and the lateral approximant /l/ sometimes occur in free variation. For example, *kwráá* [kʷráá] 'at all' can be produced [kʷláá] and *shàrà* [ʃràà] can be produced [ʃlà] 'stinky'. No consonant except /ŋ/ may occur in word-final position. /ŋʷ/ and /ɲ/ can only occur in onset position, never coda. Gã has homorganic nasal assimilation in words like *ǹtɛ̃ŋ* 'stubbornness', *ŋ̀króŋ* 'snore (n.)', *m̀plǎbí* 'love child' and *pémpéóó* 'medium-sized'. The question of whether to analyse these as consonant clusters as suggested by Downing (2005) or as prenasalized stops as suggested by Maddieson and Ladefoged (1993) and Clements (1986) is an important one in African linguistics. Dakubu (2002) is of the view that they are not single pre-nasalised stops. Indeed she puts the nasal and following stop into two different syllables, with the nasal comprising the nucleus (and sole segment) in its syllable. The nasal, therefore, is able to carry tone.

1.8.3 Syllable Structure

Gã has only open syllables with V and CV shapes. The nucleus may consist of a vowel or

syllabic consonant (nasal, alveolar lateral or alveolar approximant). If the nucleus of a syllable

consists of a nasal then there can be no onset or coda (Dakubu 2002:47).

1.8.4 Tone

Tone plays a very important role in Gã. The language has both lexical and grammatical tone. It

has two phonemic tones: High (H) and Low (L). Below are some minimal pairs which differ

only in tone:

(1) bɔ̀ 'create'   bɔ́   'dew'

    bù 'respect'   bú   'trench'

    bò 'shout'   bó   'become smooth (of food)'

    bὲ 'pinch (crab)'   bɛ́   'QUESTION PARTICLE (QP)'

Phonetically, there are three tone distinctions: High, Low and Downstepped High (!H). A

downstepped High tone is a tone that is realised at a slightly lower pitch than a preceding H

tone. This may be caused by the presence of a L before the !H. The L causes the following H

to be realised at a lower pitch, in which case we have automatic downstep. When there is no L

tone that conditions the downstep, we have non-automatic downstep.

The presence of automatic downstep makes Gã a terrace-level tone language. This

downstepping is iterative, with each successive H lower in pitch than a preceding H if they are

both preceded by a L (Dakubu 2002:10). Dakubu notes that a H tone at the end of a long

utterance may therefore end up being lower than a L tone at the beginning of the utterance. A

low tone is also slightly more raised in pitch when followed by a H than when followed by a L,

a phenomenon that has been named upstep. This lowering of H and raising of L proceeds

iteratively throughout the intonation unit, after which the pitch is reset for the start of a new

intonation unit. Wentum (1996:65) observes that there is no audible distinction between a

downstepped H tone and an upstepped L tone (U). However, she claims that words that have L

or U behave differently from those that have H or D.

   Gã also has floating tones. These are tones which lack a syllable and in speech may end

up docking on a preceding sound segment. An example of a floating tone is the floating low

tone that precedes the copular ˋ*jí.* When the syllable preceding the copula has a high tone, the

floating low tone on the copula docks on the preceding syllable, combining with its high tone

to obtain a falling tone. Example:

kòfí   'PROPER NAME'   →   kòfî   jí   í̀=nyɛ̌mí
                                Kofi   COP   1SG=sibling
                                It is Kofi who is my sibling

When the syllable preceding the copula bears a low tone, there is no change in tone.

shɔ̀mɛ̌   'PROPER NAME'   →   shɔ̀mɛ̌ jí   í̀=nyɛ̌mí
                                Shome COP   1SG=sibling
                                "Shome is my sibling."

Floating tones come about when a syllable is deleted but its tone remains, or when two

syllables coalesce into one. In §3.5.1.1, I postulate that the floating tone of the copula is a result

of the deletion of a preceding focus marker, *nǐ*.

1.9 Orthographic issues

The digraphs used here are those agreed on by the Bureau of Ghana Languages (1996) for the

writing of Gã. The following table shows only those orthographic representations that differ

from the IPA representations and their corresponding IPA symbols.

Table 2: Ga orthographic symbols and their corresponding IPA symbols

Orthographic Representation	IPA Representation
ts	t͡ʃ
j	d͡ʒ
w̌	ɥ
r	ɹ, ɽ
ny	ɲ
sh	ʃ
kp	k͡p
gb	g͡b
ŋm	ŋ͡m
kw	kʷ
gw	gʷ
hw	hʷ
y	j

Vowels are represented with the usual IPA symbols, and nasal vowels are indicated with a tilde

(˜) above the vowel. High vowels are represented with an acute accent over the vowel (´),

low vowels with a grave accent (ˋ) and downstepped high tones with an exclamation mark (!)

before the syllable bearing the downstepped tone. Upstep is signalled by an upward-pointing

arrow (ꜛ) superscripted before the syllable with the upstepped tone.

Chapter 2: Words and word classes

2.0 Introduction

This chapter examines the concept of the word in Gã. It categorises these words into various

functional categories known as word classes and examines any accompanying morphology.

§2.1 will focus on wordhood and the delineation of phonological and grammatical words. §2.2

will give an overview of some of the difficulties encountered in divying up the lexicon of a

language into syntactic/semantic categories such that they can be relevant to discussions of

typology and linguistic theory. The following word classes will then be discussed in detail:

nouns in §2.3, property concepts in §2.4 and adverbs in §2.5. Ideophones, which do not

constitute a separate word class, will be looked at in §2.6, and finally, interjections will be the

subject of §2.7. The entirety of chapter 3 will be devoted to verbs.

2.1 Wordhood

The concept of a word is one that linguists as well as non-linguists alike take for granted. It is

assumed to be self-evident and easily identifiable, especially when examining a language in its

written form. However, as many writers such as Matthews (1991) and Dixon and Aikhenvald

(2002) have noted, several linguists have tried unsuccessfully to define "word" in a way that is

applicable to all languages. One of the reasons why it has been difficult to reach a consensus is

that each writer utilizes different sets of criteria in arriving at their conclusion, with many

appealing to both phonological and grammatical attributes in identifying a word. This,

according to Dixon and Aikhenvald (2002:10) leads to ambiguities and conflicts when these

criteria do not coincide. Some writers even appeal to orthographic conventions when

delineating the word. For example, Pike's (1947:89) definition of the word as the smallest unit

of meaning capable of being written in between spaces. This approach also runs into problems

because different orthographic conventions may be used for the same language or closely

related languages. Dixon and Aikhenvald (2002) advocate an approach that keeps grammatical

and phonological criteria separate and attempts to define the word in terms of each of these

phenomena. In what follows I try to do that and subsequently compare the results from the

utilization of these two rubrics to see whether and how they coincide.

2.1.2 The phonological word

Dixon and Aikhenvald (2002:13) define a phonological word as "a phonological unit larger

than a syllable (in some languages it may minimally be one syllable) which has at least one

(and generally more than one) phonologically defining property." These defining properties

belong to three broad phonological categories, namely: segmental features, prosodic features

and phonological rules. Below, I discuss the phonological features that define the phonological

word in Gã. These features are few and I have identified just two from two areas: segmental

features and prosodic features. Note that none of these features individually constitute both a

necessary and sufficient condition for phonological word. However, the aggregate of these

provide good evidence for it.

2.1.2.1 Segmental features

Segmental features comprise phonological features related to internal syllabic and segmental

structure and related phonetic features, word boundary phenomena and pause phenomena

(Dixon and Aikhenvald 2002:13). In Gã, there are certain vowel sequences that cannot occur

within a phonological word. However some of these sequences are permitted across word

boundaries. Therefore the occurrence of such vowel sequences suggests the presence of a

phonological word boundary. These vowel sequences are **ɛe, ɔe, ɛa, oe, ɔa** and **ae.** For example,

in (1), the sequence of the phonemes /ɛ/ in *kɛ́* 'when' and /a/ in *àwò* 'they prepare' can only

occur across word boundaries as it is prohibited word-internally. Therefore it is a good marker

of the existence of a phonological word boundary.

(1)   hèwɔ̀   *kɛ́*   *à=wò*   bàá=!á   à=mã̀
             sake   when   3PL.IMPERS=prepare   leaf=DEF   3PL.IMPERS=put
             shĩ̀
             down
             "So when the herbal infusion has been prepared and put down…"   [YM:86]

In (2) the sequence /oe/, which cannot occur within word boundaries marks final and initial

phonological word boundaries of *ànű̃kò* and *èhè* respectively.

(2)   hèwɔ́ = !ɔ́   *à = nṹ-kò*   *è = ħè*
       sake = TOP   3PL.IMPERS = hear-NEG   3SG = body
       "So, she hasn't been heard from."   [DF:202]

Although syllable structure is useful in delineating phonological word boundaries in other languages, this is not the case in Gã because there is no syllable type that is unique to the beginning or ending of a word. Both V and CV syllables may be found in any position.

Restrictions imposed on positions of sound segments may offer some negative evidence e.g. the following segments may not occur in initial position in a lexical stem or phonological word: **r, u, ɛ, ɔ**. Also, the only consonant that may occur word-finally is **ŋ**.

2.1.2.2 Prosodic features - nasal spreading

In Gã, a nasalized vowel causes all successive vowels to be nasalized as long as there is no intervening consonant. However, this rightward spread of nasality is halted by a phonological word boundary. For example, in (3), nasality spreads from the nucleus of *dṹ* 'plant (v.)' to the habitual suffix *-ò*; but the first vowel of the second word *áfí* 'year' is not nasalized. *àdṹ!ɔ́* 'it is planted' is one phonological word.

(3)   *à = dṹ-!ɔ́*   áfí   áfí
       3PL.IMPERS = plant-HAB   year   year
       "It is planted yearly."

Similarly, *shĩã̀ĩ̀* 'house (PL.)' in (4) is also a phonological word in which nasality in the final

vowel of *shí!á̃* 'house' spreads to the plural marker *-i* but not to the first vowel of *àgbòì* 'big

(PL.)'.

(4)   *shĩã̀-ì*   àgbò-ì
        house-PL   big-PL
        'big houses'

These two features discussed are sufficient but not necessary to identify a phonological word

since neither nasalization nor the specific vowel sequences described are found in all words.

In many languages, especially Indo-European languages, stress is a reliable marker of

phonological words. This is because the placement of stress in such languages is predictable,

always falling on a syllable in a particular position. As is the case in many tone languages of

West Africa, stress does not play a significant role at the word level and is therefore unhelpful

in determining phonological words. For instance, Dakubu (1981:235) finds that in Gã, as in

Yoruba, the domain of semantically based syllable stress is not the word but the pause group

(i.e. the intonation unit).

2.1.3 The grammatical word

A grammatical word is described by Dixon and Aikhenvald (2002:19) as consisting "of a

number of grammatical elements which a) always occur together rather than scattered

throughout the clause (the criterion of cohesiveness), b) occur in a fixed order and c) have a

conventionalized coherence and meaning." These are considered to be the essential properties that every grammatical word in every language should possess. Other, less universally-applicable characteristics exist that could be used as supporting evidence. These are that there will be only one inflectional affix in a word (in languages which have a single inflectional system on each word class), there will be pauses between words, words may constitute an utterance all by themselves (isolatability) and finally, morphological processes which apply to a word will not apply recursively.

Some writers such as Haspelmath (2011) decry linguists' obsession with finding a cross-linguistic definition of the word, specifically the morphosyntactic (i.e. grammatical) word. He believes that such a concept has no validity across languages and consequently that the division between morphology and syntax is spurious. Defining the word for specific languages is a much easier enterprise, but even so different writers give different weight to different properties with the result that each writer simply chooses whichever word criteria that his language of study exhibits as proof of wordhood (Haspelmath 2011:59). He advocates an approach that recognizes the concept of a fuzzy word or prototypical word, where grammatical units occupy a continuum from tightly bound entity to independent word (i.e. from affix through clitic to independent word). The same view is taken by Aikhenvald (2002:43) and others.

In Gã it is relatively easy for the most part to identify a grammatical word. It is the

distinction between affix and clitic that can be particularly tricky, as these form adjacent points

on the continuum. Any root together with its inflectional and/or derivational morphemes

constitutes a grammatical word. The words in (5) are all grammatical words. Their meanings

are readily available to native speakers. The elements that make up these words always occur in

a fixed order e.g. in (a) the pronominal clitic must precede the verb, which also precedes the

future negative.

(5)   a)   è=nyɛ́-!ŋ́
                3SG=be.able-NEG.FUT
                'S/he will not be able (to do it)'

        b)   ònúkpá-!í
                elder-PL
                'elders'

        c)   jù-lɔ̀-ì
                steal-AG-PL
                'thieves'

        d)   gbèé 'dog'

The grammatical words listed above are also phonological words and in addition they constitute

utterances by themselves. Dixon and Aikhenvald (2002:25) observe that the condition of

isolatability applies to words which are both phonological words and grammatical words.

Words such as (5a) which also constitute sentences give credence to Haspelmath's (2011)

proposal to shirk the notion of a strict demarcation between morphology and syntax.

If a grammatical word is a noun with plural number, then the final boundary may be

identified by the plural morphemes *-ì, -jĩ̀, -bí!í* and *-mèì* since these always occur finally. For

verbs, the verb head itself or the post-verbal affixes such as the habitual *-ɔ*, and negative

perfect *kò* will mark the final boundary of the grammatical word. The initial boundary is

marked by the bound pronouns if the subject is a pronominal. If the subject of the verb is a full

NP then the initial boundary of the verb complex is marked either by the verb itself or the

perfect prefix *é-*.

2.1.4 Clitics

It is important to recognize a small class of elements in Gã which correspond to what have

been described in other languages as clitics. Matthews (1991:218) writes that clitics "are units

which are word-like in their grammar, but phonologically must lean for support…on another

word adjacent to them." Clitics therefore share characteristics with both words and affixes and

are considered by many (e.g. Haspelmath 2011; Dixon and Aikhenvald 2002) to be

grammatical words. Whereas a particular affix must occur with words of a particular syntactic

category and in a particular order, clitics have no such restriction. They may attach to different

classes of words and have variable word order. In Gã, there are two classes of clitics: subject

pronominals and articles. The former are proclitics while the latter are enclitics. These will be

discussed in detail in §2.3.2.1 on subject pronominal clitics (bound pronouns) and §2.3.1.2 on

articles. For now, a brief discussion with examples will suffice.

Articles:- The definite and indefinite articles *lɛ* and *ko* are clitics. They occur after the noun

phrases they modify and form a phonological word with their host noun phrases. The definite

article, in spoken Gã, is hardly realized as *lɛ*. It has the allomorphs *-ɛ, -a,* or *-ɔ,* the realization

of which is dependent on the final phoneme of the noun phrase. Like true clitics, they exhibit

low selectivity of hosts and so they attach to the last word of the noun phrase, regardless of its

syntactic category. It is attached to a noun in (6a) and (6c), a nominalization marker in (6b) and

an adjective in (6d). In chapter 7, it will be shown that the definite article also functions as a

marker of topicality.

(6)   a.   wɔ̀-shí̃!ã́=ã́
              1PL-house=DEF
              'our house'   [DF:33]

    b.   Ellen   nɔ́=!ɔ́
              Ellen   NM=DEF
              'Ellen's'   [DF:98]

    c.   ób̀láyòò   kò
              young.lady   INDEF
              'a certain young woman'   [DF:119]

    d.   lɔ́lè   yɛ́ŋ=!ɛ́

car dirty = DEF

'the white car'

Bound pronouns:- These are clitics and they will be discussed in detail in §2.3.2. Bound

pronouns in Gã are only found in subject position. They are always the first morpheme in the

verb complex, if there is no full NP subject.

2.1.5 Affixes

Affixes are morphemes which cannot occur in isolation and which convey grammatical or

semantic information about the stem to which they attach. They are neither phonological words

nor grammatical words. They do not belong to any syntactic category and are restricted as to

where they occur and in what order; a particular affix attaches only to words of a particular

syntactic category e.g. aspect markers can only attach to verbs. Verbs generally exhibit more

affixation than other word classes. Specific affixes and the functions they carry out will be

examined as part of the discussion on the word class they occur with.

2.1.6 Grammatical words consisting of phonological words

Compound words are an example of grammatical words that are made up of more than one

phonological word. They are considered one grammatical word because they take only one

inflectional affix e.g. only one plural suffix. Examples are:

(7) a. *shĩ̂ã wùɔ́* → *shĩ̂ã wùɔ́-!í*
   house chicken   house chicken-PL
   'local chicken'   'local chickens'

b.   *yàlà-bò*   →   *yàlà-bò-ì*
         funeral-cloth   funeral-cloth-PL
         'funeral cloth'   'funeral cloths'

c.   *ŋshɔ̀-ké*   →   *ŋshɔ̀-ké-!í*
         ocean-pile   ocean-pile-PL
         'ocean wave'   'ocean waves'

2.1.7 Phonological words consisting of grammatical words

A clitic and its host are an example of two grammatical words that make up a phonological

word e.g. a pronominal subject clitic and the verb complex it attaches to, as in (8).

(8)   è＝bàá-gbó
        3SG＝FUT-die
        "S/he will die."

Also, a possessive NP consisting of a pronominal clitic possessor and its NP host, the possessed

entity (e.g. *è＝mã̀mí* '3SG＝mother', 'his mother'). And finally, an NP host and the definite or

indefinite article clitic that follows it also constitute one phonological word comprising two

grammatical words (example 6).

2.1.8 Grammatical words that coincide with phonological words

There are many words in Gã wich constitute a single grammatical word as well as a single

phonological word. According to Dixon and Aikhenvald (2002:24), these are words that can

stand in isolation as an utterance. In Gã, the grammatical word and the phonological word

coincide frequently; as long as they are made up of only one word component. That is, all

single phonological words are also grammatical words and all single grammatical words are also phonological words. So, for instance *tsù-ɔ̀* (be.red-HAB) 'be light-skinned' is both a grammatical and phonological word but *è=nìnè* (3SG=hand) 'his hand' is a phonological word made up of two grammatical words; *è* '3SG' and *nìnè* 'hand'. One must also bear in mind that *nìnè* 'hand' is at the same time a phonological word. So, the only time a phonological word is not a grammatical word is when it consists of more than one word. Likewise, the only time a grammatical word is not one phonological word as well is when it consists of more than one word, as in the case of compounds (example 7).

Perhaps, the most intriguing aspect of the discussion of wordhood in Gã is the observation that whole sentences such as the verb complex in (8) above must also be considered phonological words. A strict line between Gã morphology and Gã syntax can then only be feasibly drawn by separating the study of *grammatical words* (as opposed to phonological words) from the study of how these grammatical words combine to form sentences. Making such a distinction does not seem worthwhile considering that verb complexes like those in (8) make up the core of most utterances in Gã. Following from this, there will not be a significant attempt in this dissertation to separate morphological phenomena from syntactic phenomena. The two are inextricably linked; each can be better understood in terms of the other and so ultimately it is best that they are examined inter-dependently.

2.2 Word Classes

In order to identify word classes in Gã, I will be relying mostly on distributional evidence, with support from morphological and semantic criteria. Utilizing the distributional method is unproblematic from a language-particular point of view. However, in order to define word classes universally (and by this is meant only the major classes of nouns, verbs and adjectives), other criteria need to be looked at, since the morphosyntax of one language differs from the next. Some linguists are of the view that there are languages which lack one or more of these word classes. For instance, some Austronesian, Salishan and Iroquian languages are said to lack verbs (Haspelmath (2012:118). However, some linguists, such as Croft (2000) and Haspelmath (2012) maintain that all languages possess these three word classes or parts of speech.

Croft (2000:90) argues that this position is only tenable when one looks at canonical or prototypical instantiations of the members of each category. He posits that there are pairings between each lexical semantic class and a particular pragmatic function and because these associations are fundamental in language, they are unmarked. So, nouns have the pragmatic function of referring to an object, verbs predicate an action and adjectives denote modification by a property. All other correspondences are marked and may have special morphosyntactic material indicating so. For example, a noun used for modification may be marked for genitive or 'adjectivalized' in some way, and a verb used for reference may occur as a gerund or

infinitive. They may also be zero-marked. It is also possible for marked members to have the same inflectional possibilities as unmarked members but impossible for marked members to have more inflectional properties than unmarked ones (Croft 2000:90). This means that a verb that is used for modification may lack certain TAM features or indeed take full TAM marking as a predicate-indicating verb would. However, the verb in modification use cannot have more inflectional features than the verb in predicative use.

In studying individual languages, the linguist is to determine the word class of a lexical item based on the particular construction in which the word appears, especially its distribution in comparison to the distribution of such unmarked members as are described by Croft. This task will be carried out for Gã below. Each word class together with its associated morphology will be examined.

Gã has three major word classes; major, in the sense that these classes contain a relatively large number of members which can be added on to. These are the noun class, the verb class and the adjective class. They are also known as open classes. The noun class is more open than the verb or adjective classes, in that new members are more easily and frequently added. There are other minor word classes which have relatively fewer members and which are largely closed off to new members. These are adverbs, determiners, conjunctions, prepositions and interjections.

2.3 Nouns

Nouns in Gã may be identified by their position and function in a construction. Nouns function

as subjects and objects of verbs. In Gã the verb is immediately preceded by the noun phrase

subject, with the noun functioning as the head of this NP. So in (9), *gbé!kɛ́núṹ* 'boy' and *gbèé*

'dog' are nouns. These are the subject and object respectively. The noun subject in (10) is

gbé!lé 'death'.

(9) *gbé!kɛ́-núṹ=ɛ̃̀*   bà-mɔ́   *gbèé=ɛ̀*   mĩ̀ŋ
     child-male=DEF   VENT-catch   dog=DEF   inside
     "The boy held the dog."   [DEB:28]

(10) nĩ̀   *gbé!lé* é-bà-ŋɔ̀   lɛ̀   nɛ́!ɛ́
      and   death   PERF-VENT-take   3SG.OBJ   this
      "and death has come to take him."   [DF:13]

Other morpho-syntactic characteristics of nouns are as follows. Nouns function as the object of

the locational verb *yɛ*. In (11) the noun *shĩ́!ấ* 'house' is the object of *yɛ̀*.

(11) à=bàá-bù   àkɔ́ǹtàá   yɛ̀   *shĩ́!ấ=!ấ*
      3PL.IMPERS=FUT-calculate   accounts   be.located   house=DEF
      "They are going to do the accounts at the house."   [DF:15]

Nouns may be marked by the articles =*lɛ* and =*ko*, but since these are clitics they may attach

to other constituents of the noun phrase and not necessarily to the noun. Both nouns in (9) are

modified by the definite article. The object of *yɛ* 'be located' - *shĩ́!ấ* 'house' in (11) is also

modified by the definite article. In (12), the indefinite article, *kò* modifies the noun, *àyìgbényò* 'Ewe person'.

(12) **àyìgbé-nyò**   **kò**   è=kɛ́-bà   jɛ̃́!ŋ́=!ɛ̃́
      Ewe-person   INDEF   3SG=take-come   there=DEF
      "It is an Ewe person that s/he has brought there."   [MM:145]

Nouns may be modified by other determiners such as the distal deictic demonstrative, *nɛ̀kɛ̃̀* and the proximal deictic demonstratives *nɛ̀kɛ̃̀* and *nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́* (13).

(13) dáá   lèé!bí=!ɛ́   è=tá-à   **nɛ̀kɛ̃́**   **kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né**   **nɛ̃́ɛ̃̀**
      everyday   morning=TOP   3SG=sit-HAB   this   frog   this
      hè
      body
      "Every day, he sits by this frog."   [NAR:5]

Nouns may also be marked for plural number by the suffixes *-i, -jĩ* and *-bí!í* among others (see §2.3.1.1). Examples are given in (14).

(14) *òsɔ́!fɔ́* 'priest'   *òsɔ́fɔ́-!í*   [priest-PL]   'priests'
      shĩ́!ɛ̃́ 'house'   *shĩ̂ã-ĩ̀*   [house-PL]   'houses'
      wòlò 'book'   *wò-jĩ̀*   [book-PL]   'books'
      tsàtsú 'ant'   *tsàtsú-bí!í*   [ant-PL]   'ants'

Nouns may be modified by adjectives, other nouns, numerals and other quantifiers. In (15) to (18), the modifiers are in bold.

Modification by adjective:

(15) *àtàá* **kpákpá**   [father good]   'good father'
      ŋmã̀-lè **kƒɔ́ŋkƒɔ́ŋ**   [write-NOM holy]   'holy book'

gbé!kɛ́-nʉ̀ʉ̀ *fíóó*   [child-male little]   'little boy'

Modification by another noun:

(16)   *shɪ̀kpɔ́ŋ* tsòfã̀ [earth medicine]   'herbal medicine'
        àbèlé tsɔ̃̀nè   [corn machine]   'corn mill machine'

Modification by a numeral:

(17)   *bí* **kòmé**   [child one]   'one child'   [CH:37]
        ŋwɛ̀ŋ tsʉ̃̀ **ényɔ̃̀**   [up house two]   'two storey-buildings'   [MM:80]

Modification by a quantifier:

(18)   gbé!kɛ́-bí!í=!ɛ́   ***ékòmɛ̃̀***
        child-PL=DEF   some
        'some of the children'   [OYO:89]

        ʉ̃̀=jɛ́   mɛ̃̀ɛ̃́=!ɛ́   **fɛ̃́ɛ̃́**
        1SG=insult   people=DEF   all
        "I insulted all the people."   [MM:154]

Nouns may be possessed. Possession is indicated by simple juxtaposition of possessor and

possessum. Example:

(19)   tsòfã̀-tsɛ̀[2]   wè
        medicine-NOM   house
        'a medicine man's house'.   [CH:89]

---

[2] A medicine man is a traditional healer, a person who practices traditional medicine.

2.3.1 Grammatical Categories associated with nouns

2.3.1.1 Number

This is a grammatical category associated with nouns as well as adjectives (see §2.4.2.1 for a

discussion on number in adjectives). For count nouns, Gã differentiates between singular and

plural number i.e. between one and more than one. There are two main plural morphemes in

Gã: the suffixes *-i* and *-jĩ̀* [ʤĩ̀]. The most commonly-occurring of the two is *-i*. Below are some

singular nouns and their plural forms.

Nouns that take plural suffix -i:

(20) *shĩ́nã̀ã̀* 'door' → *shĩ́nã̀ĩ̀* 'doors'

   té   'stone' → *té!í*   'stones'

   àwàlé 'spoon' → *àwàlé!í* 'spoons'

   gbèé 'dog' → *gbèé!í* 'dogs'

   ònṹfṹ 'snake' → *ònṹfṹ!í* 'snakes'

   àtàlé 'dress' → *àtàlé!í* 'dresses'

   tsòfã̀ 'medicine' → *tsòfã̀ĩ̀* 'medicines'

   nã̀ã̀bú 'mouth' → *nã̀ã̀bú!í* 'mouths'

Nouns that take plural suffix -jĩ̀:

(21) *nĩ̀nè* 'hand' → *nĩ̀jĩ̀* 'hands'

   nã̀nè 'leg' → *nã̀jĩ̀* 'legs'

   sã̀nè 'matter, problem' → *sã̀jĩ̀* 'matters, problems'

   wòlò 'paper, book' → *wòjĩ̀* 'papers, books'

   tsèlè 'feather' → *tsèjĩ̀* 'feathers'

   wòlò 'egg' → *wòjĩ̀* 'eggs'

étsùlù	'red one'	→	*étsùjĩ̀*	'red ones'
wɔ́!ŋ́	'deity'	→	*wójĩ̀*	'deities'
àdűŋ̀	'monkey'	→	*àdűjĩ̀*	'monkeys'
mà̀ŋ̀	'town, country'	→	*mà̀jĩ̀*	'towns, countries'
gɔ̀̀ŋ̀	'hill, mountain'	→	*gɔ̀̀jĩ̀*	'hills, mountains'

With a few exceptions, the plural suffix *-i* is simply attached to the host noun without any

modification of the root. The suffix *-jĩ̀,* on the other hand, supplants the final syllable of the

singular noun. So *-jĩ̀* replaces the final syllable of *nĩ̀nè* 'hand' to give plural *nĩ̀jĩ̀.* It replaces the

final syllable of *àdűŋ̀* 'monkey' to give plural *àdűjĩ̀,* and *wòlò* 'paper, book' in the singular

becomes *wòjĩ̀* in the plural. As noted by Dakubu (1996a:154) the choice of either morpheme

does not appear to be strictly dependent on the phonological shape of the noun. There are

however, phonological tendencies displayed by those nouns that take *-jĩ̀* in the plural. These are

noun roots that have a final syllable consisting of the velar nasal, /ŋ/ with low tone (e.g. *àdűŋ̀*

'monkey', *mà̀ŋ̀* 'town'); those that end in final syllable, **nè** (e.g. *sà̀nè* 'matter', *nĩ̀nè* 'hand'); and

those whose last two syllables have the shape **CVLV,** where the two vowels are identical and

the final syllable has non-high tone (e.g. *wòlò* 'paper, book', *étsùlù* 'red one'). Since in some

Gã words there is free variation between [l] and [ɹ], the consonant of the final syllable may be

[ɹ], orthohraphically represented as **r**. It is important that the final syllables in these nouns have

non-high tone in order to trigger *-jĩ̀* pluralization. For instance, even though the nouns in (22)

have the requisite segmental composition for *-jǐ* pluralization, they have high tones on their

final syllables, so they are pluralized with *-í*.

(22) *kǎné* 'light' → *kǎné!í* 'lights' NOT *kǎjǐ*

  súⁿé 'pillow' → *súⁿé!í* 'pillows' NOT *súⁿjǐ*

  lá!lá 'song' → *lálàì* 'songs' NOT *lájǐ*

There are some exceptions. For example, the plural of *tsènè* 'calabash' is *tsènèì* although it

qualifies for *-jǐ* pluralization. There are also a few words which seem to allow either suffix in

the plural. Current speakers disagree on the "correct" way to pluralize these nouns and some

speakers happily accept either suffix while others insist on only one as being grammatical for a

particular noun. Older speakers tend to be of the view that younger speakers are using *-jǐ*

indiscriminately. That is, that younger speakers are forming plurals with *-jǐ* when they should

be using *-í*. Examples of words whose plural formation with either *-jǐ* or *-ì* finds acceptance in

some section of the Gã-speaking populace are:

(23) *sɛ̌í̃* 'chair' → *sɛ̌í̃!í, sɛ̌í̃jǐ* 'chairs'

  tsǔ̃ 'building, room' → tsǔ̃ì, tsǔ̃jǐ 'buildings, rooms'

  òkplɔ̌ 'table' → *òkplɔ̌!í, òkplɔ̌jǐ* 'tables'

  dã̌ã̌ 'drink' → *dã̀ì, dã̀jǐ* 'drinks'

  sàà 'bed' → *sàì, sàjǐ* 'mats'

  bàà 'leaf' → *bàì, bàjǐ* 'leaves'

  lòófɔ̃lɔ̀ 'bird' → *lòófɔ̃lɔ̀ì, lòófɔ̃jǐ, lòófɔ̃lɔ̀jǐ* 'birds'

  sã́ḿfɛ̀lè 'window' → *sã́ḿfɛ̀lèì, sã́ḿfɛ̀jǐ, sã́ḿfɛ̀lèjǐ* 'windows'

  tsɔ̃̌nè 'machine, car' → *tsɔ̃̌nèì, tsɔ̃̌jǐ* 'machines, cars'

gbɛ̀̃	'road'	→	*gbɛ̀ì, gbɛ̀jĩ̀*	'roads'
ŋmɛ̀lɛ̀	'bell'	→	*ŋmɛ̀lɛ̀ì, ŋmɛ̀̃jĩ̀*	'bells'

In many of these examples *-jĩ̀* is simply added on to the singular root rather than replacing the final syllable. Examples are *tsũ̀jĩ̀* 'buildings, rooms', *òkplɔ̀jĩ̀* 'tables' and *gbɛ̀̃jĩ̀* 'roads'. Interestingly, even *lòófɔ̀lɔ̀* 'bird' and *sáḿfɛ̀lɛ̀* 'window' which have CVLV structure for their final two syllables are able to form plurals by addition of *-ĩ̀* as well as replacement of the final syllable with *-jĩ̀*.

It is unsurprising that there is sometimes a lack of consensus as to the appropriate use of these plural suffixes. According to Dakubu (1996a), this indeterminacy has existed for as long as records have been available, which goes as far back as Protten's (1764) Grammar, Catechism and Wordlist. The table below, created with data[3] from Dakubu (1996a) gives evidence of the variation in plural formation at different times in the course of history as well as synchronic variation at different points in history.

---

[3] From Dakubu (1996a:173), appendix: "Slashes through letters represent various typographical devices Rask used to distinguish special sounds from the "plain letters". He used a comma to represent nasality in the following vowel, where Protten used the letter "n" before the entire syllable, and an apostrophe to represent absence of nasality in the preceding vowel." Protten's **g**, Rask's **g** and Zimmerman's **dš** are equivalent to modern Gã [ʤ], orthographically represented as **j**.

<p align="center">*Table 3: Historical comparison of plurals*</p>

Singular	Plurals			
	Protten (1764)	Rask (1828)	Zimmerman (1858)	Current Gã
nằnè 'leg'	-	*Nannei, N,aɡi*	*nãdši*	*nằjĩ̀*
nĩ̀nè 'arm'	*nigi*	*Ninnei, N,igi*	*nĩdši*	*nĩ̀jĩ̀*
bàà 'leaf'	-	-	*bai*	*bàì, bàjĩ̀*
dằã̀ 'drink'	-	-	*dãi*	*dằì, dằjĩ̀*
lòófɔ̃̀lɔ̃ 'bird'	*lofinɔi, lofigi*	-	*lofõdši*	*lòófɔ̃̀jĩ̀, lòófɔ̃̀lɔ̀ì, lòófɔ̃̀lɔ̀jĩ̀*
(é)tsùlù 'red'	*Ekjurui, Ekjugi*	*ecuɡi*	*tšudši*	*(é)tsùjĩ̀*

Using the tools of historical linguistic analysis, Dakubu (1996a:160) shows that the original

Proto Ga-Dangme suffix was *-i*, (from Proto-Ga-Dangme **-hi*). The suffix *-jĩ̀* developed as a

result of affrication of a voiced alveolar stop, *d,* in the syllable immediately preceding the

plural suffix, *-hi.* The weak vowel of the final syllable of the noun root was deleted, resulting in

two consonants, *d* and *h* occurring consecutively, eventually leading to affrication. This is

illustrated for *lèlè* 'boat' (pl. *lèjĩ̀*) below.

(24)　**lɛdi-hĩ*　→　**lɛdĭ-hĩ*　→　**lɛd-hĩ*　→　**lɛdʒĩ*　→　*lɛdʒĩ-ĩ*　　　(Dakubu 1996a:161)

Over time this sound change was reanalyzed as a separate affix and was applied to noun roots

as a plural marker.

　　　Some plural forms trigger vowel alteration in the root noun. This change is one of

partial assimilation of the root vowel to the plural marker. Phonetically, it involves a change

from a back, round vowel to a front, unrounded vowel of corresponding height. The root vowel

then matches the plural marker in frontness and rounding. Therefore /o/ becomes /e/ and /ɔ/

becomes /ɛ/. Example:

(25) *tsò*   'tree'   →   *tsèì*   'trees'
      yòò   'woman'   →   *yèì*   'women'
      mɔ̀̃   'person'   →   *mèì*   'people'

There is one instance of suppletion in plural formation:

(26) *nṹ̀ũ̀*   'man'   →   *hĩ̀̃ĩ̀*   'men'

  Apart from the suffixes *-i* and *-jĩ̃*, there are other suffixes which mark the plurals of

semantically defined classes of nouns. They are as follows:

-bí!í: This suffix is derived from the lexical item *bí!í* 'offspring (pl.)', itself made up of *bí*

'offspring (sg.)' plus the plural suffix *–i*. It is used to form the plural of just a few nouns whose

referents are animate and relatively small in size.

(27) *gbé!kẽ́*   'child'   →   *gbé!kẽ́bí!í*   'children'
      tsàtsú   'ant'   →   *tsàtsúbí!í*   'ants'
      kwàkwé   'mouse'   →   *kwàkwébí!í*   'mice'

It is also used to form the plural of some compound nouns in which the second component is

nyò 'person, especially relating to origins'.

(28) *mã̀ŋ-nyò*   →   *mã̀ŋ-bí!í*
      country-person   country-PL
      'countryman'   'countrymen'

kr̀û-nyò	→	*kr̀û-bí!í*
kru-person		kru-PL
'person of the Kru tribe'		'people of the Kru tribe'

bíɛ̂-nyò	→	*bí!ɛ́-bí!í*
here-person		here-PL
'person from here'		'people from here'

While *bí!í* in (27) functions as an inflectional affix, specifically a plural suffix, *bí!í* in

the examples in (28) appears to be the second nominal component of a compound nominal.

One may also analyse the plural forms in (28) as possessive NPs containing the inalienable

noun *bí!í* 'children'. Generally, it is quite difficult to distinguish between possession and

compounding in Gã since both involve simple juxtaposition of two nominals that bear some

kind of semantic relationship to each other. This relationship could be possession or ownership

or a variety of other relationship types. What is certain is that *bí!í* in (28) is being modified by

the preceding noun and the semantic relation between the two nouns is one of origin, be it

geographic or ethnic. This same relation is what holds between the singular form *nyò* 'person'

and its noun modifier.

mɛ̀ĩ: This morpheme is semantically and functionally identical to *bí!í*. It is the plural of *mɔ̀*

'person'. It is also utilized to pluralize compounds with *nyo* 'person' as the second component.

(29) *gɑ̀nyò*   'Ga person'   →   *gɑ̀mɛ̀ĩ*   'Ga people'

      blɔ̀fónyò   'white person'   →   *blɔ̀fómɛ̀ĩ*   'white people'

àshȁntényɔ̀ 'Ashanti person' → àshȁntémȅ̃ĩ 'Ashanti people'

The suffix -mȅ̃ĩ also functions as an associative plural marker or group plural marker.

According to Daniel and Moravscik (2013), "associative plural constructions consist of a noun

X (typically of human reference, usually a proper name or kin term) and some other material,

most often an affix, clitic or word. The meaning of the construction is "X and other people

associated with X." In Gã the associative plural marker can only be affixed to proper names

(30) (31) and kin terms (32). In (30) Elma-mȅ̃ĩ refers to Elma and some others associated with

her, in this case her siblings. In (31) Oyo-mȅ̃ĩ refers to Oyo and some others associated to her

who also died.

(30) Elma-**mȅ̃ĩ**   à-pàpá=!á
      Elma-ASSOC.PL   PERT-father=DEF
      "Elma and company's father…"   [DF:166]

(31) kèkɛ́=!ɛ́   m̀ĩ   hɯ́   é=!hɑ́   í=ká!í   bè
      then=TOP   1SG   too   3SG.PERF=give   1SG.PERF=remember   time
      ní   óyóó-**mȅ̃ĩ**   gbó=!ɛ́
      NMLZ   Oyo-ASSOC.PL   die=DEF
      "Then me too, it reminds me of when Oyo and company died."   [FH:172]

In (32) ètsèmȅ̃ĩ refers to 'his father's family'.

(32) bɛ́   è=tsè-**mȅ̃ĩ**   à-wè   jí   wɔ̀=shí!ɑ́=ɑ́
      IJ   3SG=father-PL   PERTENSIVE-family.house be 1PL=house=DEF
      "His father's family house is our house."   [DF:33]

-fó!í: This suffix is interesting because it is composed of a borrowed agentive suffix *-fo* (from

Akan) and the regular Gã plural suffix *-i*. It is the preferred pluralizing suffix for borrowed

words that refer to occupations. Example:

(33) *dɔ́kìtà*   'doctor'   →   *dɔ́kìtàfó!í*   'doctors'

  títsὲ   'teacher'   →   *títsὲfó!í*   'teachers'

  dɾ̀àívà   'driver'   →   *dɾ̀àívàfó!í*   'drivers'

2.3.1.2 Articles

Gã has two articles, *lɛ* and *ko,* whose semantics differ in terms of definiteness and specificity.

lɛ also functions as a topic marker (see Chapter 7). They both occur post-nominally. *ko* is

indefinite but could be specific or non-specific depending on context. *lὲ* is definite and specific.

They both cliticize to the last element in the noun phrase. The definite article, *lɛ*, becomes

phonologically contracted to *-ɛ* when the final vowel in the NP is /i/, /e/, /ɛ/, /u/ or /o/:

(34) síkl̀í=!ɛ́   [sugar=DEF]   'the sugar'

  kã̀né=!ɛ́   [light=DEF]   'the light'

  ŋmɛ̃́=!ɛ̃́   [palm kernel=DEF] 'the palm kernel'

  nὺ̃ú̃=!ɛ̃́   [man=DEF]   'the man'

  tsó=!ɛ́   [tree=DEF]   'the tree'

 It is contracted to *-ɔ* when the final vowel in the NP is /ɔ/. Example:

(35) *tɔ́=!ɔ́*   [bottle=DEF]   'the bottle'

And it is contracted to *-a* when the final vowel is /a/.

(36) *shíá = !á*   [sand = DEF]   'the sand'

When the final phoneme in the NP is the nasal, /ŋ/, the form the definite article takes depends

on the vowel immediately preceding the nasal. The article takes the form that it would take if

the penultimate vowel in such an NP were the final vowel. Example:

(37) *édíŋ̋ = !έ*   [black.one = DEF]   'the black one'

      dàdèséŋ̋ = έ̋   [pot = DEF]   'the pot'

      téŋ̋ = !έ̋   [middle = DEF]   'the middle'

      àdúŋ̋ = !έ   [monkey = DEF]   'the monkey'

      wóŋ̋ = !ó̋   [idol = DEF]   'the idol'

      màŋ̋ = !á̋   [town = DEF]   'the town'

Their pragmatic functions will be examined below.

i) *lɛ* - When this determiner is used, the speaker assumes that the referent of its host is uniquely

identifiable to the addressee. By uniquely identifiable is meant that the addressee can identify

the speaker's referent based on the nominal alone or based on the nominal together with other

descriptive content in the noun phrase (Gundel et al 1993:277). The speaker arrives at this

assumption because the referent has been mentioned previously in the discourse or is evident in

the extra-linguistic environment or is a stereotypical assumption (Prince 1981:242) based on

shared cultural knowledge and experience. In (38), *kɔkɔdé!né* 'frog' is introduced into the story

with the indefinite article *ko*. So when it is mentioned again in line 2, it is marked by *lɛ,* which

indicates that the speaker expects the addressee to pick out the referent of *kɔkɔdé!né=!έ* 'the

frog' as identical with the just-mentioned *kɔkɔdé!né !kó* 'a frog'.

(38) 1   è=yὲ   mĩ̀ŋ   àà hű̀ù   nĩ̀   gbé!kέ-nṹù   nέ!έ

              3SG=be.located   inside constantly   and   child-male   this

              yà-nã̀   *kɔkɔdé!né*   *bí*   *!kó*

              ITIV-see   frog   child   INDEF

              "After a while, this boy found a baby frog."

     2   nò   hὲwɔ́=!ɔ́   dáá   gbì   kέ   ã̀mὲ̃=tὲ   shĩ́=!έ

              that   sake=TOP   every day   when   3PL=rise   down=DEF

              ã̀mὲ̃=kὲ   *kɔkɔdé!né=ὲ* shwέ-ɔ̀

              3PL=take   frog=DEF   play-HAB

              "So every morning when they wake up they play with the frog." [PAT:3]

In (39), the speaker is relaying how a Gã queenmother had allowed the lands in her town to be

sold by Fantes (members of the Fante tribe). *jέmὲ̃ shì̀kpɔ́ŋ!ɔ́* 'the land over there' is definite,

although it is new information that is being introduced into the discourse. In spite of that, the

speaker is relying on the addressee's cultural knowledge that towns contain land (which can be

sold). Therefore, although there had been no previous mention of Koboman[4] land and the

conversation was not taking place in or near Koboman, the speaker could employ definite

reference because of the stereotypical assumptions that can be made about lands and which the

speaker assumes are available to the addressee.

---

[4] The name of this town has been changed. There is no town I know of called Koboman.

(39) àà=tsɔ̀ɔ̀   mɑ̀̃ŋnyɛ̃̀   kò
      3PL.IMPERS.PROG=show   queenmother   INDEF
      "This is about a certain queenmother."

      nɑ́̃ɑ̃̀   mɑ̀̃ŋnyɛ́̃=!ɛ̃̀
      PRSTV.PRED.PRT   queenmother=DEF
      "So here was the queenmother."

      kóbòmɑ̀̃ŋ   mɑ̀̃ŋnyɛ̃̀
      Koboman   queenmother
      "The queenmother of Koboman."

      nĩ̀   fɑ̀nté-mɛ̃̀ĩ   hɔ̃̀ɔ́   jɛ́mɛ̃̀   *shìkpɔ́̃ŋ=!ɔ́̃*
      and   Fante-people   sell   there   land=DEF
      "And Fantes sold the land over there."   [MM:156]

The definite article may be used to modify a noun even if its referent is discourse-new

and completely unknown to the addressee, as long as there is enough information in the NP to

enable the addressee to form a mental representation of the referent. In (40) below, the head

noun, *yòò* 'woman' is modified by the definite article because there is substantial additional

information contained in the modifying argument nominalization (relative clause) to enable the

addressee to form a mental representation of the referent of the head noun.

(40)   1   ŋmɛ́̃!nɛ́̃=!ɛ̃́   ĩ́=!hóóó   ní!í
             today=TOP   1SG=cook.NEG   thing
             "Today, I didn't cook."

       2   *yòó=!ɛ́*   nĩ́   bà-wá-à   mĩ́=!ɛ̃́   bááâ
             woman=DEF NMLZ VENT-help-HAB   1SG.OBJ=DEF   come.NEG
             "The woman who helps me did not come."

ii) *ko* – In using the indefinite article, the speaker assumes that the referent of its NP host is not

uniquely identifiable to the addressee. There are two possible interpretations of NPs modified

by *ko*. In one, *ko* is specific, which means that its referent is uniquely identifiable to the

speaker but not the addressee. In the other interpretation *ko* is non-specific and the speaker has

no particular referent in mind when uttering that NP. (41) and (42) are examples of the non-

specific usage of *ko*. In (41), the speaker, a preacher, is asking his congregation to imagine they

were a woman whose child is very ill. In this hypothetical event, the woman gets a visit from a

friend.

(41) nĩ̀   *gbì*   *kò*   *ó=nã̀ã̀nyò*   *kò*   bà
      and   day   INDEF   2SG=friend   INDEF   come

      è=kὲέ   ô   ô   ĩ=nyὲ̃mĩ̀   yòò
      3SG=say   IJ   IJ   1SG=sibling   female
      And one day a friend of yours came (to see you). She said "Oh oh, my sister…"
      [CH:86]

Two NPs, *gbì* 'day' and *ónã̀ã̀nyò* 'your friend' are modified by *ko*. In neither case does the

speaker have a particular day or friend in mind. Again, in (42) the speaker wants a child, any

child, to send on an errand. He does not have a specific child in mind.

(42) mĩ́ĩ=tá!ó   *gbé!kẽ́*   *!kó*   mã́=tsṹ
      1SG.PROG=look.for   child   INDEF   1SG.FUT=send.on.errand
      "I'm looking for a child to send on an errand."

The next two examples show the use of *ko* in a specific sense. In (43), the speaker knows the

referent of the host NP of *ko* and goes on to identify it by its name, *Bordiebebor*. Similarly, in

(44) it is clear that the speaker knows the exact street of which she speaks because in the

following line she goes on to give more information about it.

(43)   *àkɩ̀lówá*   *!kó*   à=tsέ-ɔ̀   lὲ   Bɔ̀ɔ̀déébέbɔ́
        village   INDEF   3PL.IMPERS=call-HAB   3SG.OBJ   Bordiebebor
        "A village…it's called Bordiebebor."   [CH:84]

(44)   nĩ̀   *stíítì*   *kò*   ká̃   bí!έ
        and   street   INDEF   lie   here

        lέ=!έ   è=*lead*-ɔ̀   *to*   kɔ̀ɔ̀lé=ὲ   nà̃ã̀
        3SG.OBJ=TOP   3SG= -HAB   Korle=DEF   mouth
        "And there's a street here. As for it, it leads to the mouth of the Korle Lagoon"
        [FH:59]

NPs modified by *ko* have referents that constitute new topics about which further

information is given. It is the presence of this additional characterization that reveals whether

or not the speaker has a specific referent in mind.

Interestingly, both *ko* and *lɛ* can modify the same NP, with *ko* occurring first and

immediately followed by *lɛ*. Such an NP is usually modified by a grammatical nominalization

(relative clause). This is seen in (45), which is based on (40) above.

(45)   1   *ŋmέ̃!nέ̃*=!έ̃   í̃=!hóóó   ní!í̃
             today=TOP   1SG=cook.NEG   thing
             "Today, I didn't cook."

2	*yòó*	*kó=!ɛ́*	nī́	bà-wá-à
	woman	INDEF=DEF	NMLZ	VENT-help-HAB
	mī́=!ɛ́		báââ	
	1SG.OBJ=DEF		come.NEG	

"That woman who comes to help me did not come."

It may seem contradictory to employ two articles with seemingly divergent functions to modify the same nominal. When this device is used however, the individual functions of each article are nullified and the "article complex" carries its own unique function. That function is to mark the referent of the head noun as one which is familiar to the addressee. That is, the speaker presupposes that the addressee knows of the referent and can conjure up a mental representation of the referent. This mental representation, however, is stored in the addressee's long-term rather than short-term memory because the article complex cannot be deployed if the referent was just recently mentioned in the discourse. It is reserved for introducing new nominal topics that the addressee is familiar with.

To illustrate, imagine a speaker uttering (46) below, after which she and the addressee go on to have several lines of conversation. It will be infelicitous for the speaker to utter line 10a in which the nominal is modified by the article complex. The reason being that the referent in question has enjoyed a recent mention. Here, modification by just the definite article will be more appropriate, as in line 10b.

(46) 1 yòò   kò   bà-wá-à   mĩ̀   dáá

      woman   INDEF   VENT-help-HAB   1SG.OBJ   everyday

      kè   nĩ́-hòó-!mɔ́

      with thing-cook-NOM

      "A woman comes and helps me everyday to cook."

[SEVERAL LINES OF CONVERSATION OMITTED]

9   ŋmɛ̃́!nɛ̃́=!ɛ̃́   ĩ́=!hóóó   nĩ́!ĩ́

     today=TOP   1SG=cook.NEG   thing

     "Today, I didn't cook."

10a *yòò   kó=!ɛ́   nĩ́   bà-wá-à   mĩ́=!ɛ̃́

      woman   INDEF=DEF NMLZ VENT-help-HAB   1SG.OBJ=DEF

      báââ

      come.NEG

      "That woman who comes to help me did not come."

10b yòó=!ɛ́   nĩ́   bà-wá-à   mĩ́=!ɛ̃́   báââ

      woman=DEF NMLZ VENT-help-HAB   1SG.OBJ=DEF   come.NEG

      "The woman who comes to help me did not come."

Nouns may also be used bare, with no articles or other modifiers. Such nouns code

referents which are indefinite as well as non-specific; the speaker speaks of the referent only in

a general sense and has no particular referent in mind. Such a referent is what Gundel et al

(1993) describe as type identifiable. It is a member of a class of entities denoted by the noun.

The speaker here only expects the hearer to have a mental representation of the type of entity

referred to by the noun phrase. In (47), *tsòfã̀tsè wè* 'shrine' (lit: medicine man's house) has no

determiners. By this, the speaker means any place that can be classified as a shrine and not

necessarily a particular shrine of which he or the addressee knows or can identify.

(47) à=kὲέ   ò=kὲ   lὲ   á-yà   *tsòfã̀-tsὲ*
      3PLIMPERS=say   2SG=take   him   SBJV-go   medicine-father
      wὲ
       house
      "They say you should take him to a medicine man's house (shrine)."   [CH:96]

2.3.1.3 Demonstratives

Demonstratives are forms that provide spatial deictic information about a noun referent, action

or location. They may also serve an anaphoric or cataphoric function in discourse. Some

demonstratives perform certain discourse-pragmatic roles. In Gã the deictic centre tends to be

the speaker, and for each type of demonstrative there are often two opposing deictic forms that

indicate a thing or action relatively close to the speaker and a thing or action relatively distant

from the speaker. Dixon (2010:225) recognises three main kinds of demonstratives: nominal

demonstratives, locational adverbial demonstratives and verbal demonstratives. Gã does not

have verbal demonstratives, but in addition to nominal and locational adverbial demonstratives,

it also has manner adverbial demonstratives. They will be discussed in turn.

2.3.1.3.1 Nominal demonstratives

There are two kinds of nominal demonstratives: those that occur with a noun in a noun phrase

and those that constitute complete nouns by themselves. Gã has quite a few nominal

demonstratives. These are *énɛ́* 'this', *nò* 'that', *nɛ̃́!ɛ́* 'this', *nɛ̀kɛ́* 'this' and *nàkàĩ̀* 'that'. The first

two, *énɛ́* and *nò*, make up complete noun phrases while the rest must occur with a noun in a

noun phrase.

As just mentioned, *énɛ́* 'this' and *nò* 'that' are nominal demonstratives that constitute

complete noun phrases. They are pluralized with the suffix *-mɛ̃ĩ̀*, yielding *énɛ̂mɛ̃ĩ̀* 'these' and

nòmɛ̃ĩ̀ 'those', respectively and are used for reference to inanimate entities only. Such nominal

demonstratives are also known as demonstrative pronouns because of their ability to stand in

place of complete noun phrases. They cannot occur with a noun in a noun phrase. For example,

one cannot say **nũ̀ũ̀ énɛ́* 'this man'. Their function and syntax will be examined below.

(i) *énɛ́* **: -** This is a proximal demonstrative pronoun and is used for referring to NPs that are

relatively spatially close to the speaker. It can be loosely translated into English as *this*.

Morphologically, it is made up of the lexical nominalizer *é-* and the proximal predicative

particle, *nɛ̃́*. In (53), after I pose a question about how to make a particular herbal mixture that

is sitting in a pan in front of us, Oyoo tries to verify what exactly I'm referring to by pointing

to the pan and asking *"énɛ̂?"* "This?". Here, *énɛ́* refers to the herbal mixture.

(53)　Akua:　ófáínɛ̀　ɛ̃̀ɛ̃̀　　mɛ̃́nĩ̀　nyɛ̃̀=kɛ̀-fé-ɔ̀　　nɛ̀kɛ́　bàà　nĩ̃ĩ̃
　　　　　　please　IJ　　what　2PL=take-do-HAB　this　leaf　thing
　　　　　　nɛ̃́!ɛ́
　　　　　　this
　　　　　　"Please, errm…what do you use to make this herbal mixture?"

Oyo: *énê̂*
       this
       "This?"   [OYO:215]

énɛ́ may also be used even when there hasn't been explicit mention of its referent. For example,

if two people walk into a dress shop, one of them may hold up a dress and make the comment

in (54).

(54)   *énɛ́*   yè   fέò   ê
       this   have   beautiful   IJ
       "This (one) is beautiful!"

énɛ́ is also used anaphorically to refer back to previous discourse. It may be used cataphorically

as well, but this use is rare. Most of the anaphors and cataphors involving *énɛ́* are textual,

meaning the demonstrative refers to a chunk of discourse. There are fewer instances of

substitution anaphora, where the demonstrative refers to a previously mentioned NP. In (55),

the narrator of the story had just told of how the protagonist had found his lost pet frog and

taken him away. She utters the coda in (55), where *énɛ́* refers to the concluding actions of the

story she had just narrated i.e. the boy picking up the frog and taking him away.

(55)   nĩ̀   gbé!kɛ́-nũ̀ṹ=ɛ̃̀   wó   kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né=!έ   ékòmé   nĩ̀   è=kɛ̀
       and   child-male=DEF   carry   frog=DEF   one   and   3SG=take

       lɛ̀   tèè   nĩ̀   *énɛ́*   bà-fèé   nã̀ã̀gbèè   yè
       3SG.OBJ   go.PST   and   this   VENT-do   end   be.located

àdèsá́-tá́-mɔ́́=ɔ̃̀   mìŋ̀
story-narrate-NOM=DEF   inside
"And the boy picked up his frog and went away with him. And this is how the story
ended."   [MAV:105]

In (56), the speaker together with two others has just finished describing the rituals involved in

the twin yam festival. *énɛ̃́* in her comment refers to all these rituals previously described, which

she had been saying were cheap and simple.

(56)   mɔ̃̀=kò   mɔ̃̀=kò   bɛ́   nɪ́́
       person=INDEF   person=INDEF   exist.NEG   NMLZ
       2SG.PERF=birth

       ó=!fɔ́   hã̀ã̀jɪ̃̀ɪ̃̀ nɪ́́   ò=nyɛ́ɛ́ɛ́   ó=!féé
       2SG.PERF=birth   twins   NMLZ   2SG=able.NEG   2SG.SBJV=do

       énɛ̃́
       this
       "There's nobody who has given birth to twins who cannot do this."
       (Lit: "Nobody exists who has given birth to twins who cannot do this.") [OYO:292]

As mentioned above, cataphoric use of *énɛ̃́* i.e. to refer to an upcoming chunk of text is rare.

There were zero instances of this function in the spoken Gã data. Example (57) showing this

use was adapted from the Gã Bible.

(57)   mɔ̃̀kò   bɛ́   sùɔmɔ̃̀ nɪ́́   dà   fè   *énɛ̃́*
       somebody   have.NEG   love   NMLZ   be.big surpass   this

       á!kɛ́   mɔ̃̀   kɛ̀   è=wàlà   àá-ŋmɛ̃̀   shɪ̃̀   á=há́
       NMLZ person take   3SG=life   FUT-lay   down   3PL.IMPERS.SBJV=give

è = shíèŋtsὲ-mὲ̃ĩ

3SG = close.friend-PL

"No one has greater love than this, that he lays down his life for his close friends"

[BSG:145]

(ii) *nò:-* This is the only other demonstrative noun that can be used as a complete NP. It is used

for both substitution and textual anaphora. It is NOT the distal counterpart of *énɛ̃́*, at least not

synchronically; it cannot be used to refer to objects located relatively far away from the

speaker. To show this I borrow an illustration from Dixon (2010:235) and place it in the Gã

context. Imagine a man and woman seated at opposite ends of a table with two objects, A and

B on the table. Object A is closer to the man while B is further away from him but is the closer

object to the woman. In English the man may point to each object in turn and ask "Do you

want this or this?". If the woman does not want B (which is closer to her) and she'll prefer A

she may say "I don't want this (one), I want that (one)." For Gã speakers the man may pose the

question in (58a) but the woman's response in (58b), where *nò* is referring to the distally

located object, would be ungrammatical. Instead, she would have to use *ékòmétsɛ́!ɛ́* 'the other

one' or some other descriptor that specifically picks out the object located a distance away.

(58) a.   ò = sùmɔ̃̀-ɔ̃̀   *énɛ̃́*   àlóó   énɛ̃́
             2SG = like-HAB   this   or   this
             "Do you like this one or this one?"

b. *í̋=súmɔ̋ɔ̋ɔ̋   **énɛ̋**   mí̋í̋-sùmɔ̏   **nò**
    1SG=like.NEG   this   1SG.PROG-like   that
    "I don't like this one [closer], I like that one [further away]."

c. í̋=súmɔ̋ɔ̋ɔ̋   **énɛ̋**   mí̋í̋=sùmɔ̏   **ékɔ̀mé-tsɛ́=!ɛ́**
    1SG=like.NEG   this   1SG.PROG=like   one-NOM=DEF
    "I don't like this one, I like the other one."

Although *nò* does not indicate spatial deixis, it makes sense to translate it into English as *that* because *that* is more often used anaphorically than *this*. The following two examples show substitution anaphora using *nò*. In (59), the referent of *nò* is *Kweikor Fire Service*.

(59) mɛ̏ɨ̏ pìì tsɛ́-ɔ̏   mɨ̏   kwèíkɔ́ *Fire Service* **nò**   jí
    people many call-HAB   1SG.OBJ   Kweikor Fire Service that   COP

    nɔ̏   ní̋   kɛ́   ò=kè-tsɛ́   mí̋=!ɛ̋   à=bàá-!nɛ̋
    NM   NMLZ if   2SG=take-call   1SG=DEF   3PL.IMPERS=FUT-see
    "Many people call me Kweikor Fire Service. That's what if you call me by, everyone will know (that you're referring to me)."   [YM:19]

In (60), *kpékplèʹʹéʹʹé* 'the corn-based meal' is topicalized at the start of the sentence and is then referred to by *nò*.

(60) nɨ̏   kpékplè=!ɛ   **nò**   hṹ   wɔ̀=bàá-wò   mɨ̃̏ŋ   mùtsùlù
    and   kpekple=DEF   that   too   1PL=FUT-put   inside palm.oil
    "And the *kpekple*, that one too we will put palm oil in it."   [OYO:49]

In (61) *nò* is being used for textual anaphora. The speaker is about to explain why the yam festival is celebrated after another speaker has explained the rituals involved. In uttering (61) he

quotes the previous speaker, and here *nò* refers to the customs and traditions that have been

celebrated since time immemorial.

(61) è=kèέ   blèmà   bí!í=!έ   bònɪ́   ãmɛ̃=bà-nɪ́nã̀   lὲ
     3SG=say   olden.days   people=DEF   how   3PL=VENT-meet   3SG.OBJ
     jí   *nò*
     be   that
     "She said that is what people of old inherited."
     (Lit: "She said the people of old, how they met it is that.")   [OYO:69]

nò also combines with a number of relational nouns to form possessive NPs which

function as idiomatic expressions, especially expressions of time. Examples are *nò sὲὲ* (that

back) 'afterwards, after that'; *nò mɪ̃̀ɲ̀* (that inside) 'at that time'; *nò hὲwɔ* (that sake) 'because,

so'. The demonstrative in these expressions all refer to actions or situations made explicit in the

preceding discourse.

(62) *nò*   sὲέ=!έ   wɔ=nã̀   á!kέ   shɪ́   kɔkɔdé!né=!έ nɪ́   bòtè
     that   back=DEF   1PL=see   NMLZ   NMLZ   frog=DEF   NMLZ enter

     tɔ́=ɔ̀   mɪ̃̀ɲ́=!ɛ̃́   è=fɛ̃è   tãmɔ̃̀   nɔ́   nɪ́   èè=jè
     bottle=DEF   inside=DEF   3SG=do   like   NM   NMLZ 3SG.PROG=exit

     kpò
     compound
     "After that we saw that the frog that had entered the bottle, he's acting like he's coming
     out."   [FLO:12]

(63) *nò*   mɪ̃̀ɲ̀   fɛ̃́ɛ́   àyέlòófɔ̃lɔ́=!ɔ́   nyɪ̃̀ɛ́   è=sὲὲ
     that   inside all   owl=DEF   walk   3SG=back
     "That whole time the owl was following him."   [BOR:44]

(64) shí́   *Ellen* nɔ́=!ɔ́   pàpá tèí   nɔ́=!ɔ́   lɛ́=!ɛ́
      but   Ellen   NM=DEF   Papa Tei   NM=DEF   3SG.OBJ=TOP

      í̃=nyɛ̃́ɛ̃́ɛ̃́   mɑ̃́=!yá   ***nò***   hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   ĩ̀=hɑ̃́
      1SG=able.NEG   1SG.FUT=go   that   sake=DEF   1SG=give

      gbé!kɛ́-bí!í=ɛ̀   tèè
      child-PL=DEF   go.PST
      "But as for Ellen's and Papa Tei's (funerals) I couldn't attend them. So I made the
      children go." (Lit: "For the sake of that, I made the children go.")   [DF:98]

Although, the use of *nò* in (62) and (64) is more standard, it is possible to use *énɛ̃́* 'this' in its

place with no change in meaning. It is not possible to do this in (63), perhaps because speakers

do not think of *nò* and *mìŋ* as separate words but rather have reanalysed them as a single word.

One major difference between the uses of *énɛ̃́* and *nò* lies in the assumed cognitive

status of the addressee. *nò* requires that its referent be "activated", to use a term coined by

Gundel et. al (1993). This means that the referent is represented in the addressee's current

short-term memory because it has been mentioned in the previous linguistic context or is

apparent in the extra-linguistic context. *énɛ̃́,* on the other hand, can be used even when the

addressee is not familiar with the referent in question. This is possible because of the spatial

deictic "pointing" function of *énɛ̃́* (exemplified in 54) which *nò* lacks. This function allows *énɛ̃́*

to be used to refer to new topics in discourse, as long as they are relatively spatially close to

the speaker, as in (54).

That these demonstratives are nouns is seen in the fact that they may be possessed (62),

(63), (64); they may be pluralised with the suffix *-mɛ̀ĩ̀* and may also be modified by a quantifier

(65), a numeral (66) and an adjective (67).

(65) nò   hèwɔ́ !lɛ́   kàsé-lɔ̀-í = !ɛ́   nɛ́   ằmɛ̀ = nũ̀   **énɛ́ɛ̂-mɛ̀ĩ̀**
     that   sake   TOP   learn-AG-PL = DEF   NMLZ 3PL = hear   this-PL

fɛ̃́ɛ̃́ = !ɛ̃́
all = DEF
"So the disciples, when they heard all this…"   [CH:325]

(66) hɛ̃́   !mɛ̃́   **nò**   **éjwè**
     give   1SG   this   four
     "Give me four of those."

(67) **énɛ̃́**   fɛ̀ɛ́féó   nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́   ò = súmɔ́ɔ̃́ɔ̃̀
     this   beautiful   this   2SG = like.NEG
     "This beautiful thing, you don't like it?"

A few problems remain unresolved about the distribution of these two demonstratives.

Although they can both be used anaphorically, there are certain contexts in which only *nò* may

be used and others in which *énɛ̃́* is preferred. For example, in (68) *nò* refers back to *yèlè hĕtòì*

kὲ tòò fɔ̀ 'yam peels and sheep fat'. If *énɛ̃́* is substituted for *nò* the resulting sentence will not

be felicitous.

(68) mɛ̃́ĩ́ = !nɛ̃́   yèlè   hĕtò-ì   kὲ   tòò   fɔ̀
     1SG.PROG = see   yam   skin-PL   and   sheep fat

nò hũ̂?

that too

"I'm seeing yam peels and sheep fat. What's that for?" [OYO:271]

?*énế* hũ̂?

this too

What's this for?"

The same somewhat ungrammatical result is obtained when *énế* replaces *nò* in (69b) below.

(69) nĩ̀ kpékpĺé=!ɛ **nò/?énế** hṹ wɔ̀=bàá-wò mĩ̀ŋ mùtsùlù

  and kpekple-DEF that/this too 1PL=FUT-put inside palm.oil

  "And the *kpekple*, that/?this one too we will put palm oil in it." [OYO:49]

It seems at first glance that perhaps the anaphoric function of *énế* is restricted to textual

anaphora and not substitution anaphora and that only *nò* can be used for substitution anaphora.

However, in a few instances of substitution anaphora both *nò* and *énế* are acceptable. Example

(59) above is fine when rendered with *énế* instead of *nò,* as seen in (70); although, there is a

slight preference for *nò.*

(70) mề̃ĩ̀ pìì tsέ-ɔ̀ mĩ̀ kwèíkɔ́ *Fire Service* **nò/énễ̃**

  people many call-HAB 1SG.OBJ Kweikor Fire Service that/this.FOC

  jí nɔ̃̀ nĩ́ kέ ò=kὲ-tsέ mĩ́=!ế

  COP NM NMLZ if 2S=take-call 1SG=DEF

  à=bàá-!nắ

  3PL.IMPERS=FUT-see

  "Many people call me Kweikor Fire Service. That/This is what if you call me by,

  everyone will know (that you're referring to me)." [YM:19]

The general trend however, seems to be that for anaphoric function, *nò* 'that' can be used

where *énɛ́* 'this' is used but the reverse does not always hold. The answer to this puzzle seems

to be that *énɛ́* 'this', if it has a spatial deictic component, cannot be employed for referents

which are discourse-old. *énɛ́* 'this' in such a context can only refer to new referents. In (68) and

(69) the noun referents in question are physically located in the environment where the

speakers are. Once they have been mentioned, they are no longer new, and referring to them

with *énɛ́* 'this' suggests that they are new, hence its inappropriateness. This hypothesis requires

further investigation with more discourse data.

 (iii) *nɛ̀kɛ́* and *nɛ́!ɛ́:-* These are proximal demonstrative determiners, used to modify nouns in

terms of their relative physical nearness to the speaker or temporal nearness to the present time

of speaking. They may also be used for substitution anaphora. *nɛ́!ɛ́* is likely a fusion of the

proximal predicative particle, *nɛ́* and the definite article, *lɛ*. *nɛ̀kɛ́* and *nɛ́!ɛ́* cannot occur alone as

NPs but must be accompanied by a noun. They tend to occur together in the same NP, with

nɛ̀kɛ́ occurring before the head noun and *nɛ́!ɛ́* occurring after the head noun and its modifiers.

Example:

(71) *nɛ̀kɛ́* kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né   bíbɩ̀óó *nɛ́!ɛ́*
      this   frog   small this
      'this small frog.'   [NAR:5]

nềkế rarely occurs in an NP without *nế!ế*, but *nế!ế* frequently occurs without *nềkế*. In (72)-(74)

nế!ế is used (without *nềkế*) to indicate proximity of the referent of the noun head to the

speaker.

(72) *ówúlà*   *nế!ế*   mɔ̃   nɪ̃   yàá=!á   lè   jí
      young.man   this   NM   NMLZ   go=DEF   3SG.OBJ   COP
      first born
      "This young man, the one going (over there), he is the first born" [OYO:378]

(73) nằnằắ=!á   lέ   è=yὲ   *mằŋ*   *nế̃ễ̀*   mĩ̀ŋ
      Nanaa=DEF TOP   3SG=be.located   country   this   inside
      "As for Nanaa, she is in this country."   [DF:149]

(74) *mɔ̃*   *nɪ̃*   *à=kέ-bà*   *nế!ế*   è=tsùí   é=fằ
      NM   NMLZ 3PL.IMPER=take.PERF-come   this   3SG=heart   PERF=uproot
      "This person who has been brought (here), he is afraid."   [FH:129]

In (75), it is temporal proximity of the NP that is expressed by *nế̃!ế̃*.

(75) òb̀lá-yòò   kò   tsέ   mĩ̀   yὲ   òsú   gɔ́ɔ̀   mĩ̀ŋ
      life-woman   INDEF   call   1SG.OBJ   be.located   Osu   cemetery   inside

      hɔ̀ɔ̀   *nɪ̃*   *hɔ̀*   *nế!ế*
      Saturday   NMLZ   pass   this
      "A young woman called out to me in the Osu cemetery this past Saturday." [DF:119]

(76) ò=bàá-!nắ   fế̃ế̃   gbὲkὲ   *nế!ế*
      2SG=FUT-see   all   evening   this
      "You will see (it) all this evening."   [OYO:426]

In the following example, *nế!ế* is used anaphorically. The narrator initially describes how the

boy came upon a big stone or rock. He then changes topic and focuses on the owl's actions

(omitted in this example). When he pivots back to the topic of the boy and the stone, he

modifies them both with *nɛ́ɛ́!ɛ́* to indicate that their referents are the same as those of the boy

and stone mentioned earlier.

(77)   òbl̀ánǚű=ɛ̀   bà-tè   shì   nì̃   è=nã̀   té   àgbò tã̀mɔ̀
       young.man=DEF   VENT-rise   down and 3SG=see   stone big like

      rock jí   ò   *snowball* jí ò   nì̃   è=bà-bɔ́!í̃   ní̃
            COP IJ   COP IJ and 3SG=VENT-start NMLZ

      èè=kɔ̀
      3SG.PROG=climb
      "The young man got up and he saw a big stone that looked like a rock, or maybe a
      snowball and he started to climb it."

      [SEVERAL LINES DESCRIBING OWL'S ACTIVITIES OMITTED]

      nì̃   *gbɛ́!kɛ́-nűű*   *nɛ́!ɛ́* bà-kɔ̀   *té*   *nɛ́!ɛ́*
      and child-male   this   VENT-climb stone this
      "And this boy climbed this stone."   [DEB:87]

When *nɛ́!ɛ́* is used in conjunction with *nɛ̀kɛ́,* it appears to be for the purposes of reinforcement,

wherein the speaker stresses that the head noun is activated within the discourse i.e. it has

recently been a topic. It is therefore used mainly for anaphoric purposes, as in (78).

(78) bè   kò   ní̃   é-!hó=ɛ́   òbl̀ánǚű   fíóó kò
      time INDEF   NMLZ   PERF-pass=DEF young.man little INDEF

hì	shì.	*nɛ̀kɛ́*	*òblánǔǔ*	*fíóó*	*nɛ́!ɛ́*	è=yɛ̀	gbèé	bíbìóó
live	down	this	young.man	little	this	3SG=have	dog	small

"Some time ago, there lived a little young man. This young man had a small dog." [NAR:3]

When *nɛ̀kɛ́* occurs without *nɛ́!ɛ́* in a noun phrase it performs two functions. The first is

to mark new information, as in (79).

(79)	nì	ằmɛ̀=yà-nằ	*nɛ̀kɛ́*	*kòòlòì*	*bíbí!í*	*bíbí!í*	*ní*	*tsɛ̀-ɔ̌*	*mɔ̌*
	and	3PL=ITIV-see	this	animal	small	small	NMLZ	sting-HAB	person

"And they went and saw these small small animals that sting." [MAV:46]

The second function is type identification, where it identifies the head noun as an instantiation,

member or example of a larger category. For instance, *nɛ̀kɛ́* 'this' in (80) marks *nǔǔ* 'man' as a

member or exemplifier of the category of "men one should marry". Similarly, in (81), *nɛ̀kɛ́*

'this' marks *gbɔ̀mɔ̌* 'person' as an instantiation of the class of "people one should not quarrel

with."

(81)	*nɛ̀kɛ́*	*nǔǔ*	è=sà	*ní*	ò=kɛ	hì	shì
	this	man	3SG=fit	NMLZ	2SG=take	live	down

"This is the type of man you should marry."

(81)	*nɛ̀kɛ́*	*gbɔ̀mɔ̌=!ɔ̌*	à=kɛ̀	lɛ̀	bééè
	this	person=DEF	3PL.IMPERS=take	3SG.OBJ	quarrel.NEG

"Such a person, you don't quarrel with them."

When *nɛ́!ɛ́* modifies the noun *ní!í* 'thing', it results in a lexical collocation which

functions discursively as a placeholder for an entity whose name the speaker momentarily does

not remember. In (82), the participants are trying to list the herbs used in making a particular

ritual herbal mixture. After naming one in the first intonation unit, Oyo is having trouble

remembering any more and so she says *ɛ̀ɛ̀ nɪ́!ɪ́ nɛ́!ɛ́* 'errm, this thing.'

(69)   Oyo: nyȁnyȁrȁ́
                     herb.name
                     "Nyanyara (herb)"

       Kwei: [mȁ́=ká!í]
                          1SG.FUT=remember
                          "I will remember."

       Oyo: ɛ̀ɛ̀   [**nɪ̂ɪ̂**   **nɛ́!ɛ́**]
                     IJ   thing   this
                     "errm, this thing…"

       KK: nȁȁbúnȁȁbú   yɛ̀   mĩ̀ŋ
                     herb.name   be.located   inside
                     "There's naabunaabu (herb) in it."

nɪ̂ɪ̂ nɛ́!ɛ́ 'this thing' can also be used to signal self-repair as shown in (83), where the speaker

utters the wrong word (*tsò* 'tree') and then immediately self-repairs with the correct word

(*kòòlòó!ɛ́* 'the animal') which is preceded by *nɪ́!ɪ́ nɛ́!ɛ́* 'this thing'.

(83)   nɪ̀   è=bà-kɔ̀   tsò   ɛ̀ɛ̀   ***nɪ́!ɪ́***   ***nɛ́!ɛ́***   kòòlòó=!ɛ́
       and   3SG=VENT-climb   tree   IJ   thing   this   animal=DEF
       "And he climbed a tree – errm, this thing – the animal."   [FL:85]

(iv) **nȁ̀kȁ̀ɪ̀:-** This is the distal demonstrative determiner, used to reference NPs that are relatively

distant from the speaker. It contrasts with *nɛ̀kɛ́.* It is also used anaphorically. Whereas *nɛ̀kɛ́* is

often used in conjunction with *nế!ế, nằkằĩ* occurs with the definite article *lè*. It occurs before

the head noun while the definite article occurs at the end of the noun phrase.

In (84), *nằkằĩ* indicates that the head noun it modifies, *lɔ́lè* 'car' is spatially distant from the

speaker. It could be accompanied by a pointing gesture.

(85) ***nằkằĩ***   lɔ́lè   tsùlú=!ɛ́   nắmɔ̃̀   nɔ́
      that   car   red=DEF   who   NM
      "That red car, whose is it?"

In the following two examples, *nằkằĩ* is used anaphorically to refer back to something in the

prior talk. (86) shows substitution anaphora while (87) shows textual anaphora. In (87) *nằkằĩ*

refers to the act of chasing 'him' and rescuing the sibling.

(86) ò=yè   bí   !kó   bí   kòmé   pɛ́   n�í
      2SG=have   child   INDEF   child   one   only   NMLZ

      ò=yɔ́ɔ̀   è=tɔ̀   bò   dắnĩ̀   ò=nyɛ̃́   ò=fɔ́
      2SG=have.HAB   3SG=toil   you   before   2SG=able   2SG=give.birth

      nằkằĩ   *gbé!kẽ́=!ẽ́*
      that   child=DEF
      "You have a child, just one child. You toiled before you were able to have that child."
      [CH:38]

(87) té   wɔ̀=bàá-féé   tɛ̃́ɛ̃́   wɔ́=!nyɛ́ɛ̃́   è=sɛ̀ɛ̀   nɛ́
      how   1PL=FUT-do   how   1PL.SBJV=walk   3SG=back   NMLZ

      wɔ́=hé   wɔ̀=nyɛ̀mɛ́=ɛ̃̀   yè   è=dèŋ
      1PL.SBJV=get   1PL=sibling=DEF   be.located   3SG=hand

wɔ=bɛ́	hèwàlè	nɪ́	wɔ=bàá-féé	**nà̀kàì̀**
1PL=have.NEG	strength	NMLZ	1PL=FUT-do	that

"How will we chase him and take our sibling from him? We don't have the strength to do that."   [DEB:187]

Note that while *nà̀kàì̀* can be used anaphorically both as a complete NP (87) or as a determiner in an NP (86), *nɛ̀kɛ́* cannot function anaphorically unless accompanied by *nɛ́!ɛ́* in the NP.

2.3.1.3.3 Manner adverbial demonstratives

The nominal demonstratives *nɛ̀kɛ́* and *nà̀kàì̀* are also recruited as manner adverbial demonstratives where they point to some physical action which is intended to demonstrate how an action was carried out. They occur as modifiers to the predicate. Here, perhaps *nɛ̀kɛ́* and *nà̀kàì̀* will be more accurately glossed as 'like.this' and 'like.that' respectively. For example, in (88) the speaker rests his chin in his palm as he makes this statement. It is this action that is represented by *nɛ̀kɛ́.*

(88)
ì̀=tá	!shɪ́	ì́=fèé	**nɛ̀kɛ́**
1SG=sit	down	1SG.PERF=do	like.this

"I'm sitting down and I've done like this."   [MM:227]

(89)
nɪ̀̃	é=fèé	è=nì̃nè	**nɛ̀kɛ́**	èè=bó-!lɔ́
and	3SG.PERF=do	3SG=hand	like.this	3SG.PROG=shout-ITER

"And he's made his hands like this (puts hands to mouth in shouting gesture) and he's shouting."   [FLO:76]

nèké̃ is used when the speaker is the one demonstrating the action (even if they are reporting another person's actions), as in (89) while *nàkài̯* is used to point to an action carried out by an addressee. Consequently, *nàkài̯* is not accompanied by any physical demonstration on the part of the speaker, (90).

(90) fó-lɔ́-mɔ́   lɛ̀   **nàkài̯**   nɔ́ŋ́ŋ́
      cut-ITER-IMP   3SG.OBJ   like.that   just
      "Keep cutting it up just like that." [said to someone cutting up onions, for example]

Using these manner adverbials does not always require an accompanying physical action. They are sometimes used anaphorically to refer not necessarily to a preceding event but to refer the addressee to previous characterizations that the speaker has made concerning the manner in which something is done (91) and (92). Prior to the statement in (91), the speaker had given a long narrative about the procedures and rituals involved in the celebration of *Yeyeye*, the twin festival. It is this description that is being referred to by *nèké̃* 'like.this'.

(91) hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   kɛ́   à=yè   yèyéyé   **nèké̃=!ɛ̃́**
      sake=TOP   when   3PL.IMPERS=eat Yeyeye   like.this=DEF

      è=nɔ̃̀   jè-tsérè-mɔ̃̀   hɔ̀ɔ́=!ɔ́   à=bàá-wɔ́
      3SG=top   world-rise-NOM   Saturday=TOP   3PL.IMPERS=FUT-jeer

      hɔ̀mɔ̀   yì
      hunger head
      "So after we celebrate Yeyeye (AS I'VE JUST DESCRIBED), the following day, Saturday, we will jeer at hunger"   [YM:239]

In (92) the prior conversation had been about a woman whose son had died and was

inconsolable. The speaker had also lost two children and is saying how seeing that mother had

reminded her of when her own children died. By using *nầkằĩ* the speaker is likening her own

experience to that of the mother they had just been discussing.

(92)   kɛ̀kɛ̀   è＝hɑ̃́   mĩ̀   hṹ   ĩ̃＝ká!í   ĩ́＝*times*＝ɛ́＝!ɛ́
        then   3SG＝give   1SG   too   1SG＝remember   1SG＝ -DEF-DEF

        bè   ní̃   è＝bà   lɛ̀   ***nầkằĩ̃＝!ɛ́***
        time   NMLZ   3SG＝come   3SG.OBJ   like.that＝DEF
        "Then, me too, it makes me remember my time, when it happened like that"
        [FH:193]

Some discourse-pragmatic work is also done by adverbial *nɛ̀kɛ̃́* 'like.this'. When it is

followed by *nɔ̃́ɲ́* 'immediately, just', it conveys a sense of unexpectedness or surprise at the

following action. In narratives, it is an effective method of introducing a complicating action by

creating anticipation in the listener or reader.

(93)   è＝hĩ̀ɛ́   bú＝è   mĩ̀ŋ   kwɛ́-!mɔ̃́   ***nɛ̀kɛ̃́***   ***nɔ̃́ɲ́***   shĩ̀
        3SG＝hold   hole＝DEF   inside   look-NOM   like.this   immediately   instance

        kòmé   tóó＝!ɛ́   nɑ̃́ɑ̃̀   pàtú   é＝jè   kpò
        one   only＝TOP   PRSTV.PRED.PRT   owl   3SG＝exit   compound
        púɛ̃́ŋ
        IDEO
        "He kept on looking inside the hole when suddenly an owl flew out."   [PAT:106]
        (Lit: "He kept on looking inside the hole like this when suddenly, here is an owl exiting
        (the hole)")

(94) tsó=ɛ̀   shȉshȉ ń   è=tèè   è=béŋ́kɛ̀   *nɛ̀kɛ́*   *nɔ́ŋ́*
      tree=DEF   under NMLZ 3SG=go.PST 3SG=go.nearer   like.this immediately

      pɛ́   hɷ́   nȉ   è=nǎnè   hɷ́   yà-nǎ   bú   kò
      just   too   and   3SG=leg   too   ITIV-see   hole   INDEF

      yɛ̀   shȉkpɔ́!ŋ́
      be.located   ground
      "Just as he went and got closer to the tree his leg ended up in a hole (lit: his leg went
      and saw a hole) in the ground."   [PAT:77]

nɛ̀kɛ́ and *nàkàȉ* may also function as degree adverbs. *nàkàȉ* may replace *nɛ̀kɛ́* in (95) but not in

(96) or (97).

(95) ȉ=kèɛ́   gà-mɛ̌ȉ=!ɛ́   máàbà   nyɛ́=!lú   *nɛ̀kɛ́*
      1SG=say   Ga-people=DEF   why   2PL=be.foolish   like.this
      "I say, Ga people…why are you so foolish?"   [MM:155]

(96) ô   *fine girl*   *nɛ̀kɛ́*
      IJ   this
      "Oh, such a fine girl!"   [DF:123]

(97) è=mǐ!ǐ[5]   é-shɛ̀   è=hɛ̀   *nɛ̀kɛ́*
      3SG=?   PERF-reach 3SG=body   like.this
      "She was so happy!"

Another function of adverbial *nɛ̀kɛ́* is what I term exemplification. Here *nɛ̀kɛ́* occurs

outside of the noun phrase as an adverbial and presents the preceding noun as an example.

---

[5] This word does not exist outside this idiomatic expression. Based on the format of similar expressions, it likely
refers to a body part.

(98) ǐ=nábîi=ɛ̀   **nɛ̀kɛ́**   ằmɛ̃=jɛ̀   màm̀pròbí
      1SG=grandchildren=DEF   like.this   3PL=come.from   Mamprobi
      "My grandchildren for example, they are from Mamprobi."   [OYO:109]

(99) kɛ́   òò=tá!ó   nɔ́kò   **nɛ̀kɛ́=!ɛ́**   ò=kɛ̀   shìká
      if   2SG.PROG-look.for   something   this=DEF   2SG=take   money

      bàá-wò   mĩ̀ŋ
      FUT-put   inside
      "If you want something, for example, you will put money inside (it)."   [OYO:109]

nɛ̀kɛ́ may also be reduplicated a number of times (usually three times) in colloquial speech to

represent speech that the speaker deems irrelevant or unnecessarily long-winded. A good

English equivalent is the colloquial *bla bla bla* or the more formal *et cetera et cetera* and *and so

on and so forth.*

(100) è=hé   *permit* à=kɛ̀ɛ́   nɔ̃́   ní   è=hĩ̀ɛ̃́=!ɛ́
       3SG=get   3PL.IMPERS=say   NM   NMLZ   3SG=hold=DEF

       forgery   **nɛ̀kɛ́**   **nɛ̀kɛ́**   **nɛ̀kɛ́**
                    this   this   this
       "He got a permit. They said the one that he had was a forgery, bla bla bla." [MM:24]

2.3.1.3.4 Locational demonstratives
These point to a place. There are two contrasts in Gã: a place relatively close to the speaker is

bí!ɛ́ 'here' (101) and a place relatively distant from the speaker is *jɛ́!mɛ̃́* (often contracted to

jɛ̃́!ŋ) 'there' (103). *bí!ɛ́* sometimes co-occurs with the proximal nominal demonstrative, *nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́*

(102). This is done for emphasis.

(101)   *bíè*   jí   àfíě!ná
        here   be   Afiena
        "This (place) is Afiena"   [FH:55]

(102)   ɛ̃ɛ̃   *bí!ɛ́*   *nɛ́!ɛ́*   ákúŋmã̀ã̀jè
        yes   here   this   Akumaje
        Yes, this (place) is Akumaje.   [FH:90]

(103)   kɛ́   wɔ̀=ŋ̀-yá=!á   mã́=hã́   wɔ́=tsɔ́   *jɛ́!ŋ́*
        when   1PL=PROG-go=DEF   1SG.FUT=give   1PL.SBJV=pass   there
        "When we are going, I'll let us pass by there."   [FH:10]

These locational demonstratives are nouns and they display the following nominal features:

They can be possessed:

(104)   nò   hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   *wɔ̀=bíè*   nɛ́!ɛ́   hã̀ã̂jĩ̀   sɔ́ŋ̀ŋ̀
        that   sake=TOP   1PL=here   this   twins   only.FOC

        yɔ́!ɔ́   bí!ɛ́
        be.located.HAB   here
        "So here (at our house), only twins can be found here."   [FH:385]

They can be modified by the quantifier, *fɛ́ɛ́ɛ́* 'all'

(105)   *bí!ɛ́*   *fɛ́ɛ́ɛ́*   àfíěnà   jí   bí!ɛ́
        here   all   Afiena   COP   here
        "This whole area is Afiena."   [FH:63]

They can function as subjects and objects of sentences. In (101) *bí!ɛ́* 'here' is the subject of the

sentence and in (103), *jɛ́!ŋ́* 'there' is the object.

They may be modified by adjectives but such a noun phrase is syntactically constrained

because it cannot occur in subject or object position. Instead it must be modified by *nɛ́!ɛ́* and

then topicalized, followed by a comment on the topic.

(106) *bíɛ̀*   *àgbò*   *nɛ́!ɛ́*   mɔ̃   kòmé   pê   hì-ɔ̃   bí!ɛ
        here   big   this   person one   only.FOC   live-HAB   here
        "This big place, only one person lives here."

(107) *jɛ́mɛ̃*   *fɛ̀ɛ́fɛ́ó*   *nɛ́!ɛ́*   ò = súmɔ́ɔ́ɔ̃
        there   beautiful   this   2SG = like.NEG
        "That beautiful place, you don't like it?"

Below is a table summarizing the demonstratives in Gã and their functions. Functions such as

the identificational and surprise-marking function of *nɛ̀kɛ́* and the exemplification function of

both *nɛ̀kɛ́* and nãkã̀ì are grouped under "discourse".

Table 4: Ga demonstratives - forms and functions

Forms				Functions			
				Spatial deixis	Anaphora	Cataphora	Discourse
	Nominal demonstrative	NP (demonstrative pronoun)	*énɛ́* 'this'	✓	✓	✓	✗
			nò 'that'	✗	✓	✗	✗
		Determiner	*nɛ́!ɛ́* 'this'	✓	✓	✗	✓
			nɛ̀kɛ́ 'this'	✓	✓	✗	✓
			nàkàì 'that'	✓	✓	✗	✓
	Nominal locative demonstrative		*bí!ɛ́* 'here'	✓	✗	✗	✗
			jɛ́!mɛ́ 'there'	✓	✗	✗	✗
	Manner adverbial demonstrative		*nɛ̀kɛ́* 'like.this'	✓	✓	✗	✓
			nàkàì 'like.that'	✓	✓	✗	✗

2.3.2 Personal Pronouns

Dixon (2010:189) defines pronouns as "a small closed class of grammatical words which vary

for person." Gã has bound pronouns, which are obligatory, as well as free or independent

pronouns. Subject pronouns are bound, while object pronouns are free. The tone on a personal

pronoun is dependent on surrounding tones. Table 5 shows all personal pronouns in Gã.

Table 5: Personal pronouns in Ga

Singular			
	Subject pronominal proclitic	Object pronoun	Free Pronoun/Disjunctive Pronoun
1st person	*ĩ/mĩ*	*mĩ*	*mĩ*
2nd person	*o*	*bo/o*[6]	*bo*
3rd person animate	*e*	*lɛ*	*lɛ*
3rd person inanimate	*e*	*lɛ/Ø*	-
3rd person impersonal	*a*	-	
Plural			
1st person	*wɔ*		
2nd person	*nyɛ̃*		
3rd person animate	*àmɛ̃*		
3rd person inanimate	*àmɛ̃*	*àmɛ̃/Ø*	-

An interesting observation made from table 5 is that in the plural there is no form distinction among the various grammatical relations. That is, for each plural "person", the subject, object and independent pronouns all have the same form. However, singular subject pronominals differ from their object and free pronoun counterparts, except for the first person clitic, which has two forms, one of which is identical to and the other different from the object and free forms. Because object pronouns and free pronouns have the same form, it is safe to say that object pronouns in Gã serve an additional role as disjunctive or free pronouns.

---

[6] The second person object pronoun, *o =* is used in very formal contexts or by older speakers.

Free pronouns in Gã have similar syntactic function to what are traditionally known as "disjunctive pronouns"; they occur in "dislocated" positions such as in topicalized NPs. They occur in elliptical constructions e.g. as the sole answer to an interrogative. They also occur as conjuncts in coordinated NPs and also as focused NPs. According to Dixon (2010:190), in languages that have obligatory bound pronouns, free pronouns are used for contrast, emphasis or in copular complement or verbless clause complement function. Free pronouns in Gã are able to carry out all these functions. These functions will be exemplified in §2.3.2.3. Bound pronouns, on the other hand, cannot carry out any of these functions.

2.3.2.1 Subject pronominal proclitics

Bound subject pronouns in Gã are clitics, specifically proclitics. They constitute grammatical words that lack phonological independence and hence must attach to a host. They attach to the verb complex and occur as the very first element in the main clause. Absolutely nothing can intervene between a subject pronominal clitic and its host verb. Below are some sentences containing the subject pronominal clitics.

(108) nɛ́   *ɩ̀=hé*   shìká=!á   nɩ̀   *ɩ̀=síí!sí*
       when   1SG=get   money=DEF and   1SG-seize
       "When I collected the money, I seized it."   [MM:71]

(109) *ò=bàá-!nɛ́*   féɛ́   gbékè   nɛ́!ɛ̃́
       2SG=FUT-see   all   evening   this
       "You will see (it) all this evening."   [OYO:426]

(110) *ằmḛ̀=ŋ̀-jè*   nyḛ̀   *dḛ̀ŋ*
3PL = PROG-exit   2PL   palm
"They are becoming badly-behaved." (Lit: "They are getting out of your palms")
[OYO:139]

The first person singular clitic, *ĩ=* can be considered a simple clitic, following Zwicky

(1985:295). This is a clitic that has a corresponding fuller form which occurs in the same

syntactic position. The fuller form is *mĩ*. *mĩ* is also the older form and is the only form found in

archaic texts. It sounds very formal and stiff when used in ordinary conversation. It is not

known when *ĩ=* supplanted *mĩ* because writing convention still dictates that the first singular

subject clitic be written *mĩ*, even though people hardly pronounce it that way. In modern Gã,

mĩ is used only when the verb is in the progressive (111) or future (112) and then it forms a

portmanteau morpheme with these grammatical markers. The reduced form, *ĩ=* is used for all

other aspects.

(111) kèé-mɔ́   !lɛ́   á!kɛ́   *mĩ́ĩ́=!yá*
tell-IMP   3SG.OBJ   that   1SG.PROG = go
"Tell him that I am going."   [MM:97]

(112) bè   *mã́=kwɛ́*   ó = hĩ̂ɛ̀   *Sunday*
then   1SG.FUT = look   2SG = face
"Then I'll be expecting you on Sunday."   [FH:205]

As mentioned, though the first singular subject pronoun *mĩ=* is almost never heard in

spoken Gã (except in the two instances just described), it is the only first singular subject

pronoun used in written Gã. *ĩ=* never appears in any written work that I have encountered. The

following examples are taken from the Gã Bible and a primary school reading textbook.

(113) *mĩ̀=tèè*   zú!ú   !lέ
       1SG = go.PST zoo   DEF
       "I went to the zoo."   (BGL 3A 1999:3; tone marks and glosses mine)

(114) *mĩ̀=bò*   mĩ́ = tsὲ   yèhówà
       1SG = shout   1SG = father   Jehovah
       "I called on my father, Jehovah."   (BSG:671; tone marks and glosses mine)

The subject pronominal clitics may also attach to a noun phrase to form a possessive

construction (115).

(115) *ĩ́=mã̀mĩ́*   [1SG = mother]   'my mother'
       è=gbèé   [3SG = dog]   'his dog'
       wɔ̀=shĩ́!ã́   [1PL = house]   'our house'
       ó=shìká   [2SG = money]   'your money'

Unlike affixes, these clitic pronominals are not restricted to a particular syntactic

category; they cliticize to both verbs and nouns. As Zwicky (1985:299) puts it, they have a low

degree of selectivity with respect to their hosts. Whereas affixes do not belong to any word

class, these pronominals belong to a subset of the class of nouns i.e. pronouns. Therefore, they

are word-like in character. But unlike lexical words they cannot occur in isolation. The first,

second and third person singular subject pronominal clitics, for example, cannot be uttered

alone as an answer to a content question. Instead it is the free forms that must be used (116).

(116) Q: nǽmɔ̀   jwà   plɛ̀!té = !ɛ́
              who   break   plate = DEF
              "Who broke the plate?"

       A: *mǐ/bò/lɛ̀*
              1SG/2SG.OBJ/3SG.OBJ
              "Me/you/him,her."

But NOT:

       A: *ǐ/*ò/*è*
              1SG.SUBJ/2SG.SUBJ/3SG.SUBJ

Since the plural pronominals are completely neutralized for subject, object and free

form, they cannot be distinguished formally when they occur in isolation e.g. in answer to a

content question, as in (117). The answers in A are presumably the free forms (based on the

fact that only free forms occur independently), but the same forms are used for the subject

proclitics as well as object pronouns.

(117) Q: nǽmɛ̃̀ĩ̀   bàá-hóó   kpékplɛ̀ = !ɛ́
              who.PL   FUT-cook   food.type = DEF
              "Who will cook the *kpekple*?"

       A: *wɔ̀/nyɛ̃̀/ɐ̃̀mɛ̃̀*
              1PL/2PL/3PL
              We/You (pl.)/They

An important point to note about the pronominal subject clitics is that they are in

complementary distribution with the full noun phrases they refer to. That is, a pronominal clitic

and its NP referent cannot both occur in the same clause. Example (118) is ungrammatical if

Oko and the pronoun *e=* refer to the same person.

(118a)   *òkó   è=tsá-à   hèlà
                Oko   3SG=heal-HAB   disease
              "Oko heals diseases."

In order for both the full NP and the pronominal clitic to occur together there must be an

intonational break between the full NP and the rest of the sentence - a kind of topicalization by

fronting (see §7.3). In (119) the pause is signalled by a comma. Alternatively, the full NP can

be topicalized using the topic marker *lɛ* (120).

(119)   òkó,   è=tsá-à   hèlà
        Oko   3SG=heal-HAB   disease
        "Oko, he heals diseases."

(120)   òkó=!ɛ́   è=tsá-à   hèlà
        Oko=TOP   3SG=heal-HAB   disease
        "As for Oko, he heals diseases."

    Another difference between the subject pronominal clitics on one hand and object and

free pronouns on the other is that whereas free pronouns and object pronouns may be modified

by the additive adverb *hū́* 'too' and the quantifier, *fɛ́ɛ́* 'all', the subject pronominals cannot. So

(121) is grammatical because it is the object pronoun that is modified by *fɛ́ɛ́* 'all', but (122),

where the subject proclitic takes the modifier is not grammatical. In order for a subject

pronominal to take on such qualifiers, free pronouns must be employed. These can be modified

and left-dislocated and then can be followed by the subject pronominal clitic, as in (123). The

inability of the subject clitics to be modified shows that they are not quite like ordinary words.

(121) wò-bíì=ὲ   jὲ   kpò   yὲ   tsó=ὲ   nɔ̃̀
honey-people=DEF exit   compound be.located   tree=DEF   top

kὲ-bɔ̀lὲ   ằmɛ̃̀   fɛ́ɛ́
take-surround 3PL   all
"The bees exited the tree and surrounded them completely."   [PAT:63]

(122) *ằmɛ̃̀   fɛ́ɛ́   ŋ̀-jè   nyɛ̃̀=dɛ̃̀ŋ
3PL   all   PROG-exit   2PL=palm
"They are all becoming badly-behaved." (Lit: "They are all getting out of your palm.")

(123) ằmɛ̃̀   fɛ́ɛ́   ằmɛ̃̀=ŋ̀-jè   nyɛ̃̀=dɛ̃̀ŋ
3PL   all   3PL=PROG-exit   2PL=palm
"They are all becoming badly-behaved."

The impersonal pronoun *a=* is used only in subject position. It is used to indicate

referents that are unknown to the speaker or whose role the speaker wishes to downplay, or

referents that are unspecifiable, as is the case in (124). Constructions with the impersonal

pronoun are the closest thing semantically to passives in other languages.

(124) á=sɔ̀lè   bò   òò   à=sɔ́lé-kò
3PL.IMPERS.PERF=baptise2SG.OBJ   IJ   3PL.IMPERS=baptise-PERF.NEG

bò   òò   dáá   áfǐ=!ɛ   à=bàá-fɛ́ɛ́
2SG.OBJ   IJ   everyday   year=TOP   3PL.IMPERS=FUT-do

á=hɛ́ɛ́   bò
3PL.IMPERS.SBJV=give   2SG.OBJ
"Whether you've been baptized or not, every year it (customary rites for twins) will be done for you."   [OYO:152]

2.3.2.2 Object pronouns

These are not considered clitics mainly due to their ability to occur as independent pronouns.

Object pronouns occur immediately after the verb complex.

(125) à=tsέ-ɔ̀   *mì̃*   nã̀ã́ kwèíkɔ́
       3PL.IMPERS=call-HAB   1SG.OBJ   Naa Kweikor
       "My name is Naa Kweikor." (Lit: "They call me Naa Kweikor") [YM:16]

(126) mĩ́ĩ́=kέέ   *bò*   hɔ̀mɔ̃̀ yééé   *nyὲ̃*   kɔ̀kɔ̀ɔ̀kɔ̀
       1SG.PROG=say   2SG.OBJ   hunger eat.NEG   2PL   never
       "I'm telling you, you'll never go hungry." (Lit: "…hunger will never eat you.")
       [OYO:180]

(127) nì̃   è=mɔ́   *lὲ*
       and   3SG=catch   3SG.OBJ
       "And he caught him."   [PAT:206]

The second singular object pronoun is *bò*, but in some formal, written literature *o* has been found in object position. This use is attested but not common in the spoken language. The example below is from the Gã Bible.

(128) nì̃   mì̃   hũ̀   mĩ́ĩ́=kέέ   *!ó*   á!kέ
       and   1SG   too   1SG=tell   2SG.OBJ   NMLZ
       "And I am also telling you that…"   (BSG:NT16)

The third singular object pronoun for inanimate entities is null. In the third intonation unit in

(129), Sally corrects Dina by saying that the accounts are going to be done at the house, but

there is no mention of the NP, *àkɔ́ǹtàá* 'accounts' or of an overt pronoun because it is

pronominalized with a null pronoun.

(128) Dina: hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   à=bàá-bù   àkɔ́ǹtàá=à   yè
            sake=TOP   3PL.IMPERS=FUT-calculate   accounts=DEF be.located

            [jɛ́!mɛ́]
            there
            "So the accounts will be calculated there."

       Sally: [àkɔ́ǹtàá]   pɛ́
            accounts   only
            "Only the accounts."

            ḿm̀hm̀ḿ   à=bàá-bù   Ø   yè
            no   3PL.IMPERS=FUT-calculate   3SG.OBJ.INAN   be.located

            shɛ́!ɛ́=!ɛ́
            house=DEF
            "No, it will be calculated at the house."

Using *lè* for animates will be ungrammatical.

(129) *ḿm̀hm̀ḿ   à=bàá-bù   *lè*   yè   shɛ́!ɛ́=!ɛ́
       IJ   3PL.IMPERS=FUT-calculate   3SG.OBJ   be.located   house=DEF
       "No, it will be calculated at the house."

   All inanimate object nouns must be pronominalized with a zero unless the noun is

capable of being the subject of a middle verb or labile verb. These are verbs that are capable of

occurring in both transitive and intransitive clauses. Specifically, this relates to labile verbs

where the S (single argument) of the intransitive clause corresponds to the P (patient) of the

transitive clause. So for instance, while the inanimate object of *bù* 'calculate' in (128) can be

pronominalized with a zero morpheme, the inanimate object of *wó!só* 'shake' in (130) cannot

because it is a labile verb. The overt 3SG object pronoun, *lɛ̀*, must be used.

(130) nò   hèwɔ=ɔ́   ã̀mɛ̃=hɪ̀ɛ̃́   !lɛ́   táò-mɔ̃̀   ã̀ã̀hũ̀   nɪ̃̀
      that   sake=TOP   3PL=hold   3SG.OBJ   seek-NOM   continuously and

      gbèé !lɛ́ tèè   *bee*=!ɛ́   ã̀mɛ̃=tsũ̀   kókŕóó   !kó
      dog   DEF go.PST   =DEF   3PL=house   spherical   INDEF

      nɪ̃́   àmɛ̃́=fèé   yɛ̀   tsò   nɔ̃̀.   hèwɔ=!ɔ́
      NMLZ   3PL.PERF=do   be.located   tree   top.   sake=TOP

      è=tèè   nɪ̃̀   èè=wósò   *lɛ̀*
      3SG=go.PST and   3SG.PROG=shake   3SG.OBJ.
      "So they kept looking for him. And the dog went to…the bees, their small house that
      they had made on a tree (i.e. beehive). So he went and he is shaking it." [MAV:50-53]

The reason for allowing inanimate objects of only labile verbs to be pronominalized with the

overt object pronoun is to avoid potential misinterpretation of such clauses. Labile verbs may

or may not have objects. The presence or absence of an object determines whether the subject

is the agent or patient. A clause with a labile verb and no overt object will be interpreted as one

in which the subject is the undergoer or patient of the action predicated by the verb. If that is

not the meaning that the speaker wishes to convey, then it makes sense for an overt object to be

present for such verbs in all instances, regardless of the animacy of the object referent. For

example, if the last sentence of (130) occurs with a null object as in (131), the sentence would

mean that the beehive was shaking all by itself, perhaps due to the wind. Introducing the overt

3SG pronoun eliminates this interpretation.

(131) èè=wó!só
       3SG.PROG=shake
       "It is shaking."

Just like subject pronominals, object pronominals cannot co-occur with the noun phrase

co-referential with it (132). Again, (132) will be grammatical only if there is an intonational

pause between the object pronoun and the NP it refers to. Such a construction would constitute

a right-dislocated construction, a kind of topic construction (§7.4).

(132) *nĩ̀   è=mɔ̃́   *lὲ*   *gbèé=!έ*
       and   3SG=catch   3SG.OBJ   dog-DEF
       "And he caught him, the dog."

Such a construction without the pause may be employed for stylistic effect. A noun co-

referential with the object pronoun may co-occur with it as long as the noun is a proper name.

A speaker may employ this tactic for dramatic emphasis. Example:

(133) mĩí=bí   bò   àshámĩ̀
       1SG.PROG=ask   2SG.OBJ   Ashami
       "I'm asking you, Ashami."

2.3.2.3 Free pronouns

In Gã, object pronouns (except for null 3SG pronouns) are used as free pronouns. As

mentioned earlier, these pronouns perform many of the functions that bound pronouns cannot.

These functions are discussed below.

Free pronouns are the only pronouns that can occur as the sole answer to a question

(116). Free pronouns are used to show contrastive emphasis; the subject pronominal clitic

(together with the verb complex) is preceded by the corresponding free pronoun (same number

and person) without any intervening intonational pause. For example, in (134) the use of the

free pronoun *bo* in addition to the subject pronominal clitic *ò* puts emphasis on the the second

person (you).

(134) nɔ̃́   nɛ́   ***bò***   ò＝bàá-tsɔ̃́ɔ̃́＝!ɔ́   nɛ̃̀
         NM   NMLZ   2SG   2SG＝FUT-show＝DEF   FOC

      à＝bàá-féè
      3PL.IMPERS＝FUT-do
      "What *you* will choose is what will be done."   [OYO:13]

Free pronouns are the only pronouns that can be focused. Focus is marked by placing

the focus particle, *nɛ̀* after the focused noun. For pragmatic reasons, utilizing a focused pronoun

is sometimes obligatory. For example, instead of answering an interrogative with just a

pronoun as in answer A in (135), one may respond with a complete sentential answer.

However, such an answer must include a focused pronoun, which is then followed by a clause

containing the corresponding subject pronominal clitic (B).

(135) Q: nǻmɔ̀ jwà   plɛ̀ɛ́!té = !ɛ́
          who   break   plate = DEF
          "Who broke the plate?"

   A: mĩ̀

   B: mĩ̀   (nì)   ĩ̀ = jwà   plɛ̀ɛ́!té = !ɛ́
       1SG   FOC   1SG = break   plate = DEF
       "I broke the plate."
       "I am the one who broke the plate."

   C.   ĩ̀ = jwà   plɛ̀ɛ́!té = !ɛ́   → grammatical but not felicitious
       1SG = break   plate = DEF
       "I broke the plate."

Although answer C is grammatical, it is pragmatically aberrant because it does not meet the

information structure demands of the question. Because the question presupposes that someone

out of a pool of many people broke the plate, Gã requires that the answer reflect this by putting

contrastive emphasis or focus on the answer.

The free pronouns could be optionally followed by the focus particle *nì.* Indeed, when

the answer to such a question is a full NP, that NP is obligatorily marked by the focus

morpheme. This state of affairs is not unique to Gã. In English, answer B will correspond to a

sentence in which the first singular pronoun is phonologically stressed (*I* broke the plate) and

answer C to one in which it is not stressed (I broke the plate). The sentence in which the first

person pronoun is stressed would be the more pragmatically appropriate one. The same

explanation can be given for why (136a) is acceptable but (136b) is not.

(136a) *stamp* nɛ́!ɛ̃́ **mì̃** **ì̃=yà-fèê** ló
        this   1SG   1SG=ITIV-do   QP
    "This stamp, am I the one who went and made it?"   [MM:39]

(136b) **stamp*   nɛ́!ɛ̃́ **ì̃=yà-fèê** ló
              this   1SG=ITIV-do   QP
    "This stamp, did I go and make it?"

Since the free and bound forms of the plural pronouns are identical, an answer with a

plural pronoun appears to have two copies of the pronoun. However, it is the free pronoun that

constitutes the first element of the sentence, followed by the subject clitic:

D: **wɔ̀**   **wɔ̀=jwà**   pɪ̀ɛ́!té=!ɛ́
      1 PL   1PL=break   plate=DEF
      " *We* broke the plate."
      "We were the ones who broke the plate."

Free pronouns are the only pronouns that can occur as subjects (137) or complements

(138) in copula clauses. The copula verb is *jí*. Example:

(137) *Elma=!ɑ̃́*   **lὲ**   jí   àmɔ̃̀ɔ̃́!kɔ́
      Elma=TOP   3SG.OBJ   COP Amorkor
      "Elma, she is Amorkor."   [DF:118]

(138) kɛ́   nṳ̀ṳ̃   jí   *bó=!ɛ̃́*
       if   man   COP   2SG.OBJ=DEF
       "If you are a man…"   [OYO:336]

Generally, subject proclitics cannot function in these roles:

(139) *Elma=!ɛ̃́   *è=jí*   àmɔ̃̀ɔ̃́!kɔ́
       Elma=TOP   3SG=COP   Amorkor
       "Elma, she is Amorkor."

(140) ?kɛ́   nṳ̀ṳ̃   jí   *ó=!ɛ̃́*
       if   man   be   2SG.OBJ=DEF
       "If you are a man…"

An exception is made for the subject of a copular verb whose complement refers not to

a concrete entity but to an abstract concept, idea or event. Such a subject *must* be the third

singular subject clitic, *e=* (141a). It cannot be the free form equivalent *lè* (141b), since the

referent of *lè* when it is subject of a copula must be animate, perhaps even human.

(141a) *è=jí*   dɾ̀ó!mɛ̃́   kɛ̀   hɛ̃́   !wɔ́   à!kɛ́
       3SG=COP   blessing   take   give   1PL   NMLZ
       "It is a blessing for us that…"   [CH:6]

(141b) **lè   jí*   dɾ̀ó!mɔ́   kɛ̀   hɛ̃́   !wɔ́   à!kɛ́
       3SG   COP   blessing   take   give   1PL   NMLZ
       "It is a blessing for us that…"

Free pronouns function as subjects of verbless clauses, something which subject

pronouns cannot do.

(142) *lɛ̀*   nɛ́ɛ̃́
      3SG   PROX.PRED.PRT
      "This is him."

(143) ***è**=nɛ́ɛ̃́
      3SG=PROX.PRED.PRT
      "This is him."

Free pronouns can be modified by nominal property words (144), whereas subject

proclitics cannot (145).

(144) *bò*   *bíbìóó*   *nɛ́!ɛ́* ò=nyɛ̃́-!ŋ́   ó=yì   tèté
      2SG   small   this   2SG=be.able-NEG.FUT   2SG=beat   Tete
      "A small person like you cannot beat Tete." (Lit: "You, this small person…you cannot
      beat Tete.")

(145) ***ò*   *bíbìóó*   *nɛ́!ɛ́* ò=nyɛ̃́-!ŋ́   ó=yì   tèté
      2SG   small   this   2SG=be.able-NEG.FUT   2SG=beat   Tete
      "A small person like you cannot beat Tete." (Lit: "You, this small person…you cannot
      beat Tete.")

2.3.3 Possessive pronouns

There are no possessive pronouns in Gã per se. Since possession is indicated by simple

juxtaposition of possessor and possessum (with the possessor in initial position), the subject

pronominal clitics function in place of full nouns and stand in juxtaposition to the possessum

Example:

(146) *í=wɔ́!ŋ́*   *gbɛ̂ì* jí   yòómó àshámî̃
      1SG=deity   name be   Yoomo Ashami
      "My deity name is Yoomo Ashami."   [YM:17]

(147) ò=tá   shì̃   nì̃   *ó=bí*   lέ-!έ   ŋ̀-gbô
       2SG=sit   down   and   2SG=child   DEF-TOP   PROG-die
       "You are sitting by idly as your child dies?"   [CH:108]

(148) kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né=!έ   bέ   *è=tɔ́=ɔ̀*   mì̃ĩ̀
       frog=DEF   be.located.NEG   3SG=bottle=DEF   inside
       "The frog was not in his bottle."   [DEB:7]

Independent pronouns cannot occur as possessors in possessive NPs. One exception is

the first singular independent pronoun. In written Gã, the first singular pronoun *mĩ́=*, rather

than *ĩ=* is used as possessor. The following example is from the Gã Bible. Tone marks and

glosses are mine.

(149) yèhówà   jí   *mĩ́=*té-sàà   kὲ   mĩ́=mɔ́ɔ̀   nĩ́   wà
       Jehovah   COP   1SG=stone-bed   and   1SG=prison NMLZ   be.hard
       "Jehovah is my rock and my strong fortress."   [BSG:671]

2.3.4 Possession

As mentioned earlier, possession in Gã is coded by apposition of the possessor noun and the

possessed noun. The possessor comes first and is immediately followed by the possessum.

Although the notion of possession evokes the semantic relation of ownership, many writers

(Dixon 2010:263 ; Nikolaeva and Spencer 2013:225) have noted that this is not the only

relation that may exist between the two noun phrases in a so-called possessive noun phrase.

According to them, some other semantic relationships that may hold between a possessed noun

and its possessor are kinship relationship, whole-part relationship, orientation or location or

some sort of association that must be pragmatically determined. Some examples are given

below:

Kinship:

(150) **Elma** **bî**   jí   lè
      Elma child COP   3SG.OBJ
      "She's Elma's child."   [DF:143]

(151) **nǎnǎǎ**   **fí!óó** **nyèmí** **nǔǔ=!ɛ́**   nɪ́   hɪ̀   gɔ̀ɔ́=ɔ̀̃   nɔ́=!ɔ́
      grandmother little   sibling male=DEF   NMLZ live hill=DEF   top=DEF
      "little grandma's brother who lived at the top of the hill." [DF:107]

(152) **wɔ̀=nǎǎ-mɛ̀ɪ̃̀**   kɛ̀   **wɔ̀=nǎnǎkɛ́ńsóá-ì-mɛ̀ɪ̃̀**
      1PL=grandmother-people   and   1PL=great.grandmother-PL-people

      bèbèèbè   à=bɔ̂ɪ̃   hǎǎjìàyɛ̀lɛ̀yélí
      past.time   3PL.IMPERS=start   twin.festival
      "It was during the time of our grandparents and great grandparents that the twin festival
      was started."   [OYO:16]

Whole-part relationship:

In (153) below, there are three possessive NPs which all exhibit whole-part semantics. Body

part nouns almost always occur in such NPs, as in *èyítsò* 'his head'. The two nouns *mɪ̀ɪ̃̀*

'inside' and *nǎǎbú* 'mouth' denote different parts of the bottle, *tɔ̀*. They are locative or spatial

nouns and are primarily derived from body part terms. They will be looked at in more detail in

§2.3.4.3.

(153) shǐ̀ mòŋ́ *è=yítsɔ̀* yà-kà yɛ̀ *tɔ́=ɔ̀* *mìŋ̀*
     but rather 3SG=head ITIV-be.stuck be.located bottle=DEF inside

é!jáá!kɛ́ *tɔ́=ɔ̀* *nàǎbú* yɛ̀ bíbìóó
because bottle=DEF mouth have small
"But rather, his head went and got stuck inside the bottle because the mouth of the
bottle was small."   [PAT:40]

It is possible for several possessive NPs to be stacked one on top of the other. (154) is a
possessive NP which contains three possessive NPs. In the first, *ótsũ̌ɛ̀* 'your room', the
possessor is *ó* '2SG' and the possessum is *tsũ̌ɛ̀* 'the room'. In the second possessive NP, *ótsũ̌ɛ̀*
'your room' is the possessor and *mìŋ̀* 'inside' is the possessum; and in the third and
superordinate NP, *ótsũ̌ɛ̀* mìŋ̀ 'your room' is the possessor and *sáḿfɛ̀lɛ́!ɛ́* 'the window' is the
possessum.

(154) ŋã́ [[[ó=tsṹ=ɛ̀]_PossP1 mìŋ̀]_PossP2 sáḿfɛ̀lɛ́=!ɛ́]_PossP3
     close 2SG=house=DEF inside window=DEF
     "Close the window in your room." (Lit: "Close your room's window.")

Orientation/location:

Possessive NPs which code this semantic relationship are especially important in Gã because
they are the primary means of expressing location. Locational reference in Gã is intrinsic,
meaning that the location of an entity is described in relation to another entity. In a possessive
NP denoting location, the possessor is the reference object and the possessum is a noun
(usually a body part) which denotes a region related to the reference object. Example, in (155)

sèè 'back' in *nầkầĩ téé sèè* 'behind that stone' denotes the area contiguous to the posterior

region of the stone. See §2.3.4.3 for a discussion of locative nouns.

(155) nĩ̀   gbèé=!έ   hṹ   tèè   è=yà-tèé   yὲ
     and   dog=DEF   too   go.PST   3SG=ITIV-hide   be.located

     nầkầĩ̀   *té=ὲ*   *sὲὲ*
     that   stone=DEF   back
     "And the dog too went and hid behind that stone."   [MA:64]

Pragmatically-determined association:

Here, the relationship between possessor and possessum can only be deduced from the

contextual situation. 'Ownership' (temporary or permanent) could be one of several possible

relationships between the two nouns. Some instances of this type of possession are

indistinguishable from lexicalized noun-noun compounds. Example (156) is a jocular

expression often addressed to a child who is being disrespectful to an adult. The possessive NP

ònṹkpá fótò 'adult's photo' does not refer to a photo owned by an adult but to a photo

depicting an adult. In the second possessive NP, *óshĩ́!ắ* 'your house', again if the addressee is a

child then the house in question does not refer to a property owned by the child but to the

house where the child lives.

(156) *ònṹkpá*   *fótò*   bέ   *ó=shĩ́!ắ*
     adult   photo   be.located.NEG   2SG=house
     "There's no photo of an adult in your house."

In (157), it is 'ownership' that links the possessor and possessum in the possessive NPs, *èshúù* 'his shoes' and *ètàlé* 'his clothes'.

(157) nĩ̀   è꞊jìé   **è꞊shúù**   kɛ̀   **è꞊tàlé**   fɛ́ɛ́   è꞊shwìé   !shí

and   3SG꞊remove 3SG꞊shoes   and   3SG꞊dress   all   3SG꞊pour   down

"And he removed his shoes and his clothes and put them down." [AKU:7]

In (158), the noun in possessor position is inanimate and so is incapable of ownership. To some extent, however, *síkl̀ì* 'sugar' is personified and can now be said to have *wèbí!í* 'followers, associates'. The entire NP refers to the ants that are commonly found around sugar.

(158) síkl̀ì   wèbí!í

sugar   followers

'sugar ants'

In (159), *tsòfã̀tsɛ̀ wè* 'shrine', refers not necessarily to a house owned by the medicine man or even to where he lives but where he practices his craft.

(159) tsòfã̀-tsɛ̀   wè

medicine-NOM   house

'shrine'   [CH:91]

Examples (158) and (159) can also be analysed as lexicalized noun-noun compounds. Other examples of possessive NPs which are also lexicalized compounds are *tsũ̀ nyɛ̃̀* (house mother) 'wall gecko', *gbónyõ̀ àdékà* (dead.body box) 'coffin',

2.3.4.1 Alienable and inalienable possession

In many languages there is a grammatical distinction between alienably possessed nouns and

inalienably possessed nouns. The parameters for membership in one category or the other is

determined uniquely for each language. Generally, inalienably possessed nouns are those which

entail the existence of a possessor noun i.e. they exist in relation to some other noun

(Nikolaeva and Spencer 2013:207-208). In many languages with this distinction, nouns

denoting kinship relations and body parts are considered inalienable and there is special

morphology to mark them as such. Nouns like *tree, clothes* and *chair* are alienable; they are not

inherently linked or associated with another noun.

Gã makes no grammatical distinction between alienable and inalienable nouns. Kinship

terms and relational nouns (body parts) tend to occur in possessive NPs. In pragmatically

marked situations, however, they can occur without possessors, often for dramatic effect, as in

(160).

(160) è＝nyɛ́ɛ́ɛ̃́   *goal*   é＝!wó   *nɑ̀né＝!ɛ́*   é＝!kpá   àfã́
       3SG＝able.NEG   3SG.SBJV＝score   leg＝DEF   PERF＝turn   side
       "He can't score a goal. The leg is crooked."

Body parts may also occur without possessors when one wants to predicate an action or

attribute of a body part in a general sense, without referring to any particular individual, as in

the proverb in (161).

(161) à=kὲ   *hĩŋmɛ́ĩ́*   ényɔ̃   kwέέέ   tɔ̀   mĩ̀ŋ
       3PL.IMPERS=take eye   two   look.NEG   bottle   inside
       "One does not look into a bottle with both eyes."

There is one noun that must always appear in a possessive noun phrase, with no exceptions.

This is the noun *ŋɔ̃ɔ̃* which refers to a person's immediate vicinity or home or a person's

possession (162), (163).

(162) ì̀=bí   !lέ   á!kέ   è=bà-hὶ̃   *Auntie àmὲέ!lé*   *ŋɔ̃*
       1SG=ask   her   that   3SG=VENT-live   Auntie Amerley   place
       ló
       QP
       "I asked her whether she came and lived with Auntie Amerley."   [DF:126]

(163) gbé!kɛ̃́=!ɛ́   é-yááá   *mɔ̀=kɔ̀*   *mɔ̀=kɔ̀*   *ŋɔ̃*
       child=DEF   PERF-go.NEG   person=INDEF   person=INDEF   place
       "The child won't go to anyone."

2.3.4.2 Plural possessors

In Gã, if the possessor is a plural noun, the possessum takes a prefix, *a-*, to indicate plurality of

the possessor. Dixon (2010:268) refers to the marker on the possessum that functions to specify

the person or number of the possessor as a pronominal pertensive [PERT] affix. Examples are

given in (164) and (165).

(164) *Elma*-mɛ̃ὶ̀   *à-*pàpá=!á
       Elma-people   PERT-father=DEF
       "Elma and company's father…"   [DF:166]

(165) ɛ̀ɛ̂   jùlɔ̀-í=ɛ̀   nyî̃ɛ̂-ɔ̃   mɛ̃î̃=ɛ̃   à-téŋ
       IJ   thief-PL=DEF   walk-HAB   people=DEF PERT-middle
       "Yes…there are thieves among the people."   [OYO:216]

2.3.4.3 Locative nouns

As mentioned earlier, possessive NPs are the main means of expressing location. The possessor

is the reference object and the possessum is a noun denoting a region of the possessor or a

region contiguous with the area denoted by the possessum. Such a possessum is called a

locative noun, relator noun or relational noun. Many are derived from body part terms.

According to Imbert (2005:5) "syntactically speaking, relator nouns are complex adpositions

built around a noun stem". Svorou (1994) refers to relational nouns as "spatial grams".

Svorou's (1994) term is more inclusive and is intended to capture relator nouns i.e. adpositions,

as well as other grammatical forms which express spatial relations such as affixes, case

inflections and spatial adverbs. Relational nouns often lack some of the morphosyntactic

features of regular nouns such as articles and pluralisation.

In an extensive cross-linguistic exposition on the evolution of body-part terms to spatial

grams, Svorou (1994) discovers that body-part terms most often develop into expressions of

spatial relations that arise out of the divisions that individual languages make of the exterior

regions of entities. She makes the following observation about spatial grams and the body parts

that give rise to them.

FRONT-REGION: eye, face, forehead, mouth, head and breast or chest.

BACK REGION: back, buttocks, loins and anus

SIDE-REGION: flank, ribs, abdomen, heart and ear.

TOP-REGION :   head and back.

Ga has a definite number of body-part relational/locative nouns which have generally been referred to in the literature as postpositions. These are shown in table 6.

Table 6: Ga body part terms and their corresponding locational denotations

Gã body part	English gloss	Locative denotation
hɛ̃́ɛ̃̀	face	front
sɛ̀ɛ̀	back	back
dṹnã̀ã̀	buttocks/anus	tail end/rear
nã̀ã̀bú/nã̀ã̀	mouth	edge, entrance/opening
tòí	ear	edge
yìtéŋ	top of head	top
hè	body	surface, immediate surroundings

Some examples of sentences containing these body part relational nouns are:

(166) nĩ̀   è = ŋmɛ̀ɛ́   gbé!kɛ̃́-nũ̀ũ̀   fí!óó = ɛ̀   hè   è = bà-tswà   shĩ̀
       and   3SG = let.go   child-male   little = DEF   body   3SG = VENT-hit   down

       kɛ̀-jɛ̀   *cliff = ɛ́ = !ɛ́*   *yìtéŋ*
       take-come.from   = DEF = DEF   top.of.head
       "And he let go of the little boy and he came and fell down from the top of the cliff."
       [DEB:125]

(167) àkùtú=ɛ̀   kấ   *gɔ́ɔ́!tá=à*   *tòí*
       orange=DEF lie   gutter=DEF   ear
       "The orange is lying at the edge of the gutter."

(168) *té!shí house hɛ̂̃*   gbɛ́=!ɛ́   bíɛ̀   gbɛ́=!ɛ́
       Teshie   face   road=DEF   here   road=DEF
       "In front of Teshie house and around here…"   [FH:49]

(169) òbÌà-nừừ   fí!óó=ɛ̀   sèlè   kɛ̀-tèè   *nự̃=ɛ̀̃*   *nằằbú*
       life-male   little=DEF   swim   take-go.PST   water=DEF   mouth
       "The little gentleman swam to the water's edge."   [NAR:73]

(170) è=nằ   tsè-ì   kɛ̀   jwɛ́!í   nấ   é-bú!á   *tɛ́=ɛ̀*
       3SG=see   stick-PL   and   bushes NMLZ   PERF-gather   stone=DEF
       hɛ̀
       body
       "He saw sticks and bushes around the stone."   [NAR:63]

The word for head in Ga is *yitso*, but this is not used as a spatial gram. What is used

instead is *yìtéŋ*, which refers to the part of the head normally covered by hair and including the

hair itself and is morphologically made up of *yì* 'head' and *téŋ* 'middle'. Consequently *yìtéŋ*

specifies not just any top region but the topmost region of an entity, just as the top of the head

is the uppermost region of the human body. It is also reserved for use with entities that have a

higher vertical elevation than the average human being or entities whose height is greater than

eye-level. Therefore it would be used to indicate the location of an entity on the top of e.g. a

building, a tall cupboard or a cliff, as in example (166). *nɔ̃̀* 'top', which is not a body part term,

is not as restricted. It indicates location on the upper surface of an object, regardless of height

(171).

(171) é=yà-sɔ́   *tsó=!ɛ́*   *hékò*   *nɔ̀*   èè=kwɛ́
       3SG.PERF=ITIV-perch   tree=DEF   somewhere   top   3SG.PROG=look
       lὲ
       3SG.OBJ
       "He has gone and perched on some part of the tree and is watching him" [DEB:73]

Other locative relational nouns that are not derived from body part terms are *shῐshῐ*'under',

mɑ̃̀sèí'side' (173), *kóŋ* 'side' *mῐ̃̀ŋ* 'inside' (172) and *téŋ* 'middle/centre'.

(172) kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né=!ɛ́   jè   kpò   yὲ   *tɔ́=ɔ̀*   *mῐ̃̀ŋ*
       frog=DEF   exit   compound   be.located   bottle=DEF   inside
       "The frog got out of the jar." (Lit: "The frog exited the inside of the bottle.")
       [MA:15]

(173) nò   hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   ɑ̃̀mɛ̃̀=nɑ̃̀   tsò   kò   kɑ́   *nǘ=ɛ̀*   *mɑ̃̀sèí*
       that   sake=TOP   3PL=see   stick   INDEF   lie   water=DEF   side
       "So they saw a stick lying beside the water."   [BOR:53]

2.3.4.3.1 Syntactic properties of locative relational nouns

Locative nouns are categorized as nouns because they can function as possessums in possessive

noun phrases. Just like non-relational nouns which function as possessums, locative nouns take

the pertensive prefix *a-* when the possessor is plural.

(174) ò=kὲ-bàá-tsɔ́   gbé!kɛ́-bîi=ὲ   *à-nɔ̀*
       2SG=take-FUT-pass   child-PL=DEF   PERT-top
       "You will pass (it=your request) through the children." [YM:88]

Some locative nouns are capable of functioning alone as arguments in a clause. In such cases, although there is no explicit mention of the locus that normally occurs as possessor, the prior text or situational context often supplies this information. For instance, in (175) the addressee will be able to infer from the situational context precisely what object he is being instructed to stand behind.

(175) yàá   dằmɔ̃   *sὲὲ*
        go.IMP   stand   back
        "Go and stand behind (it)."

As nouns, some can take the definite article (but not the indefinite article) as in (176), the post-nominal demonstrative, *nɛ́!ɛ́* 'this' (177) and can also be modified by property words (178), where *tέɲ* 'middle' is modified by the property noun *tsàkàtsàkà* 'nasty'. The locative nouns that can take these modifiers are *híɛ̂* 'face/front', *sὲὲ* 'back', *shʹshʹ* 'under' and *tέɲ* 'middle'.

(176) *shʹshʹ=ὲ̃*   ŋɔ̂ɔ̂
        under = DEF   be.sweet
        "The bottom part (of e.g. boiled rice) is sweet."

(177) *híɛ̂*   *nɛ́!ɛ́*   é-wò   mɛ́!jí   ómó
        face   this   PERF-put   dirt   already
        "This front part (of e.g. the compound) is already dirty"

(178) kòjó   hɛ́   mǐ   *tέɲ*   *tsàkàtsàkà = á = !á*
        Kojo   give   me   middle   nasty = DEF = DEF
        "Kojo gave me the nasty middle part."

mằsèí 'beside', *mȉ̀ŋ* 'inside', *kóŋ̀* 'edge' and *nɔ̀̃* 'on' cannot take these noun categories. It

appears those locative nouns that are derived from body parts are more noun-like in their

ability to take typical nominal modifiers while those that are not body parts are less noun-like

in that although they may occur as possessums in possessive phrases, they cannot take nominal

modifiers.

As has been shown, many of the Ga body-part terms are not prototypical nouns, and this

in Svorou's (1994) view makes them excellent candidates for grammaticalization. She tracks

the evolutionary path of body-part nouns through four stages. In the first stage the nouns are

used to indicate object parts, as in (179).

(179) ké-pètɛ̀   *shī́nằ́ằ́=ằ́*   *sèɛ̀*
        take-paste   door = DEF   back
        "Paste it behind the door."

The second stage is marked by "the use of the relational object-part term to specify the location

of an entity contiguous or adjacent to the referred relational object part." (Svorou 1994:96).

This is seen in (180), where the dog is not located on the stone itself but in the area next to the

back of the stone.

(180) nĩ̀   gbèé = !ɛ́   hű̃   tèè   è = yà-tèé   yɛ̀
        and   dog = DEF   too   go.PST   3SG = ITIV-hide   be.located

nàkàĩ̀ *té=ὲ*   *sὲὲ*
that   stone=DEF   back
"And the dog too went and hid behind that stone."   [MA:64]

All the Gã body-part nouns with the exception of *dúnàã̀* 'buttocks/anus' are at this

second stage. In the last stage the noun is used to specify the location of an entity that is not

adjacent to the relational object part. No locative relational noun in Gã has as yet reached this

last stage.

2.3.5 Noun phrase constituency

Noun phrases denote entities and therefore function as arguments in clauses. Every Gã noun

phrase (NP) must minimally contain one noun. The noun may be a full lexical noun (e.g. *yòò*

'woman'), a pronoun (e.g. *bò* '2SG'), or a demonstrative noun (e.g. *énέ̃* 'this'). Depending on

the type of noun, it may have pre-modifiers and post-modifiers. There are two pre-head slots.

The first may be filled by the pre-nominal proximal and distal demonstrative determiners *nὲkέ̃*

'this' and *nàkàĩ̀* 'that'. The second pre-head slot may be taken up by a nominal modifier. Only

full lexical nouns may be modified by these pre-head modifiers. The immediate post-nominal

slot may be taken up by a property word. Up to three property words can modify one noun.

The property word is followed by a quantifier (numeral or quantificational adjective such as *pìì*

'many'), then a post-nominal-demonstrative or an article. An article is always the last element

in a noun phrase unless the first element in the noun phrase is *nὲkέ̃* 'this'. In this case, then the

final slot must be taken up by *nέ!έ* 'this'. A schematic is given below (brackets indicate

optional elements), followed by two examples with all possible slots filled. The difference

between them is that (181) has pre-head *nằkằῒ* 'that' and therefore must have an article in NP-

final position while (182) has *nềkέ* 'this' in pre-head position and so must have *nέ!έ* 'this' in

NP-final position.

(DEM.DET) - (NOUN.MOD.) - NOUN.HEAD - (ADJ₁) - (ADJ₂) - (ADJ₃) - (QUANT) - (DEM.DET/ART)

(181) nằkằῒ gẫnẫ yè-ì   àgbò-ì kpìtí-bîì   fềéfề-jῒ   é!tế-!ế
      that   Ghana woman-PL   big-PL short-PL   beautiful-PL three-DEF
      "those three, big, short, beautiful Ghanaian women."

(182) nềkế gẫnẫ yè-ì   àgbò-ì kpìtí-bîì   fềéfề-jῒ   é!tế   nế!ế
      that   Ghana woman-PL   big-PL short-PL   beautiful-PL three this
      "these three, big, short, beautiful Ghanaian women."

Although in theory it is possible for a noun to be modified by three property words, in practice

it is very rare, most likely due to relative difficulty in production and processing.

    It is also possible for the noun phrase to be further modified by a verb-based

grammatical nominalization (relative clause), as in (183) below, where the grammatical

nominalization modifies the head noun *kùsúm̀* 'custom'. This nominalization will thus be the

very last element in the noun phrase. See Chapter 6 for more on grammatical nominalizations.

(183) *kùsúm̀*   [nῒ   yè   kề-jề   bl̀èmẫ]
      custom   NMLZ   exist take-come.from   olden.days
      "A custom that has existed since olden days; an ancient custom." [OYO:131]

(184) *tsò*   *àgbó=!ɛ́*   [nɪ́   bú   !lɛ́=ɛ̀   yɔ́ɔ̀   mɪ̀ŋ́=!ɛ́]
       tree   big=DEF   NMLZ hole   DEF=DEF   be.located.HAB   inside=DEF
       "the big tree that had a hole in it."   [MA:50]

When the head noun is a pronoun or demonstrative noun, no modifiers are allowed

before the head and the final element cannot be an article but should be the post-nominal

proximal demonstrative *nɛ́!ɛ́* 'this'.

(185) bò   bíbìóó nɛ́!ɛ́
      2SG   small   this
      "little you"

2.3.6 Noun phrase linkers

These are the coordinator and comitative conjunction, *kɛ̀* 'and' and the disjunctive coordinator

àlóó 'or'. *kɛ̀* is used to conjoin two or more noun phrases of equal rank, as in (186) and (187).

The NPs linked by the coordinator form a constituent.

(186) ŋshɔ̀   **kɛ̀**   tòò   lá   **kɛ̀**   wùɔ́   lá
      sea   and   sheep blood   and   chicken   blood
      "sea water and sheep's blood and chicken's blood"   [OYO:302]

(187) è=fɔ́   àkôs   **kɛ̀**   àrăkú   **kɛ̀**   *doctor=!á*
      3SG=give.birth   Akos   and   Araku and   =DEF
      "She gave birth to Akos and Araku and the doctor."   [DF:206]

kɛ̀ is also used to mark a comitative noun phrase. It conjoins two (and just two) NPs. As

Stassen (2000:18) explains, the NPs that are conjoined using the comitative strategy are of

unequal rank. For instance, unlike the NPs in a coordinate NP, those that are conjoined using

the comitative strategy do not form a constituent and "while one of the NPs can take any case role, the other NP is invariably encoded as the head of an oblique NP." Stassen (2000:18). In Gã the NP marked by *kɛ̀* is an oblique NP while the other NP is the subject of the sentence. In (188), *ènyɛ̀mí̵!ɛ̃́* 'his sibling' is marked by the comitative conjunction, *kɛ̀* and it is in a comitative relationship with the subject Oko.

(188) òkó   bà   bíɛ̀   **kɛ̀**   è=nyɛ̀mí̵=!ɛ̃́
       Oko   come   here   with   3SG=brother=DEF
       "Oko came here with his sibling."

Stassen (2000:18) notes that it is atypical among the world's languages for a coordinate marker and a comitative marker to share the same form, which is the case in Gã.

The marker of disjunction, *àlóó* 'or' is used to present NPs and other constituents (as well as clauses) that are considered alternatives to one another. If there are more than two alternatives it is more common for *àlóó* 'or' to be used after each alternative than just once before the last alternative.

(189) ò=bàá-!yé   òmɔ̃́   **àlóó**   yɛ̀lɛ̀   **àlóó**   fùfùí
       2SG=FUT-eat   rice   or   yam   or   fufu
       "Will you eat rice or yam or *fùfù?*"

(190) nò   hɛ̀wɔ́=!ɔ́   à=fé-ɔ̀   lɛ̀   shɪ̃̀   kòmé
       that sake=TOP   3PL.IMPERS=do-HAB   3SG.OBJ   time   one

       àlóó   dáá   áfɪ̃́=!ɛ́   à=fé-ɔ̀
       or   everyday   year=TOP   3PL.IMPERS=do-HAB

à = hɛ́-!ɛ́   ằmɛ̀
3PL.IMPERS = give-HAB   3PL
"So do they do it once, or every year they do it for them?"   [YM:214]

2.4 Property concepts

These are words that ascribe some property or attribute to a noun. They may occur as

complements of verbs or as intransitive predicates, where they make a statement that the

subject exhibits a particular property. They may also occur as modifiers to heads in NPs, where

they delimit the pool of referents of the NP head and make it more easily identifiable (Dixon

2010:70-71). Gã has three main syntactic types of property concepts:

Type A: property concepts which function as the head of an intransitive predicate. These are essentially
verbs and they take most of the inflectional and syntactic properties associated with verbs.

Type B: property concepts that function only as modifiers in an NP. These correspond to what are
prototypically termed adjectives (especially in Indo-European languages).

Type C: property concepts that function as complements of *yɛ̀* 'have' and can occur as arguments in
clauses. These are nouns.

2.4.1 Type A: Property concepts that are verbs (Property verbs)

These form a small closed class of about 30 words which does not accept new members.

Members of this class code properties which belong to the following semantic classes, set out

in Dixon (2010:71): DIMENSION, PHYSICAL PROPERTY, VALUE, HUMAN PROPENSITY,

DIFFICULTY and POSITION. An example from each semantic class is given below.

(191) gã̀-mɛ̃̌í = !ɛ̃́   *nyɛ̃́ = !lû*   ê
Gã-PL = DEF   2PL.PERF = be.foolish   IJ
"As for Gãs, you are very foolish!" (HUMAN PROPENSITY)   [MM:148]

(192) *è = jèkɛ̀*
3SG = be.far
"It is far." (POSITION)   [PAT:54]

(193) kèkɛ́ = !ɛ́   à = bàá-kɛ́ɛ́   !bó   á!kɛ́   nyɔ̃̀ŋmɔ̃́ = !ɔ́
then = TOP   3PLIMPERS = FUT-say   2SG.OBJ   NMLZ   God = TOP

è = dà
3SG = be.big
"Then you will be told that God, he is big (i.e. powerful)." (DIMENSION)
                                                        [CH:70]

(194) àwèrɛ̀hóó   sã̀nè jí   á!kɛ́   wɔ̀ = mɛ̃̀í   pìì
sadness   matter COP   NMLZ   1PL = people many

wɔ̀ = hé-mɔ̃̀-kè-yé-lí   *é-!gbédé*
1PL = buy-NOM-and-eat-NOM   PERF-weaken
"The sad thing is that many of us, our faith is weak." (PHYSICAL, CORPOREAL
PROPERTY)   [CH:223]

(195) â   kr̀ístòfónyò   fèé-mɔ̃̀   *wà*   ê
IJ   Christian   do-NOM   be.hard   IJ
"Gosh! It is most certainly hard to be a Christian!" (DIFFICULTY) [CH:320]

(196) ô   *è = hɪ̃̀*   á!kɛ́   nyɛ̃̀ = bà   *this time*
IJ   3SG = be.good   NMLZ   2PL = come
"Oh, it is good that you came at this time." (VALUE)   [FH:105]

All property verbs are stative verbs. They are of two major types which I will call "temporary"

and "permanent". They are characterized by opposing semantic and morpho-syntactic features.

2.4.1.1 "Temporary" property verbs

A temporary property verb predicates a state which comes about as a result of some process.

Such states are viewed as temporary or not inherently characteristic of the noun referent. There

is a sense that these qualities are easily susceptible to change. Examples are *dɔ̀* 'be hot', *fɔ̀* 'be

wet', *gbî́* 'be dry', *shwì* 'be fat', *gbé!dé* 'be weak, tired', *lú* 'be foolish', *pá!í* 'be angry', *tɔ̀tɔ́*

'be tangled'. Such property verbs are always marked for perfect if they are to indicate a

characteristic or attribute of the referent of the subject, as in (191) and (194) above and (197)

and (198) below. Therefore, temporary property verbs are distinguished not only by their

semantics but also by perfect morphology.

(197) tsɛ́ǹsǐ=!ɛ́   *é-dɔ̀*
       pan=DEF   PERF-be.hot
       "The pan is hot."

(198) kpã̀ã́=!ã́   *é-tɔ̀tɔ́*
       thread=DEF   PERF-be.entangled
       "The thread is entangled, knotted."

The verbs take on a dynamic meaning when they are unmarked (199), or are marked for some

other tense or aspect category (200). Here, the verbs predicate an action or event involving the

referent of the noun, rather than predicating a property or state associated with the referent.

(199) mî́=nã̀-jǐ   *tɔ̀tɔ́*
       1SG=leg-PL   be.entangled
       "I missed my step." (Lit: "My legs became entangled")   (Dakubu 2008a:207)

(200) mằmá̰ = ằ   *gbɪ̋*   nɪ̃   ɪ̃ = yà-kpá
       cloth = DEF   *dry*   and   1SG = ITIV-remove
       "The cloth dried and I went and removed it (off the clothes line)."

When conveying dynamic meaning, some verbs of this sub-class are best accompanied by the

ventive pre-verb auxiliary *ba-*.

(201a) ʔtsɛ́ǹsɪ̌ = !ɛ́   *dɔ̀*
        pan = DEF   be.hot
        "The pan became hot."

(201b) tsɛ́ǹsɪ̌ = !ɛ́   *bà-dɔ̀*
        pan = DEF   VENT-be.hot
        "The pan became hot."

When it comes to property verbs, sometimes the semantic difference between the perfect tense

and say, the progressive tense, is stark. For example, while *lú* in the perfect tense means 'be

foolish, stupid', in the progressive it means 'to joke around, act silly'. Compare (191) with

(202).

(202) gbé!kɛ́-bɪ̂i = ɛ̀   *ɲ̀-lú*   yɛ̀   jɛ̃́!mɛ̃́
       child-PL = DEF   PROG-be.foolish   be.located   there
       "The children are joking around over there."

2.4.1.2 "Permanent" property verbs

These verbs code qualities that are construed as permanent, or otherwise inherently

characteristic of the noun referent in question. They must occur in the bare, unmarked form to

indicate a property or characteristic of the referent of the subject. Examples of such verbs are

kè 'be tall', *wà* 'be hard', *kwɔ̀* 'be deep', *hǐ̃* 'be good', *dà* 'be big', *ŋɔ̀ɔ̂* 'be sweet', *lɛ̀ɛ̂* 'be

broad'. When they occur unmarked they are temporally unbounded, in that there is an

assumption that the property remains unchanged at all times. Examples (193) and (196) above

are repeated here for convenience as (203) and (204).

(203) kèkɛ́ = !ɛ́   à = bàá-kɛ́ɛ́   !bó   á!kɛ́   nyɔ̃̀ŋmɔ̃̀ = !ɔ̃̀
      then = TOP 3PLIMPERS = FUT-say 2SG.OBJ NMLZ   God = TOP
      è = dà
      3SG = be.big
      "Then you will be told that as for God, he is big (i.e. powerful)."   [CH:70]

(204) ô   *è = hǐ̃*   á!kɛ́   nyɛ̃̀ = bà   *this time*
      IJ   3SG = be.good   NMLZ   2PL = come
      "Oh, it is good that you came at this time."   [FH:105]

(205) bↄ̀dó = ɛ̀   *wà*   wàà
      bread = DEF be.hard very.much
      "The bread is very hard."

When these verbs are used with perfect tense they reflect a change of state and display

inchoative aspect. Example:

(206) bↄ̀dó = ɛ̀   *é-wà*
      bread = DEF PERF-be.hard
      "The bread has become hard."

(207) ó = bí   !lɛ́ = !ɛ́   *é = dà*   ê
      2SG = child DEF = DEF PERF = be.big IJ
      "Wow, your child has grown big!"

Semantic differentiation may arise as a result of the aspect marking on such property verbs. An example is *dà* 'be big', which in the perfect tense means 'be grown up/be an adult' (208) below, in addition to 'become bigger, grow older' (207). In (208), *dà* 'be.big' deviates from the expected syntactic behavior of a permanent property verb. When permanent property verbs have perfect tense, they lose their stativity and rather indicate a change of state or take on inchoative meaning. *dà* 'be.big' in the perfect has two senses; one which conforms to this expectation (207) and another which doesn't (208). In (208) it remains a stative verb indicating a permanent property.

(208) jééé   gbé!kḗ   !nî́   *é=dà*
      NEG   child   PRED.PRT   3SG.PERF=be.big
      "She's not a child. She's (a) grown (woman)."

Property verbs cannot directly modifiy a noun. For that to happen, the property verb must be nominalized by the grammatical nominalizer *nî́*. This results in a grammatical nominalization which may then modify the noun referent. This grammatical nominalization is more commonly analysed as a relative clause, but see Chapter 6 for an argument against this analysis.

(209) í́=súmɔ́ɔ́ɔ́   bɪ̀òdò nî́   *wà*
      1SG=like.NEG   bread NMLZ   be.hard
      "I don't like bread that is hard."

To sum up, property verbs that code temporary qualities are marked by the perfect. When they occur unmarked they take on dynamic semantics and are no longer property verbs. On the other hand, property verbs that code permanent properties must occur unmarked. When they are marked for perfect they indicate a change of state and also lose their status as property verbs.

Notably missing among the semantic classes which can be coded by verbs is COLOUR. Although it is possible for the colour terms, red, white and black, to be coded as verbs (*tsù* 'be red, ripen', *yέ* 'be white', *dí* 'be black'), there is a semantic shift such that the terms describe not mere colour but skin colour or complexion. They are typically used with habitual aspect, because skin tone is a property that one perpetually maintains (normally). As (211) shows, these verbs cannot be predicated of non-humans. In order to modify a non-human entity with a colour term, the colour term must occur as a modifier in an NP (212), where it is categorised as an adjective.

(210)   è＝ŋá̋＝à̃   *tsù-ò̃/yέ-ò̃/dí-ò̃̃*
       3SG＝wife＝DEF   redden-HAB/whiten-HAB/blacken-HAB
       "His wife is light-skinned/very light-skinned or pale/dark-skinned."

(211)   *mã̃mã́＝à̃   *tsù-ò̃/yέ-ò̃/dí-ò̃̃*
       cloth＝DEF   redden-HAB/whiten-HAB/blacken-HAB
       "The cloth is red/white/black."

(212) mằmã́ *tsùlù/yέ́!ŋ́/dɨ́!ŋ́*

      cloth   red/white/black

      "red/white/black cloth"

2.4.1.3 Verbal properties exhibited by property verbs

As verbs, these property terms can take most aspect, mood and polarity markers, with a few

exceptions. For example, most property verbs can be marked for future, as in (213), habitual

(214) and perfect (197) and (198).

(213) nɨ́-bí!í   nɨ́   wà   nɨ́   kέ   ằmɛ̀̃=kwéέέ

      thing-PL   NMLZ   be.hard   NMLZ   if   3PL=look.NEG

      !lέ   è=nɔ̀̃   yé-lí   *bàá-!wá*

      DEF   3SG=top   eat-NOM   FUT-be.hard

      "things that are difficult…that if they are not vigilant will be difficult to abide by."

      [CH:299]

(214) à=nyɛ́̃-ɔ̀̃   à=mằ-ằ   jɛ́!mɛ́

      3PL.IMPERS=able-HAB   3PL.IMPERS=be.situated-HAB   there

      nɨ̀   ò=fé-ɔ̀   yὲ   jɛ́!mɛ́ nɨ̀   *è=hɨ̀̃-ɔ̀̃*

      and   2SG=do-HAB   be.located   there   and   *3SG=be.good-HAB*

      "It is possible to do it (the twin ceremony) there (mother's family house) and it works

      out fine i.e. it is good/acceptable."   [OYO:341]

Property verbs may also occur with progressive aspect, in which case they indicate a change in

progress and are viewed as dynamic events.

(215) *ɔ̀ɔ̀=shwì*

      2SG.PROG=be.fat

      "You are becoming fat."

(216)   *èè=dɪ́*

      3SG.PROG=be.black

      "S/he is becoming darker (skin tone)"

They may also occur in the subjunctive:

(217)   mɪ́ɪ́=tá!ó   nɪ́   kòjó   *á-kɛ̀*   tãmɔ̃̀   è=nyɛ̀mɪ́=!ɛ́

      1SG.PROG=want   NMLZ   Kojo   *SBJV-be.tall*   be.like   3SG=sibling=DEF

      "I want Kojo to be tall like his sibling."

In terms of sentence mood, sentences with property verb predicates may be declarative (as all

the above examples show) or interrogative (218).

(218)   ófáìnɛ́   gbɛ́=ɛ̀   *lɛ̀ɛ̂*   ló

      please   road=DEF   be.wide   QP

      "Please, is the road wide?"

Property verbs may be negated in the same way as non-property verbs. For example, the

negative and future negative may be marked on the property verbs, *hɪ́* 'be.good' and *kɛ̀* 'be.tall'

respectively:

(219)   *é=!hɪ̃́ɪ̃̂*

      3SG=be.good.NEG

      "It is not good."

(220)   tsó=!ɛ́   *é-!kɛ̃́-!ŋ́*

      tree=DEF   PERF-be.tall-NEG.FUT

      "The tree will not grow tall."

Like prototypical verbs, property verbs may be modified by an array of adverbial types. They

may be modified by intensifiers such as *wàà* 'very', *pìì* 'indeed', *tsɔ́*'too much', *kpákpá* 'really,

very'.

(221) kɛ́   ò = sà   ó = nằầ   ò = bàá-nằ   á!kɛ́   ***è = ŋɔ̀ɔ̂***
       when   2SG = touch   2SG = mouth 2SG = FUT-see   NMLZ   3SG = be.sweet
       kpákpá/wàà/pì/tsɔ́
       very much/very much/indeed/too much
       "When you taste it, you will see that it is very sweet/sweet indeed/too sweet."

2.4.1.4 Verbal properties not exhibited by property verbs

Unlike typical verbs, property verbs in Gã may not occur in the imperative.

(222)   *kɛ̀-ɛ́
       be.tall-IMP
       "Be tall!"

(223)   *fɔ̀-ɔ́
       be.wet-IMP
       "Be wet!"

There are a number of suffixes that are used to indicate iterative action of a verb (see

§3.2.2.5). Depending on the phonological shape of the verb root, the iterative suffix may be *-lɔ,*

-lɛ, -ra or *-mɔ̃*. These suffixes give the meaning, "do repeatedly" or "do many times".

Example:

(224)   kɛ́   ***à = fɔ̀-lɔ̀***   é!ŋmɔ́mí = !ɛ́ fɛ́ɛ́ = !ɛ́   nĩ̀
       when 3PL.IMPERS = cut-ITER   okro = DEF all = DEF   and

à＝bàá-hóò
3PL.IMPERS＝FUT-cook
"After all the okro is cut then it is cooked." 　　　[YM:264]

(225) *è＝tsé-lè*　　　　　wòló＝ɛ̀　　　mî̃ŋ
3SG＝tear-ITER　　　paper＝DEF　inside
"She tore up the piece of paper (into several pieces)."

The iterative suffix can be attached to property verbs but only those with a plural subject.

When it is used with property verbs, however, it no longer maintains the iterative meaning but

imparts a distributive meaning instead, indicating that each member of the plural set of noun

referents displays the quality described by the property verb.

(226) yè-í＝ɛ̀　　　　　　*ké-!lé*
woman-PL＝DEF　　be.tall-ITER
"The women are tall."

(227) bú-ì＝ɛ̀　　　　　à-mî̃ŋ　　　　*kwɔ́-!lɔ́*
ditch-PL＝DEF　　PERT-inside　　be.deep-ITER
"The ditches are deep."

2.4.1.5 Nominalization of property verbs
Non-property verbs and property verbs differ in terms of how certain lexical nominalizations

are done. Single syllable, low-toned non-property verbs form action nominals by lengthening

the final vowel (228). Single syllable, low toned property verbs, on the other hand, are

nominalized using the suffix -*lɛ* (229), which cannot be used for non-property verbs. This

includes non-property stative verbs, which cannot even be nominalized.

Action nominalization of non-property verbs (monosyllabic, low-toned):

(228) jù   'steal'   →   jùù   'act of stealing'

 wɔ̀   'sleep'   →   wɔ̀ɔ̀   'sleep (n.)'

 jɔ̀   'dance'   →   jɔ̀ɔ̀   'dance (n.)'

Action nominalization of property verbs (monosyllabic, low-toned):

(229) dà   'be big'   →   dàlɛ̀   'size'   *dàà

 kɛ̀   'be tall'   →   kɛ̀lɛ̀   'height'   *kɛ̀ɛ̀

 dɔ̀   'be hot'   →   dɔ̀lɛ̀   'temperature'   *dɔ̀ɔ̀

 shwì   'gain weight   →   shwìlɛ̀ 'being fat, obesity' *shwìì

 bɔ̀   'be muscular'   →   bɔ̀lɛ̀   'being muscular' *bɔ̀ɔ̀

Multi-syllabic verbs and high-toned monosyllabic verbs of all types (both property and non-property verbs) take the nominalizing suffix -mɔ̃, so in this respect there is no difference between property verbs and non-property verbs:

Action nominalization of non-property verbs (multisyllabic or high-toned, monosyllabic):

(230) wó   'lift'   →   wó!mɔ̃́   'act of lifting'

 bɛ̀ɛ̂   'sweep'   →   bɛ̀ɛ́!mɔ̃́   'act of sweeping'

 tsá!ké   'change'   →   tsàkèmɔ̃̀   'change (n.)'

Action nominalization of non-property verbs (multisyllabic or high-toned, monosyllabic):

(231) lú   'be foolish'   →   lú!mɔ̃́   'foolishness'

 ŋɔ̀ɔ́   'be sweet'   →   ŋɔ̀ɔ́!mɔ̃́   'sweetness'

 tɔ̀tɔ́   'be entangled'   →   tɔ̀tɔ́!mɔ̃́   'act of being entangled'

Agent nominalization of non-property verbs is by use of the suffix -lɔ (232). However, property

verbs cannot take this suffix (233). Instead, such verbs will have to undergo a grammatical

nominalization and be marked for NP use by mɔ̀ (234) and (235).

(232) jù   'steal'   →   jùlɔ̀   'thief'
      gbà   'prophesy'   →   gbàlɔ̀ 'prophet'
      tsɔ̀ɔ̂   'teach'   →   tsɔ̀ɔ́!lɔ́ 'teacher'
      sùmɔ̀   'love'   →   sṹɔ̀lɔ̀ 'lover'

(233) shwì   'be fat'   →   *shwìlɔ̀ 'one who is fat'
      kɛ̀   'be tall'   →   *kɛ̀lɔ̀ 'one who is tall'
      dà   'be big'   →   *dàlɔ̀ 'one who is big'

(234) mɔ̃̀   ní́   é-shwì
      NM   NMLZ   PERF-be.fat
      "one who is fat"

(235) mɔ̃̀   ní́   kɛ̀
      NM   NMLZ   be.tall
      "one who is tall"

2.4.1.6 Transitivity

Property verbs occur in intransitive clauses, while non-property verbs are capable of occurring

in both transitive and intransitive clauses. There is however, one property verb that occurs

transitively. This is the verb tɔ̀ 'be tired'. What is unique about this property verb, though, is

that the grammatical relations of its arguments do not match up with their expected semantic

roles. Whereas with other property verbs which occur intransitively it is the subject which is

being qualified and is therefore the experiencer, in clauses with predicate tɔ̀ 'be tired', it is the

object that is the experiencer. The subject is always *è* 'it' and is non-referential; it is a dummy

or expletive pronoun. Therefore, in (236) the experiencer, the one who is tired, is the object

àmề '3PL'. Further proof that *tɔ̀* 'tire' is a property verb comes from the fact that it is

nominalized like other property verbs i.e. with the suffix *-lɛ* (*tɔ̀lɛ̀* 'tiredness', 'strife'), rather

than vowel lengthening (**tɔ̀ɔ̀*) as will be the case for monosyllabic, low-toned non-property

verbs.

(236) á!gbɛ́nɛ̃́=!ɛ̃̀   òsɔ́fó-!í=!ɛ́   pó   *é=tɔ̀*   *àmè*
       now=TOP   priest-PL=DEF   even   3SG.PERF=tire   3PL
       "Now, even the priests are tired, fed up."   [CH:68]

2.4.2 Type B: Property concepts that occur only as modifiers in an NP (Adjectives)

This class contains only a few members, about 20 in all. These property words align

syntactically with what are classed as adjectives, in that they may modify a noun in a noun

phrase i.e. attributive modification, and thereby aid in the identification of the noun referent.

Words belonging to this class can be found in three of the four core semantic classes of

property concepts i.e. AGE, VALUE, COLOUR as well as several more. Property concepts from

the core class of DIMENSION are not among those coded as adjectives. Examples of adjectives

are *yɛ́!ŋ́* 'white', *hèè* 'new', *fèéféó* 'beautiful', *fólò* 'naked', *sã́ŋ́ŋ́* 'many', *ŋmɔ̃́!ŋ́* 'raw' and

ŋml̀íkítí 'unripe'. Some example sentences are as follows.

(237) *àtàlé   yɛ́!ɲ́*
      dress   white
      "a white dress"   (COLOUR)   [OYO:86]

(238) *dúkù   hèè*
      headscarf   new
      "a new headscarf."   (AGE)

(239) nĩ̀   ã̀mɛ̃̀=táò   *tɔ̀   fɛ̀ɛ́fɛ́ó   !kó*
      and   3PL=find   bottle   beautiful   INDEF
      "And they found a beautiful bottle."   (VALUE)   [MAV:4]

(240) jééé   *nṹ   fɔ́lò*
      NEG   water   naked
      "It's not just ordinary water."   [OYO:297]

(241) nĩ̀   fàá=!á   *tsè-ì*   *sɛ́ɲ́ɲ́*   mã̀-mɔ̃̀   fàá=à   mĩ̀ŋ̀
      and   river=DEF   tree-PL   many   be.situated-ITER   river=DEF   inside
      "And the river, there are many trees in the river."   (QUANTIFICATION) [SAM:96]

In addition to full nouns, adjectives may modify demonstrative nouns (243), as long as

the noun is also modified by the demonstrative determiner *nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́* 'this' and the entire noun

phrase is topicalized and place in initial position in the construction. Example:

(243) *énɛ̃́   fɛ̀ɛ́fɛ́ó*   nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́   mɛ́nĩ̀   hèwɔ̀   ò=súmɔ́ɔ́ɔ̂
      this   beautiful   this   what   sake   2SG=like.NEG
      "This beautiful thing, why don't you like it?"

The demonstrative pronoun can be modified by virtually any adjective that is suitable for

qualifying inanimate entities.

2.4.2.1 Number marking on adjectives

Adjectives must agree in number with the nouns they modify. Plurals are formed by the regular

noun plural suffixes –*ì*, –*jì̀* and –*bí!í*. The choice of plural suffix is based on the same rules that

govern plural formation in non-property denoting nouns (See §2.3.1.1). In the following

examples the nouns are marked for plural and so are the modifying adjectives.

(244) ã̀mẽ̀ fé-!ɔ́ **nɨ́bɨ̂ fɔ̌-jɨ̀**
      3PL do-HAB things bad-PL
      "They do bad things." SG → *fɔ̀ɔ́!ŋ́*

(245) è = hé-ɔ̀ **lɔ́lè-ì dɨ́-jɨ̀** sɔ́ŋ́ŋ́
      3SG = buy-HAB car-PL black-PL only
      "He only buys black cars." SG → *dɨ́!ŋ́*

2.4.2.2 Nominalization of adjectives

Certain adjectives may be nominalized by prefixing the nominalizer *e-* to the adjective (table

7). They can then be used as noun heads or constitute NPs on their own and can be pluralized

accordingly. Their referents must be inanimate. This strategy is restricted to a very small group

of adjectives from the semantic classes of COLOUR, AGE, VALUE and PHYSICAL PROPERTY.

Example sentences are given in (246) and (247).

Table 7: Nouns morphologically derived from adjectives

Semantic class	English gloss	Adjective	Singular noun	Plural noun
COLOUR	red	*tsùlù*	*étsùlù*	*étsùjǐ*
	white	*yɛ̋!ŋ́*	*éyɛ̋!ŋ́*	*éyɛ̋jǐ*
	black	*dɨ̋!ŋ́*	*édɨ̋!ŋ́*	*édɨ̋jǐ*
PHYSICAL PROPERTY	raw, fresh	*ŋmɔ̋!ŋ́*	*éŋmɔ̋!ŋ́*	*éŋmɔ̋jǐ*
	unripe	*ŋmílíkítí*	*éŋmílíkítí*	*éŋmílíkítí!í*
AGE	old	*mómó*	*émómó*	*éméméjǐ*
	new	*hèè*	*éhèè*	*éhèì*
VALUE	good	*kpákpá*	*ékpákpá*	*ékpákpá!í*
	bad	*fɔ̋!ŋ́*	*éfɔ̋!ŋ́*	*éfɔ̋jǐ*

(246) *é-ŋmílíkítí-ì*   pê   yɔ́!ɔ̌   tsó = ɛ̀   nɔ̌
      NOM-unripe-PL   only.FOC   be.located.HAB   tree = DEF   top
      "There are only unripe ones on the tree."

(247) *é-dɨ̋ŋ́ = ɛ̌*   nɨ̌   ɨ̋ = sùmɔ̌-ɔ̌
      NOM-black = DEF   FOC   1SG = like-HAB
      "It is the black one that I like."

These derived nouns may then be modified by other property words:

(248) *é-dɨ̋ŋ*   *àgbó = ɛ̌*   nɨ̌   ɨ̋ = sùmɔ̌-ɔ̌
      NOM-black   big = DEF   FOC   1SG = like-HAB
      "It is the big black one that I like."

(249) *é-mémé-jǐ*   *fɨ̋!óó*   !kó   pê   é = shwɛ̀
      NOM-old-PL few   INDEF   only.FOC   3SG = remain
      "There are only a few old ones remaining."

It is also possible to use the derived nouns as modifiers of other nouns. In (250), the

derived nominal *étsùlù* 'red one' modifies *òtɔ́* 'type of food' in line 1. In the second token of

étsùlù 'red one' in line 2, it functions as an object complement indicating the result of the

causative verb *fèê* 'make'.

(250) 1   tàmɔ̃   bɔ̀nɪ́   wɔ́=fèé   *òtɔ́*   *é-tsùlú-!ɛ́*
             like   how   1PL=do   food.type   NOM-red-DEF
             "Like how we've made the red *òtɔ́*…"

     2   wɔ̀=bàá-féé   kpékpɪ̀é-!ɛ́   hɛ̃́   *é-tsùlù*
             1PL=FUT-do   food.type-DEF   too   NOM-red
             "we'll make the *kpékpɪ̀è* too red."   [OYO:50]

While the adjective *tsùlù* 'red' can replace the noun *étsùlù* in line 1, it cannot replace it in line

2 (251). The implication of this is that an object complement denoting result must be a noun.

(251) *wɔ̀=bàá-féé*   kpékpɪ̀é-!ɛ́   hɛ̃́   *tsùlù*
       1PL=FUT-do   kpekple-DEF too   red
       "We'll make the *kpékpɪ̀è* too red."

2.4.2.3 Derivation of adjectives from verbs

Adjectives may be derived from verbs by the following derivational processes.

i) Suffixation

This is not a very productive means of adjectivization. Two basic colour adjective terms are

derived from verbs by the suffixation of *-ŋ*. These are *dí̵!ŋ́* 'black' from *dí̵* 'to become black'

and *yɛ́!ŋ́* 'white' from *yɛ́* 'to become white'. It is limited to these two words. Another suffix, -

ru/-lu derives the adjective *tsùrù/tsùlù* from *tsù* 'become red'.

ii) Reduplication

Another means of deriving adjectives is by reduplicating certain verbs. The verbs must be

ambitransitive/labile verbs and must belong to the "temporary" property verb class (discussed

in §2.4.1.1). This method is fairly limited in productivity. In (252) and (253), the property verb

is found in the (a) examples while the adjective is in the (b) examples:

(252) *mɔ́!nyɔ́*   'smash, mangle'   →   *mɔ́nyɔ́mɔ́nyɔ́* 'tattered'

    (a)   lɔ́lè   gìá!sé = !ɛ̀   *é-mɔ́!nyɔ́*
          car   glass = DEF   PERF-mangle
          "The window of the car is mangled'

    (b)   àtàlé   *mɔ́nyɔ́mɔ́nyɔ́*
          dress   tattered
          "a tattered dress"

(253) *tsɛ́!lɛ́* 'tear (ITER)'   →   *tsélèìtsélèì*   'torn, tattered'

    (a)   ó = tàlé = !ɛ̀   *é-tsɛ́-!lɛ́*
          2SG = dress = DEF   PERF-tear-ITER
          "Your dress is torn."

    (b)   àtàlé   *tsélèìtséléì*
          dress   tattered
          "a tattered dress"

2.4.3 Type C: Property concepts that function as arguments in clauses (Property nouns)

Certain descriptive words may occur as subjects or objects of verbs. Most are able to occur as objects of the verbs *yè*[7] 'have' and *fèê* 'do'. Hengeveld (1992:34) calls such linking words 'semi-copulas'. Such descriptive words are classed as property nouns because they occur in a syntactic position reserved for nouns (254). In (254a), the objects of *yè* 'have' are regular nouns; in (254b) the object of *yè* 'have' is a property noun.

(254a) ákú   yè   *shìká/nyɛ̀mí/hèwàlè/jwɛ̀ŋ-mɔ̀*
      Aku   have   money/sibling/strength/think-NOM
      "Aku has money/a sibling/strength/sense"

(254b) yòó＝ɛ̀   yè   *légélégé*
      woman＝DEF have   skinny
      "The woman is skinny."

Property nouns constitute a large class with dozens of members from all semantic classes. They often describe a stable or permanent attribute. In Gã, the normal copula *jí* 'be' cannot have a property noun as complement (255).

(255)   *dííŋ̀   jí   Kòjó
      quiet   COP   Kojo
      "Kojo is quiet."

---

[7] The verb *yè* is polysemous and may also mean 'be located'.

Examples of property nouns that can be complements of *yè* are *yɾòyɾò* 'soft (of tubers), *dĩ́ŋ́ŋ́*

'quiet', *yɾódóó* 'watery', *gídígàǹdàŋ̀ŋ̀* 'bulky', *flémɪ̃́ɪ̃́* 'fussy', *wɾɔ́mɪ̃́ɪ̃́* 'sluggish', *tsɾótsɾó*

'slippery', *bíbìóó* 'small', *nyáfɪ̃́nyáfɪ̃́* 'fretful, bad-tempered'. Some property nouns that occur as

complements of *yè* are also capable of occurring as direct modifiers of nouns in NPs e.g. *bíbìóó*

'small' in (256b) and *dĩ́ŋ́ŋ́* 'quiet' in (257b). But some are not as versatile, as the remaining (b)

examples show.

(256) a.   …é!jáá!kɛ́   tɔ́ɔ̀   nã̀ã̀bú *yè*   *bíbìóó*
               because   bottle mouth have   small
               "…because the mouth of the bottle was small."   [PAT:41]

       b.   gbèé   *bíbìóó*
               dog   small
               "a small dog"

(257) a.   è=mã̀mɪ̃́   *yè*   *dĩ́ŋ́ŋ́*
               3SG=mother have   quiet
               "Her mother is quiet."

       b.   gbɔ̃̀mɔ̃̀   *dĩ́ŋ́ŋ́*
               person   quiet
               "a quiet person"

(258) a.   ó=!nã́ã́ã́   á!kɛ́   ɪ̃́=hɪ̃́ɛ̃̂   *yè*   *féô*
               2SG=see.NEG   NMLZ   1SG=face   have   beauty
               "Don't you see that I have a beautiful face?"   [MM:52]

       b.   *yòò   *féó*
               woman   beauty
               "a beautiful woman"

(259) a.   nɔ́-fɛ́ɛ́-nɔ́   yɛ̀   òjògbã̀ŋ̀ŋ̀
            thing-all-thing   have   well
            "Everything is well."   [PAT:9]

       b.   *nĩ́bîì òjògbã̀ŋ̀ŋ̀
            things well
            "well things"

(260) a.   àkpókpĩ̀òǹtò yɛ̀   blèòò
            turtle   have   slow
            "A turtle is slow."

       b.   *àkpókpĩ̀òǹtò blèòò
            turtle   slow
            "a slow turtle"

When *fɛ̂ɛ̂* 'do' is the predicate, it frequently indicates a change of state; the inchoative. As

such, all property nouns can be complements of *fɛ̂ɛ̂* 'do'. An alternative gloss for *fɛ̂ɛ̂* is

'become'.

(261) è＝kɛ̀ɛ́   è＝gbèé＝!ɛ́   á!kɛ́   *é＝!fɛ́ɛ́*   dĩ́ŋ́ŋ́
       3SG＝say   3SG＝dog＝DEF   NMLZ   3SG.SBJV＝do   quiet
       "He told his dog that he should be quiet."   [BOR:58]

(262) nĩ̀   *è＝fɛ̂ɛ̂*   blèòò nĩ̀   è＝jè   kpò   yɛ̀
       and   3SG＝do   slow   and   3SG＝exit   compound   be.located

       tɔ́＝ɔ̀   mĩ̀ŋ̀
       bottle＝DEF   inside
       "And he slowly got out of the bottle." (Lit: And he did slow and he got out of the
       bottle.")   [PAT:15]

àgbò 'big' and *kàkàdã́ɲ́ɲ́* 'tall' are two property nouns that can occur as complements of *fɛ̂ɛ̂*

'do' (b. sentences) but not of *yɛ̀* 'have' (a. sentences). They can also occur as nominal

modifiers of other nouns (c. sentences). I still maintain that they are nouns because the object

of *fɛ̂ɛ̂* 'do' is nominal and also because they can occur as arguments in clauses and be modified

by noun modifiers.

(263a) *è＝yɛ̀   *kàkàdã́ɲ́ɲ́*
     3SG＝have   long/tall
     "S/he/It is long/tall."

(263b) é＝fɛ̂é   *kàkàdã́ɲ́ɲ́*   yɛ̀   ́ɪ̂＝hɪ̂ɛ̂
     3SG＝do   long   be.located   1SG＝face
     "It is looking long to me."

(263c) tso   *kàkàdã́ɲ́ɲ́*   !nɪ́
     stick   long   PRED.PRT
     'It is a long stick'

(264a) *shɪ̂ã̀＝ã̀   yɛ̀   *àgbò*
     house＝DEF   have   big
     "The house is big."

(264b) mɛ́nɪ̀   nɪ̀   ó＝fɛ̂é   *àgbò*   nɛ̀kɛ́
     what   FOC   2SG.PERF＝do   big   like.this
     "Why have you become so big?"

(264c) nã́ã̀   *tsò*   *àgbò*   *kò*   mã̀   shɪ̀
     PRST.PRED.PRT   tree   big   INDEF   be.situated   down
     "Here stood a big tree."   (DIMENSION)   [PAT:69]

2.4.3.1 Nominal properties exhibited by property nouns

Property nouns, like regular nouns, may function as arguments in clauses, and as such are

capable of being marked by articles. Referents of such property nouns are limited to inanimates

(265), (266), (267), (268). They can also be used as object complements in contexts similar to

example (250), line 2.

(265) è＝kὲ　　　　*bíbìóó＝!ɛ́*　　é-!hɛ̃́　　　!mɛ̃́
　　　　3SG＝take　　small＝DEF　PERF-give　1SG.OBJ
　　　　"She's given me the small one."

(266) *kàkàdɛ̃́ŋ＝ɛ̃̀*　lὲɛ́　　　　　fὲ　　　　　*kpìtíóó＝!ɛ́*
　　　　long＝DEF　　be.broad　　　surpass　　　short＝DEF
　　　　"The long one is broader than the short one."

(267) *pìí＝!ɛ́*　　　nɛ̃́　　　　ĩ̀＝wìé＝!ɛ́　　　　ò＝nɛ̃́ũ̀ũ̀
　　　　plenty＝DEF　NMLZ　　　1SG＝speak＝DEF　2SG＝hear.NEG
　　　　"All that I said, you didn't hear (it)?"

(268) hɛ̃́　　!mɛ̃́　　　　*fì!óó*　　!kó
　　　　give　1SG.OBJ　　little　　INDEF
　　　　"Give me a little bit."

Property nouns can also be modified by numerals (269), adjectives (270) and the post-nominal

proximal demonstrative determiner, *nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́* 'this' (271).

(269) wɔ̀＝ŋ-táò　　　　　*àgbò-ì*　　　*ényɔ̃̀*
　　　　1PL＝PROG-want　　big-PL　　　　two
　　　　"We want two big (ones)."

(270) *kpìtí-bɨí*　　　pìì　　yὲ
　　　　short-PL　　　many　exist

"There are many short (ones).   SG → kpìtíóó 'short'

(271) **kàkàdã́ŋ́ŋ́**   nɛ́ɛ̀   ò=tsɔ́ɔ̀
      long   this   2SG=show
      "Do you mean this long one?"

Property nouns may also be modified by intensifying adjectives, such as *wàà* 'very, a lot' in

(272) and *tsɔ́* 'too much' in (273).

(272) yòò   àgbò   **wàà**
       woman   big   very
       "a very big woman"

(273) è=yɛ̀   bàsàbàbàsà   **tsɔ́**
       3SG=have   untidy   too.much
       "S/he is too untidy."

A noun marked by the definite article alone, with no other descriptors, cannot be complement

of *yɛ̀* 'have'. This applies to both regular nouns and property nouns. For example, (274a) is

ungrammatical. If one wants to state that they have some dress that is identifiable to the

listener, then (274b) is the grammatical way to express this.

(274a) *ì̀=yɛ̀   **àtàlé=!ɛ́**
       1SG=have   dress=DEF
       "I have the dress."

(274b) **àtàlé=ɛ̀**   yɛ̀   í=!dé/í=ŋɔ̀
       dress=DEF   be.located   1SG=hand/1SG=possession
       "The dress is with me."

A definite noun is acceptable only when it is also modified by *é!kó* 'some'. This changes the

semantics of the sentence considerably because in (275) the speaker is no longer referring to

one particular dress which the addressee can identify but rather to a different dress which is

nonetheless identical to the dress that is identifiable to the addressee.

(275) ĩ̀=yè   *àtàlé=!ɛ́*   ékò
       1SG=have   dress=DEF   some
       "I have a dress identical to that dress."

The same patterns of syntactic acceptability is seen with property nouns. They cannot occur in

definite form as complements of *yè* 'have'.

(276a) *ĩ̀=yè   *bíbìóó=!ɛ́*
       1SG=have   small=DEF
       "I have the small one."

(276b) *bíbìóó=è*   yè   í=!dé/ĩ́=ŋɔ̃̀
       small=DEF   be.located   1SG=hand/1SG=possession
       "The small one is with me."

(276c) ĩ̀=yè   *bíbìóó=!ɛ́*   ékò   yè   shî!ắ
       1SG=have   dress=DEF   some   be.located   house
       "I have one identical to the small one at home."

3.4.3.2 Nominal properties not exhibited by property nouns
Modification by the pre-nominal distal demonstrative determiner, *nã̀kã̀ĩ̀* 'that', and its proximal

counterpart, *nĕ̀kɛ̃́* 'this' are unacceptable (277), (278). This marks an important difference

between regular nouns and property nouns, since regular nouns can occur freely with all

demonstratives.

(277) *nɛ̀kɛ́ ***kàkàdə́ŋ́ŋ́*** nɛ́ɛ̂ ò=tsɔ́ɔ̀

      this long this 2SG=show

      "Do you mean this long one?"

(278) *nɛ̀kɛ̂ɛ̀ ***kàkàdə́ŋ́ŋ́=à*** ò=tsɔ́ɔ̀

      that long=DEF 2SG=show

      "Do you mean that long one?"

Unlike regular nouns, property nouns cannot be possessed (279), (280).

(279) *ó=bíbìóó=!ɛ́

      2SG=small=DEF

      "Your small one"

(280) *kòjó é-tsùlú=!ɛ́

      Kojo NOM-red=DEF

      "Kojo's red one"

2.4.3.3 Number marking on property nouns

Property nouns that occur in NPs are usually marked for plural if the NP head is plural. The

plural property word may be reduplicated for emphasis, as in (281) and (282), but this

pragmatic strategy appears to be utilized more commonly for the two DIMENSION nouns in

these examples than for other nouns. The stem may be reduplicated more than once for even

more emphasis, usually twice. Any more than three reduplicated property nouns is unwieldy.

(281) **àkútú-ì**   **àgbò-ì**   **àgbò-ì**   kò   jwélé jɛ̃́!mɛ̃́

orange-PL   big-PL   big-PL   INDEF   lie   there

"There are some big oranges over there."   SG → *àgbò*

(282) nĩ̀   ãmɛ̃̀ = yà-nã̀   nɛ̃̀kɛ̃́   **kòòlòì bíbí!í**   **bíbí!í**   nɛ̃́

and   3PL = ITIV-see   this   animal small.PL   small.PL   NMLZ

tsɛ̃̀-ɔ̃̀   mɔ̃̀

sting-HAB   person

"And they went and saw these small small animals that sting."   SG → *bíbìóó*

[MAV:46]

Property nouns that function as complements of *yè* in constructions with a plural subject may

or may not take plural marking. Many HUMAN PROPENSITY property nouns do not take any

plural marking in this construction (283), but DIMENSION and some PHYSICAL PROPERTY

words can be marked for plural (284), (285) respectively. Reduplication of the plural property

noun in the *yè*-construction is common (285).

(283a) yè-í = ɛ̀   yè   *légélégé*

woman-PL = DEF   have   skinny

"The women are skinny."

(283b) *yè-í = ɛ̀   yè   *légélégé-!í*

woman-PL = DEF   have   skinny-PL

"The women are skinny."

(284) ãmɛ̃̀   yè   *bíbí!í*   tsɔ̃́

3PL   have   small.PL   too.much

"They are too small."

(285) hĩ̌ĩ=ɛ̀   yɛ̀   *kpìtíbí!í*   *kpìtíbí!í*
      man.PL=DEF   have short   short
      "The men are short."

2.4.3.4 Nominalized verb phrases as complements of *yɛ̀*

The complement of *yɛ̀* 'have' may also be an abstract noun derived by nominalization of a verb

phrase. The verb phrases from which these abstract nouns are derived are often idiomatic. For

example, *mĩ̂ĩshɛ̀ɛ̀* 'happiness' in (286a) is a nominalization of the verb phrase in (286b) and

nã̀ã̀kpɛ̀ɛ̀ in (287a) is a nominalization of the verb phrase in (287b).

(286a) kòjó   hè   *yɛ̀*   *mĩ̂ĩshɛ̀ɛ̀*
       Kojo body have   happiness
       "Kojo is amusing."

(286b) kòjó   mĩ́!í́   é-shɛ̀   è=hè
       Kojo ?   PERF-reach   3SG=body
       "Kojo is happy."

(287a) sã̀né=ɛ̀   *yɛ̀*   *nã̃ãkpɛ̀ɛ̀*
       matter=DEF   have   wonder
       "The matter is amazing, unbelievable."

(287b) ákú   nã̀ã̃   kpɛ̀   è=hè
       Aku   mouth sew   3SG=body
       "Aku was dumbfounded."

These nominals may also function as attributive modifiers within noun phrases. The

difference between them and other nominal modifiers (of the *ékpákpá* 'good one', *étsùlù* 'red

one' variety) is that while these occur before the head noun (288), all other property nouns

occur after the head noun (289). Modifiers are in bold.

(288) **nà̀àkpèè** *nírí*   [wonder thing]   'an unbelievable, amazing thing'

     mîîshèè *sàné*   [happiness matter]   'happy news'

     tòŋ̀jòlè *màŋ̀*   [peace town]   'peaceful town'

(289) *àtàlé* **hèè**   [dress new]   'new dress'

     màmâ **éyế!ŋ́**   [cloth white]   'white cloth'

     mũ̀sũ̀ **àgbò**   [stomach big]   'big stomach'

(290) *nírí **nà̀àkpèè**   [thing wonder]   'an unbelievable, amazing thing'

     *sàné **mîîshèè**   [matter happiness]   'happy news'

     màŋ̀* **tòŋ̀jòlè   [town peace]   'peaceful town'

The order of derived nominal modifiers and their noun heads is consonant with the order of

non-descriptive nominal modifiers and their noun heads, which in many instances form

compound words; the modifier precedes the head. Examples are:

(291) **gbónyò** *àdékà*   [dead.person box]   'coffin'

     dàdé *kòtsá*   [metal spong]   'steel sponge'

     té-*sàà*   [stone bed]   'rock, boulder'

2.4.3.5 Derivation of property nouns from regular nouns

Property nouns may be derived from regular nouns by total reduplication of the noun once.

These property nouns have the meaning 'full of N' or 'similar to N'. This is not a productive

strategy. The ideal nouns for this type of property noun formation are those whose referents are

inanimate, relatively small in size, tend to occur in multiple instantiations and are naturally-

occurring as opposed to man-made. Another semantic class that avails itself to this type of

derivation is liquids. These property nouns may occur as modifiers in a noun phrase or as

complements of *yè* 'have'. Examples are:

(292) *mǘ!jǐ* 'dirt' → *mǘ!jǐmǘ!jǐ* 'dirty'

    bú-!í hole-PL 'holes (in roads)' → *bú!íbú!í* 'pot-holed'

    ŋmèì 'thorns' → *ŋmèìŋmèì* 'thorny'

    shíá 'sand' → *shíáshíá* 'gritty'

    kpɔ́-bí!í lump-PL 'lumps' → *kpɔ́bí!íkpɔ́bí!í* 'lumpy'

    ŋmɔ̃̀tɔ̀ 'mud' → *ŋmɔ̃̀tɔ̀ŋmɔ̃̀tɔ̀* 'muddy'

(293) gbɛ́=ɛ̀   yè   ***ŋmɔ̀tɔ̀ŋmɔ̀tɔ̀***
       road=DEF   have   muddy
       "The road is muddy"

(294) è=wò   àtàlé   ***mújǐ̀mújǐ̀***   kò
       3SG=wear dress dirty   INDEF
       "S/he was wearing a dirty dress."

2.4.3.6 Agent nominalization of property nouns

Agent nominalizations with animate referents may be obtained with the suffix *-tsè*, itself a

lexical item meaning 'father'. This is possible mostly for DIMENSION and COLOUR nouns.

(295) *àgbò*   'big'   →   *agbòtsɛ̀*   'big one'
       bíbìóó   'small'   →   *bíbìóótsɛ̀*   'small one'
       kàkàdã́ŋ́ŋ 'tall'   →   *kàkàdã́ŋ́tsɛ̀* 'tall one'
       édǐ!ŋ   'black (n.)' →   *édǐ́ŋtsɛ̀*   'dark-skinned one'
       étsùlù   'red (n.)'   →   *étsùlùtsɛ̀*   'light-skinned one'

When *mújìmújì* 'dirty' undergoes agent nominalization however, the product is *mújì-à-tsè* [dirt-PERT-NOM] 'dirty person', where the morpheme *a-* appears to be the pertensive marker, suggesting a possessive NP. This strategy is not at all productive and can only be observed with this particular noun.

2.4.3.7 Adjectives and the possessive construction

Adjectives cannot be complements of *yè*. It is their inability to occur in this syntactic slot or as arguments in clauses that disqualifies them as nouns. They can only occur as modifiers in NPs. For example *yɛ́!ɲ* 'white' and *kpákpá* 'good' can be modifiers in an NP (b. examples) but cannot be complements of *yè* (a. examples). Even their derived nominals, *ékpákpá* 'good (n.)' and *éyɛ́!ɲ* 'white (n.)' cannot be complements of *yè* 'have'.

(296a) **àtàlé＝ɛ̀ yè (é)-yɛ̃́!ɲ*
      dress＝DEF   have   (NOM)-white
      "The dress is white."

(296b) *àtàlé yɛ̃́!ɲ*
      dress   white
      "a white dress"   [OYO:86]

(297a) *è＝yè (é)-kpákpá*
      3SG＝have   NOM-good
      "S/he is good."

(297b) *gbɔ̀mɔ̀ kpákpá* !nɛ́
      person   good   PRED.PRT
      "S/he is a good person."

One reason why certain property words cannot occur as complements of *yè* 'have' is that they have semantic correlates that can be expressed verbally. For instance the verbal forms of *àgbò* 'big' *kàkàdã̂ŋ́ŋ́* 'tall', *(é)yɛ́!ŋ́* 'white' and *(e)kpákpá* are *dà* 'be.big', *kɛ̀* 'be.tall', *yɛ́* 'be.white' and *hɨ̀* 'be.good'. It seems then that where there is a choice between expression of a concept as a verb and expression of the same concept as a complement of *yè* 'have', the former is favoured over the latter. A look at table 7 reveals that all the adjectives there can only occur attributively or as intransitive predicates (only the colour terms can occur as intransitive predicates). The properties expressed by these adjectives belong to core semantic classes such as COLOUR, AGE and VALUE. The two PHYSICAL PROPERTY adjectives *éŋmɔ̂!ŋ́* 'raw, fresh' and *éŋmĩ̄líkítí* 'unripe', according to Dixon (2010:76), are the most frequently-occurring adjectives from that semantic class across languages. This suggests that these adjectives are relatively primitive within the language, and it implies that intransitive predication and attributive modification are more established, older means of property concept expression than predication with *yè*.

Other authors have noted that the adjective class (or more broadly, the class of words that occur as modifiers of nouns in NPs) in many West African languages is an innovation (Ameka 1991b). Schaefer and Egbokhare (1993:74) note that in Emai, the relatively new adjective class is an addition to a system where property concepts were primarily and perhaps

singularly coded by verbs. In Gã, it is not possible to determine whether the older form of

property expression is property verbs or attributive adjectives and nouns. What does seem

clear, though, is that complementation of *yὲ* 'have' with property nouns is a more recent

innovation, judging from the fact that most of the basic property concepts cannot occur in this

construction.

2.4.3.8 The relationship between possession and property-denotation

The use of possessive syntax to introduce property concepts is common in the world's

languages. Francez and Koontz-Garboden (2013:536) observe that property concept lexemes

which occur in possessive predicate constructions are those that denote abstract "substances"

such as English 'strength' and 'beauty'. These are essentially abstract nouns. Those that occur

in canonical predicate constructions (e.g. copula constructions) tend to be adjectives in English.

Their thesis is that substance-denoting property concepts require possessive semantics in order

to meet the truth conditions of property concept constructions, while adjectivally-denoting

property concepts have no such requirement.

In Gã, possessive predicate constructions are used for both substance-denoting property

concepts as well as non substance-denoting ones. So as predicted by Francez and Koontz-

Garboden (2013), noun modifiers like those described earlier in this section (e.g. *mĩ͂shὲὲ*

'happiness') all occur in predicate possessive constructions. However, many non substance-

denoting property concepts such as *bíbìóó* 'small', *díŋ́ŋ́* 'quiet' and *kpìtíóó* 'short' can also

appear in possessive predicate constructions. Also significantly, no property concept may occur

in a canonical predicate construction (with copula *jí*). That option simply does not exist for Gã.

The semantics of possessive predication would require that the complement of *yè* 'have'

be a noun. Only concrete 'things' can be possessed. An extension to allow property-denoting

words to fill this slot is not unexpected. If a thing or person exhibits some quality, then that

quality can be thought of as being a part of the thing's or person's constitution - a part of their

'body' (to use the term loosely), which they then have control over (just as humans have

control over their bodies) and can be said to have ownership over.

2.4.3.9 Adverbial use of property nouns

Property nouns can themselves be used for the adverbial modification of property verbs which

have identical semantic component (298), (299). This is possible only in the affirmative, as the

(b) examples show. The function of the property noun appears to be emphasis; it reinforces the

property expressed by the property verb.

(298a) àbìfáó=!ɛ́   *é-shwì*   *àgbò*
       baby=DEF   PERF-be.fat   big
       "The baby is very fat."

(298b) ?àbìfáó=!ɛ́   *é-!shwí-kò*   *àgbò*
       baby=DEF   PERF-be.fat   big
       "The baby is not very fat."

(299a) tsó = ὲ   *kὲ*   *kàkàdấŋ́ŋ́*

      tree = DEF   be.tall   tall

      "The tree is very tall."

(299b) ?tsó = ὲ   *é-kέέέ*   *kàkàdấŋ́ŋ́*

      tree = DEF   PERF-be.tall.NEG   tall

      "The tree is not very tall."

2.4.4 Comparison and Gradability

One of the most common features of property words across languages is that they can occur as

a parameter of comparison in comparative constructions. In Gã, only property verbs and

property nouns can occur in comparative constructions. The comparative construction is a serial

verb construction in which the property word constitutes the first VP or is a complement of the

first VP and the comparative verb, *fἒ* 'surpass' constitutes the second VP. The object of *fὲ*

'surpass' is the object of comparison. Since the comparative construction only has positions for

nouns (objects of *yὲ* 'have' or *fἒê* 'surpass') and verbs (V1 slot), adjectives cannot occur in this

construction since they cannot be objects of *yὲ* 'have'. However, since many adjectives in Gã

have verbal counterparts, this does not represent a handicap for concepts expressed by

adjectives; their verbal semantic counterparts can occur in comparative constructions. Example

(300) contains a property verb as parameter of comparison while (301) and (302) have property

nouns. (303a) is a comparative sentence where the property at issue is an adjective, *tsùlù* 'red'.

It is ungrammatical, but (303b) with the equivalent verbal property word, *tsù* 'be red' is

grammatical.

(300) kòjó *kɛ̀*   *fɛ̀*   ákú
       Kojo   be.tall surpass   Aku
       "Kojo is taller than Aku."

(301) kɔ́ɔ̀pòó   nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́ *yɛ̀* *bíbìóó*   *fɛ̀*   énɛ̃́
       cup   this   have   small   surpass   this
       "This cup is smaller than this one."

(302) è=sã̀né=ɛ̀   *yɛ̀* *àwɛ̀rɛ̀hóó* fɛ̀   ó=nɔ́-!ɔ́
       3SG=matter=DEF   have   sadness   surpass   2SG=NM-DEF
       "His problem is sadder than yours."

(303a) *è=mã̀mí́   *yɛ̀*   *tsùlù* *fɛ̀*   í́=mã̀mí́
       3SG=mother have   red   surpass   1SG=mother
       "Her/His mother is lighter in complexion than my mother."

(303b) è=mã̀mí́   *tsù-ɔ̀*   *fɛ̀*   í́=mã̀mí́
       3SG=mother be.red-HAB surpass   1SG=mother
       "Her/His mother is lighter in complexion than my mother."

Property words that can function as parameters of comparison are termed gradable.

Such property words can also be modified by adverbs which convey the extent or degree of the

attribute expressed by the property concept. There are property concepts which cannot function

as a parameter of comparison, neither can they be modified by degree adverbs. These are

termed non-gradable. So far, we have encountered mainly gradable property words. Non-

gradable property words in Gã belong to the adjective class. Many of these adjectives have a

fixed, collocational relationship with the noun they modify and do not occur with any other

nouns. They cannot occur as complements of *yὲ* 'have'. Examples are:

(304) *yòò hɔ́-!lɔ́*   [woman pregnancy-AG]   'pregnant woman'

    shìkátsὲ kpã̀nã̀ã̀   [rich.person extremely]   'filthy rich person'

    éyɛ̃́ŋ fũù   [white pure]   'pure white'

    shwã̀né fĩ́ńtĩ́ŋ́   [afternoon bright]   'bright afternoon'

    lèé!bí mã́ŋkpá   [morning early]   'early morning'

Other non-gradable adjectives which are not in a collocational relationship with their noun

heads are *fólò* 'empty, naked, alone'. Example: *òmɔ̃́ fólò* 'only rice' i.e. rice with no stew.

2.5 Adverbs

Adverbs are infamously difficult to define because they span a wide semantic range and are

realized by an equally wide array of morphosyntactic devices as well as lexical and periphrastic

means. Payne (1998:69) describes it as a "catch-all category" which accepts as members any

word with semantic content that is not a noun, verb or adjective. Adverbs tend to modify verbs

and adjectives but also whole clauses and propositions. They are usually distinguished into

various sub-classes based on their semantics. Each semantic adverbial classs relevant to Gã will

be examined below.

2.5.1 Manner adverbs

These modify verbs by stating the manner in which the action expressed by the verb is carried

out. It is useful to think of manner adverbs as property concepts which modify verbs. Examples

are *kpì* 'suddenly', *kpéŋ́ŋ́* 'firmly', *hènĩ̂ãnẫã̀* 'luckily' and *fítsófítsó* 'clearly, lucidly'. Example

sentences follow:

(305)   kèkè   nĩ̀   áfíkòŋkòmé = ὲ   wá   ***kpì***
      then   and   reindeer = DEF   stop   suddenly
      "And then the reindeer stopped suddenly."   [MA:78]

(306)   shĩ̀   jàtá   hĩ̀ɛ̃́   ὲ = nĩ̀nè   mĩ̀ĩ̀   ***kpéŋ́ŋ́*** díɛ̀ŋtsὲ
      but   lion   hold   3SG = hand   inside firmly indeed
      "But lion held onto his hand firmly indeed."   [BGL 1976 3B:47; my glosses, tones]

(307)   ***hènĩ̂ãnẫã̀ = !ã́*** àsòmòá!ŋ́   shĩ̀-gbèé-mɔ̃́ = ɔ̃̀   mòŋ́ hĩ̀   hã́
      luckily = TOP unknowing   down-fall-NOM = DEF   rather be.good   give
      gbèé = !ɛ́
      dog = DEF
      "Luckily and unbeknownst (to us), falling down rather was good for the dog." [PAT:52]

The above examples belong to the adverb word class alone. However there are many manner

adverbs which also function as adjectives and property nouns. This is not unexpected since they

are all property concepts. Some adjectives and property nouns are used as adverbs without any

overt derivational morphology. Others have to be reduplicated in order to be used as adverbs.

In (308) to (311), the (a) examples contain property concepts modifying nouns while the

corresponding (b) examples contain those same property concepts but modifying verbs (manner

adverbs).

(308a) àkpókpĩ̀òntò yὲ   ***bĩ̀èòò***
      turtle   have   slow
      "The turtle is slow."

(308b) nǐ   gbé!ké-nǔű̃=ɛ̃̀   bà-tè   shǐ   **bìèòò**
       and   child-male=DEF   VENT-rise   down   slowly
       "And the boy got up slowly."   [PAT:122]

(309a) òdáké!léó   sɔ̃!mɔ̃̀ yòómó   !lɛ́   áfí-ì   **bàbàóó**   dánǐ
       lizard   serve old.woman DEF   year-PL   many   before

       yòómó   lɛ̀   ŋmɛ̃̀ɛ̃́   è=hè
       old.woman   DEF   release 3SG=body
       "Lizard served the old woman for many years before the old woman let him go."
                                              [BGL 1976 3B:63; my glosses, tones]

(309b) nò   mlǐ̃   !lɛ́   nǔ̃   mǐ̃ǐ-hò   **bàbàóó**
       that   inside TOP   water PROG-flow   many
       "At that time, water was flowing with great force." [BGL 1976 3B:63; my glosses,
                                                     tones]

(310a) nɔ̃́-fɛ̃́ɛ̃́-nɔ̃́   **yè**   **òjògbã̀ŋ̀ŋ̀**
       thing-all-thing   have   well
       "Everything is well."   [PAT:9]

(310b) ã̀mɛ̃̀=tááá   tsó=ɛ̀   nɔ̃̀   **òjògbã̀ŋ̀ŋ̀**
       3PL=sit.NEG   tree=DEF   top   well
       "They didn't sit on the tree properly, well."   [BOR:65]

(311a) nã̀nã̃̀ã̃́   **fí!óó**
       grandmother   little
       "little grandmother"   [DF:110]

(311b) mã́ã̃̀   ófáìnɛ̃́ nǐ   ó=wó   ó=gbèè   nɔ̃̀
       mother please NMLZ   2SG.SBJV=lift   2SG=voice top

       ó=hã́   !wó   **fí!óó**
       2SG.SBJV=give 1PL   little
       "Mother, can you please raise your voice a little for us?"   [OYO:19]

New adverbial meanings may be obtained by reduplication of adverbs and adjectives or property nouns. For instance *fí!óó* 'little' may be reduplicated to obtain the adverb *fìòfí!ó* 'gradually, little by little'.

(312) tsɔ́   mũ̀-tsùlú=!ɛ́   ó=!wó   tsénsǐ=ɛ̃̀   mĩ̀ŋ   *fìòfí!ó*
       pour   oil-red=DEF   2SG.SBJV=put   pan=DEF   inside little.RED
       "Pour the palm oil (red oil) into the pan little by little."

In other cases, there is little semantic difference between an adverbial root and its reduplicated form. For instance, both *òyá* and *òyáìòyáì* mean 'quickly'. *òyá* could also be a time adverb meaning 'early'.

Some adverbs may occur immediately after the verb phrase they modify (308b), (309b); sentence-finally (312) or sentence-initially (313).

(313) *tìùkàà*   òkó   bà-jìé   è=hí̂ɛ̃̂   kpò
       suddenly   Oko   VENT-remove   3SG=face   compound
       "Suddenly, Oko appeared."

2.5.2 Degree adverbs

A subset of manner adverbs are degree adverbs. These qualify the degree or extent of an action or property. Therefore, they modify both verbs and adjectives. Examples are *wàà* 'very', *tsɔ́* 'too.much, excessively', *díɛ̃̂ŋtsè* 'very' and *kwráá* 'at all'.

(314) nĩ̀   ã̀mɛ̃̀=sùmɔ̃̀-ɔ̃   nɛ̃̀kɛ́̃   kɔkɔdé!né   nɛ́ɛ̃̀   sã̀nè   *wàà*
       and   3PL=like-HAB   this   frog   this   matter very.much
       "And they liked this frog very much."   [MAV:3]

(315) énɛ́   gbááá   è=nǎ̀ǎ̀   *kwɪ́áá*
      this   bother.NEG   3SG=mouth   at.all
      "This did not bother him at all."   [PAT:95]

díɛ̂ŋtsɛ̀ 'indeed, really' may modify adjectives as well as other adverbs, such as *wàà* 'very

much' in (316) and *kpɛ́ŋ́ŋ́* 'firmly' in (306).

(316) nǐ   ǎ̀mɛ̌=sùmɔ̌-ɔ̌   nɛ̌kɛ́   kɔkɔdé!né   nɛ́ɛ̌   sǎ̀nè   **wàà**   **díɛ̂ŋtsɛ̀**
      and   3PL=like-HAB   this   frog   this   matter   very.much   indeed
      "And they liked this frog very much indeed."

2.5.3 Time adverbs

As the name suggests, these are words that express the time at which an action occurs.

Examples are *bíânɛ́* 'now', *wɔ́* 'tomorrow', *nyɛ̂* 'yesterday', *jú* 'Monday', *ágbènɛ̂* 'so.now',

furthermore'. They may occur following the verb phrase or topicalized in sentence-initial

position.

(317) kɛ̀-bà-shí   **bíânɛ́**
      take-VENT-hit   now
      …up until now.   [MM:7]

(318) **bíânɛ́=!ɛ̂**   lɛ̀   mòŋ́   é=mǎ̀   tsǔ̀
      now=TOP   3SG.OBJ   rather 3SG.PERF=build   house
      "Now, he rather has built a house." [MM:78]

(319) **wɔ́**   bé   nɪ́   ò=bàá-!bá=!á   wɔ̀=jwélé   !nɔ́
      tomorrow   time   NMLZ   2SG-FUT=come=DEF   1PL=lie   top

ní	wɔ̀ = ŋ̀-hòó	ní!í
NMLZ	1PL = PROG-cook	thing

"By the time you come tomorrow, we'll be busily cooking."   [YM:292]

The adverb *ágbènɛ́* 'so now' highlights the fact that the action it modifies is a result or sequential product of some preceding action. Also, unlike *bîànɛ́* 'now' it does not refer to the present time of speaking but to the most current time in the event, be it past, present or future.

(320)

ágbènɛ́ = !ɛ́		kɛ́	ò = tá	gbékɛ́ = !ɛ́	hé = !ɛ́	bɛ̀
so.now = TOP		when	2SG = sit	child = DEF	body = DEF	then

òò = yé	àwὲrὲhóó
2SG.PROG = eat	sorrow

"So now when you sit by your child, you become sorrowful."   [CH:78]

(321)

nĩ̀	mɔ̃̀-fɛ́ɛ̃́-mɔ̃̀	ŋ-nã̀	á!kɛ́	*ágbènɛ́ = !ɛ́*	gbé!kɛ́ = !ɛ́
and	person-all-person	PROG-see	that	now = TOP	child = DEF

èè = jè	ó = !dɛ́ŋ́
3SG.PROG = exit	2SG = palm

And everyone can see that now (at this point) the child is dying.   [CH:49]

When *ágbènɛ́* is followed by *hú̃* 'also, too', it means 'furthermore'.

Time adverbials may also occur periphrastically, as in the case of *bîànɛ́ tɔ̃̀ɔ̃̀ nɛ́!ɛ́* 'right now, right this minute', literally (and paradoxically) 'now far.away this'. In actual speech the final vowel of *bîànɛ́* is ellipsed to obtain *bí!ántɔ̃̀ɔ̃̀nɛ́!ɛ́*, which is now felt by speakers to be one word.

(322) shí́   *bí!ántɔ̀ɔ̀nɛ́!ɛ́*   è=bà-shè   hé=!kó=!ɛ́   jé
       but   right.now   3SG=VENT-reach   place=INDEF=TOP   world

       !lɛ́=ɛ̀   mî̃ŋ   é-!gbélé
       DEF=DEF   inside   3SG.PERF-open
       "And right now, it got to a point…the world is enlightened." [OYO:154]

Another example of a temporal adverbial phrase is *nò mî̃ŋ* (lit: 'that inside') which translates as

'at that time, by then'.

(323) *nò*   *mî̃ŋ=!ɛ́*   á=yè   ní!í́=ɛ̃́   fɛ̃́ɛ̃́
       that   inside=TOP   3PL.IMPERS.PERF=eat   thing=DEF   all
       á=tã̀
       3PL.IMPERS.PERF=finish
       "By that time, all the food would have been eaten up."   [YM:147]

Many time adverbs are multi-categorial because they can function as nouns too. In (324), *bíànɛ̃́*

functions as a noun; it is marked by the focus particle *nî̀.*

(324) *bíànɛ̃́* nɔ̃́ŋŋ́   nî̀   òkó   !shí́
       now   just   FOC   Oko   leave
       "Oko left just now."

    Time adverbs may also express aspectual meanings, especially those related to the

frequency of an action. Examples are *é!kóŋŋ́* 'again', *ààhû̃* 'continuously', *kɔ̀kɔ̀ɔ̀kɔ̀* 'never', *dɑ́ŋ*

'before', *dáá* 'everyday' and adverbial phrases such as *shî̀ kòmé* (lit: instance one) 'once'.

(325) à=sàá   à=yàá-fɔ́   *é!kóŋŋ́*   *two*
       3PL.IMPERS=fix   3PL.IMPERS=FUT.ITIV-give.birth   again
       "They were going to give birth again…(they ended up with) two (babies)" [OYO:193]

(326) hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   wɔ̀=bà-dàmɔ̀   shĩ̀   **àà hṹ**
       sake=TOP   1PL=VENT-stand   down continuously
       "So, we stood there for a long time."   [MM:47]

(327) mĩ́ĩ=!kéɛ́   bò   hɔ̀mɔ̀ yéɛ́ɛ́   nyɛ̃̀   **kɔ̀kɔ̀ɔkɔ̀**
       1SG.PROG=say   2SG.OBJ   hunger eat.NEG   2PL   ever
       "I'm telling you, you'll never go hungry."   [OYO:162]

(328) í=!nã́-kò   *dollar*   **dáŋ**
       1SG.PERF=see-NEG   before
       "I have not seen dollars before."   [MM:64]

(329) á=tèè   sɔ̀ɔmɔ̃̀ shĩ̀   kòmé **ómó**
       3PL.IMPERS.PERF=go.PST   church time   one   already
       "They've been to church once already."

(330) **ólólóóló=!ɛ́**   nò   mĩ̀ŋ=!ɛ̃́   ãmɛ̃̀=ŋ̀-táò   kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né=!ɛ́
       still=TOP   that inside=TOP 3PL=PROG-search   frog=DEF
       "At that time they were still looking for the frog."   [SAMP:16]

2.5.4 Epistemic adverbs

These express the speaker's commitment to the truth of the proposition. While other languages

may use affixes or modal auxiliaries to code these notions, Gã uses adverbs and adverbial

phrases. Givón (2001a:92) notes that the semantic scope of epistemic adverbs can range over

the whole clause or proposition. There are three such adverbs: *bèkɛ̃́* 'maybe' (331) and *é!kólé!ɛ́*

'maybe' (332) indicate the speaker's uncertatinty while *kɛ̃́* 'certainly, definitely' indicates

certainty (333). *é!kólɛ́* 'maybe' may actually be an adverbial phrase comprising *é!kó* 'some

(n.)' and the definite article *lɛ.*

(331) hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   èè=fèé   !lɛ́   á!kɛ́   **bèkɛ́**
      sake=TOP   3SG.PROG=do   3SG.OBJ NMLZ   maybe

      kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né=!ɛ́   hɔ̀   flɔ́=ɔ̀   mĩ̀ŋ
      frog=DEF   be.at.hollow.place   hole=DEF   inside
      "So, he thought that maybe the frog was in the hole."   [DEB:71]

(332) **é!kólɛ́=!ɛ́**   *next year*   è=bàá-!yá-dằmɔ̀̃   *fifteenth*
      maybe=TOP   3SG=FUT-ITIV-stand
      "Maybe next year, it will fall on the fifteenth."   [OYO:62]

(333) nằ   à=bà-gbèé   !shɛ́   yè   nɔ́-kò   tằmɔ̀̃
      and   3PL.IMPERS=VENT-fall down be.located thing=INDEF like

      fàà   mĩ̀ŋ   nũ̀   mĩ̀ŋ   **kɛ́**
      river   inside water   inside definitely
      "And they fell into something like a river. In water, definitely."   [DEB:132]

There is another epistemic adverb, *àsòmòá̋!ŋ* 'unknowingly' which is used before the subject to indicate that the speaker now has knowledge of the propositional content of the statement that follows, when previously she didn't.

(334) hènĩ̂ĩànằá̋=!ằ **àsòmòá̋!ŋ**   shằ-gbèé-mɔ́̃=ɔ̀̃   mòŋ   hằ   hɛ̋
      luckily=TOP unknowingly down-fall-NOM=DEF   rather be.good give

      gbèé=!ɛ́
      dog=DEF
      "Luckily and unbeknownst (to us), falling down rather was good for the dog." [PAT:52]

(335) è=nằ   tsè-ì-jĩ̀[8]   yè   tɛ́=ɛ̀   sèè

_____

[8] This speaker, a 17-year old girl, forms the plural of *tsò* 'tree/stick' with two plural markers *-i* and *-jĩ* to make *tsèìjĩ̀* 'trees' instead of the more prevalent *'tsèì'*. If this is not a slip of tongue, then it appears that in this speaker's repertoire the domain of *-ji* has been expanded to include nouns for which *-i* is the traditional pluralizer. The

3SG = see	tree-PL-PL	be.located	stone = DEF	back		

àsòmòá̋!ŋ́	tòò	nɛ̏kɛ́	wɔ̀ = jwɛ́ìàŋ̀	tòò	nɛ́ɛ̏	kɛ̀	è = kókĺòntò
unbeknownst	sheep	this	1PL = bush	sheep	this	with	3SG = horns

kàkàdá̋ŋ́ = ̋á	ékò	yɛ̀	jɛ́!mɛ̋
long = DEF	some	be.located	there

"He saw sticks behind the stone. Not knowing, it was a sheep. These wild sheep with their long horns. One was there."   [MAV:77]

2.5.5 Emphatic adverbs

This group contains a hodge podge of uninflected words which are not verbs, nouns or adjectives and which serve a function related to emphasis. Their roles as emphasizers may be more obvious in some cases than others, for it is sometimes difficult in some cases to pinpoint their exact meaning, making them more akin to discourse markers. What differentiates them from the adverbs discussed above is that they are capable of modifying nouns. However, unlike adjectives they do not attribute any property to these nouns. They are *nɔ̋ŋ́ŋ́* 'just', *kwŕáá* 'actually, at.all', *(tété) pó* 'even', *mòŋ́* 'rather', *díɛ̏ŋ̀tsɛ̀* 'even', *pɔ̀tɛ̏ɛ̏* 'exactly' and *hű* 'too'. A few illustrative examples are given for these adverbs. Examples (336) and (337) demonstrate the syntactic flexibility of these adverbs because in (336) *pó* modifies the noun *òsɔ́fó!í!ɛ́* 'the priests' while in (337) it modifies the proposition contained in the conditional clause.

---

speaker also has reanalyzed *tsě̀i* as singular. This is not very common but not surprising either. Among younger speakers *-ji* is being used for words that were once the domain of *-i* e.g. *sɛ̏ɛ̌jì* instead of *sɛ̏ɛ̌!í* for the plural of 'chair'.

(336) á!gbénɛ̃́=!ɛ̃̀　òsɔ́fó-!í=!ɛ́　　*pó*　é=tɔ̀　　　　　ãmɛ̃̀
　　　so.now=TOP priest-PL=DEF　even　3SG.PERF=tire　　3PL
　　　"Now, even the priests are tired, fed up."　[CH:68]

(337) shĩ̀　kɛ́　è=tsááá　　　　!lɛ́　*tété*　*pó*　!lɛ́
　　　but　if　3SG=heal.NEG　him　even　even　DEF

　　　ĩ̀=kɛ̀　　　lɛ̀　é-yá-!ŋ́
　　　1SG=take　him　PERF-go-NEG.FUT
　　　"But even if he doesn't heal him, I won't take him (to the medicine man)." [CH:103]

(338) ãmɛ̃́!ríkà　　*kwŕáà*　　jí　hénĩ́　kòòkóò　　　jè
　　　America　　actually.FOC　COP　where　cocoa　　　　come.from
　　　"(South) America is actually where cocoa comes from."　[BGL 1976 3B:23]

(339) ménĩ̀　*kwŕáà*　　yɔ́ɔ̀　　　　　nĩ̂　nɛ́ɛ̃̀　mĩ̀ŋ
　　　what　at.all.FOC　be.located.HAB　thing　this　inside
　　　"What at all is inside this thing?!"　[FLO:49]

(340) hèwɔ́=!ɔ́　　ò=bàá-!nɑ̃́　　á!kɛ́　gbé!kɛ̃́-bí!í　bíbí!í　　　bíbí!í
　　　sake=TOP　2SG=FUT-see　NMLZ child-PL　small.PL　　　small.PL

　　　bíbí!í=ɛ̀　　　*díɛ̃̀ŋtsɛ́*　*díɛ̃̀ŋtsɛ́=!ɛ́*　ãmɛ̃̀=bú-mɔ̃̀
　　　small.PL=DEF　even　　　　even=DEF　　3PL=lie.upside.down-DISTRIB

　　　kɔ̃̀ɔ́!ŋ́
　　　shoulder
　　　"So you'll see that even the tiny little children (babies) are being carried over
　　　shoulders."　　　　　　　　[OYO:424]

(341) hèwɔ́=!ɔ́　　ófáìnɛ̃́　bàá=!á　　nĩ́　ó=fèé　　　　yɛ̀
　　　sake=TOP　please　leaf=DEF　NMLZ 2SG.PERF=do　be.located

jé̃!mé̃=!ɛ̃   mɛ̃nĩ̀   *pɔ̀tɛ̀ɛ̀*   à=kɛ̀-fé-ɔ̀
there=DEF   what   exactly   3PL.IMPERS=take-do-HAB
"So, please, the herbal infusion that you've made over there, what exactly is it made from?"[YM:158]

(342) hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   é-nɛ̃́ɛ̃̀-mɛ̃́ĩ=ɛ̃̀   *mɔ̌ŋ*   jí   òtí=!ɛ́
       sake=TOP   NOM-this-PL=DEF   rather COP   salient.point=DEF
       "So these rather are the important points."   [OYO:287]

(343) tsìnɛ̃́=!ɛ̃́   *hɛ̃́*   nyĩ̀ɛ̃́   è=sɛ̀ɛ̀
       cow=DEF   also   walk   3SG=back
       "The cow was also chasing him."   [TIN:59]

2.6 Ideophones

These do not constitute a word class or syntactic category of their own. Rather most of them

belong to the property noun, adjective and manner adverb classes and a few belong to the noun

and verb classes. Blench (2010) states that they are "expressives, characterizing sounds,

sensations, textures and feelings, usually but not always through morphological patterning".

Essentially they are property concepts whose phonological shape is rooted in the perceived

correlation that speakers make between the property in question and certain phonological

features. This correlation may not necessarily be iconic. That is, ideophones need not be

onomatopoeic. This notion is best explained by Dingemanse (2012:655) who defines

ideophones as "marked words which depict sensory imagery". He writes that the use of

ideophones to depict sensory images is more about framing than likeness. Depictions differ in

the degree to which they capture the real-life entity, just as different paintings of similar objects

reflect differences in the artist's perceived resemblance to reality. Therefore, ideophones

primarily should be viewed in this way and only secondarily as iconic representations

(Dingemanse 2012:658).

With this in mind, one can set up two broad types of ideophones for Gã. In one class

are *onomatopoeic ideophones*, which to varying degrees, depending on the word, have some

sound semblance to the property (or event) that they depict. The other class of ideophones, *non-*

onomatopoeic ideophones, constitute a vast majority of the ideophones in the language. The

main hallmark of this sub-class is that they contain a fair number of reduplicated forms. All

ideophones, especially *onomatopoeic* ideophones are often characterized by marked intonation,

which serves to make the depiction more expressive and vivid. This may be realized as an

increase or decrease in the pitch register relative to the pitch of the rest of the clause. The two

types of ideophones will now be discussed.

2.6.1 Onomatopoeic ideophones

These onomatopoeic words often function as adverbs, modifying a verb by depicting the sound

that accompanies the action coded by the verb. In other cases, the ideophone itself depicts the

entire action, such that the clause may be missing a verbal predicate. They are especially

common in narratives; the only examples of such ideophones in my corpus were from

narratives. *púɛ́ŋ* in (344) depicts the owl's unexpected exit from his hole in a tree and *zɔ̀zɔ̀rɔ̀* in

(345) conjures up an image of a person making a soft landing. A synonym to this ideophone is

zèzè. Both ideophones are functioning as adverbs here. In (346), *yìkɔyìkɔ̀* describes the sound

of a person sobbing and heaving uncontrollably. It is derived from the verb *yí!kɔ́* 'sob', also an

ideophone.

(344) nã̃ã̃   pàtú   é=jè   kpò   ***púɛ́ŋ***
       PRSTV.PRED.PRT   owl   3SG.PERF=exit   compound   IDEO
       "And here an owl has exited suddenly."   [PAT:107]

 (345) nɪ̃̀   àmɛ́=bà-yí   shɪ̀kpɔ̃̀ŋ   ***zɔ̀zɔ̀rɔ̀***
        and   3PL=VENT-land   ground   IDEO
        "And they landed smoothly on the ground."   [TIN:62]

(346) gbé!kɛ́=ɛ̃̀   ŋ̀-fó   ***yìkɔyìkɔ̀***
       child=DEF   PROG-cry   IDEO
       "The child is sobbing uncontrollably."

In (347), *kpàá* indicates a hard landing. In (348), *hùù* conveys the smooth and quick movement of an

object through air and *klóbótóŋ* is a comical means of indicating a fall in water. In both examples it is

ideophones that predicate the action of the subject after the source of its motion is predicated. The

ideophones in these examples therefore co-lexicalize the action of falling (and landing) as well as the

manner of falling of the subject. In the case of (348) *hùù* was lengthened significantly by the narrator,

perhaps to indicate that it was a long fall.

(347) lɛ̀   hṹ   è=jɛ̀   tsó=ɛ̀   nɔ̃̀   shĩ̀kpɔ̃́ŋ   *kpàá*

3SG.OBJ   too   3SG=come.from   tree=DEF   top   ground   IDEO

"He too came from the top of the tree to the ground (and landed with a loud thud)!"
     [PAT:110]

(348) è=jɛ̀   ŋwɛ̃̀ŋ   ŋwɛ̃̀ŋ   *hùùù*   fàà   kò   mĩ̀ŋ   *kĺóbótóŋ*

3SG=come.from   up   up   IDEO   river   INDEF   inside   IDEO

"He came from way way up (and fell with a splash) into the river!"   [PAT:162]

The ideophones in (347) and (348) do not fit neatly into any word class and thus demonstrate one feature of ideophones that was previously thought to be cross-linguistically valid i.e. that ideophones form a syntactic category of their own (Doke 1935). It is more instructive, however, as suggested by Ameka (2001:26), to view them as a phonosemantic class which does not have to have uniform word class membership within a language or across languages. In so doing one does not miss any functional and syntactic similarities they may have with members of well-established classes such as adverbs, property nouns and adjectives.

My view is that ideophones such as the ones in (347) and (348) should still be considered adverbs, in so far as their main function is to characterize the manner in which some action is effected. The difference here is that the action is not explicitly stated but clues to the nature of the action are given in the previous discourse and crucially in the ideophone itself, and this enables the hearer to decipher what action is being predicated of the actor.

There are also a few nominal ideophones in the language, which attempt to mimic the typical sounds made by their referents, as perceived by speakers. They are:

(349) klílí   'cricket (insect)'

       dɔ́kɔdɔ́kɔ́   'duck'

       kìàkúŋ̀   'turkey'

       kóŋ̀kò   'empty tin can'

       òkété!ké   'railway train'

       tsúkútsàk̀a   'railway train'

       tùtùlú!tú   'a kind of horn' (used when addressing children)

       hǎĩ̀hǎĩ̀   'disdainful treatment'

The last example, hǎĩ̀hǎĩ̀ 'mistreatment' is atypical, firstly because it refers to an abstract concept and secondly because it consists of a reduplication of the root word hǎĩ̀, which is an interjection used to ward off animals. Its English equivalent would be *"Shoo!"*

(350) è = fé-ɔ̀   lὲ   *hǎĩ̀hǎĩ̀*
       3SG = do-HAB   3SG.OBJ   mistreatment
       "She treats him with disdain."   (Dakubu 2008b:85; glosses and tone marks mine)

2.6.2 Non-onomatopoeic ideophones

These bear no resemblance to the sounds of the situations they describe. It is difficult even to conceive of a sound associated with concepts like 'brightly', 'carelessly' or 'skinny'. Such ideophones comprise a large number of words belonging mostly to the adverb, property noun and adjective word classes, most of which are reduplications. Although they are reduplications, in many cases one cannot speak of a root word from which the ideophone is derived. For

example, there is no word *hábá* from which *hábáhábá* 'thin' is derived. This is the case for

many reduplicated ideophones. Exceptions can be found in words like *bàsàà* and its

reduplicated form, *bàsàbàsà* which both mean 'careless, carelessly'. Below are examples of

ideophones that function as property nouns (351), those that function as adverbs (352) and

those which can function as both (353).

(351) *Property noun ideophones*

hábáhábá	'thin, light (of people)'
légélégé	'skinny'
yàà	'confused'
bùgábùgá	'aggressive'
bĺóbĺó	'thin (of a woman)'
gɔ́bígɔ́bí	'loquacious'
gégéégé	'loud, quarrelsome'
gídígầndầɲɲ̀	'unwieldy, bulky'
hɔ́tŕɛhɔ́tŕɛ	'indecisive'
hɔ́tɾɔ́hɔ́tɾɔ́	'small and weak (used of people)'
jɾ̀ìbàjɾ̀ìbà	'restless'
gòjòò, gójógòjòò	'very tall and big'
tsàkàà, tsàkàtsàkà	'nasty, disgusting'
pètsèè, pètsèpètsè	'soggy and nasty'
bɔ̀dɔ̀ɔ̀, bɔ̀dɔ̀bɔ̀dɔ̀ɔ̀	'soft'
fɛ̃̀nyɛ̃̀ɛ̃̀, fɛ̃́nyɛ̃́fɛ̃̀nyɛ̃̀ɛ̃̀	'having a serious overbite'

(352) *Adverbial ideophones*

hɛ̃́ŋ́ŋ́	'brightly'
bà̃m̀bà̃m̀	'voraciously, of eating'
gà̀à̀	'intensely, when looking at someone'

vı̋ı̏ı̏	'dull, sluggish' OR 'deeply, soundly (of a person sleeping) '
gbàyàà	'wide open'
fı́tsófı́tsó	'clearly, lucidly'
gábógábó	'greedily'
ŋwɛ́tɛ́ŋwɛ́tɛ́	'spattering, drizzling'
tı́ı́ŋkòı̀ı̀	'peaceful'
hr̂ídìdì	'boisterous (used especially of children)'
gı̀ègı̀è	'burning wildly, of fire'
vɛ́ı́ı́, vɛ́ı́vɛ̀ı̀	'spiny, sticking out dangerously'

Some example sentences are given below. In (354), the second ideophone, *jàbéjàbé* is being

used adjectivally.

(353)　nàkǎı̃　nɔ́ı́ı́　wɔ̀=kɛ̀　　wɔ̀=hɛ̀　　bàá-fɔ̃　　nyɔ̃ŋmɔ̃　　nɔ̃　　*kpɔ̀tsɔ̀ɔ̀*
　　　　that　exactly　1PL=take　1PL=body　FUT-put　God　　　　top　　lazily
　　　　"That is how we will rely wholly on God."
　　　　Lit: "That is how we will lie on God comfortably, lazily." [CH:198]

(354)　ékò-mɛ̃ı̃　　yè　　nı́　　　　hé-mɔ̃-kɛ̀-yélí=!ɛ́　　　　　è=dãmɔ̃
　　　　some-PL　　exist　NMLZ　buy-NOM-and-eat-NOM=DEF　　3SG=stand
　　　　shı̃　　*fı́ı́ı́*
　　　　down　firmly

　　　　ékò-mɛ̃ı̃　　yè　　nı́　　　　è=yè　　　*jàbéjàbé*
　　　　some-PL　　exist　NMLZ　3SG=have　lukewarm
　　　　"There are some whose faith stands firm. There are some whose faith is lukewarm,
　　　　neither here nor there."

(355)　kú!tsó=ɛ̀　　　　　　mı̀ı̀　　é-jɔ̀　　*tı́ı́ŋkòı̀ı̀*
　　　　neighbourhood=DEF　inside　PERF-cool　quietly
　　　　"The neighbourhood is dead quiet."

(356) dàdé yὲ   gbὸgbó=ὲ   nɔ̃̀   *vɛ́ŋ́ŋ́/vɛ́ŋ́vὲ̃ŋ*
      iron   be.located   wall=DEF   top   dangerously, of spiky things
      "Iron spikes stick out along the wall." (Dakubu 2008b:219; glosses and tone marks
      mine)

(357) *Property noun/Adverbial ideophones*

      bàsàà, bàsàbàsà   'careless, carelessly'

      gìdìgìdì   'boisterous, boisterously'

(358a) ã̀mὲ̃̀=ŋ̀-shwέ   *gìdìgìdì*
       3PL=PROG-play   boisterously
       "They are playing boisterously."   → adverb

(358b) gbé!kɛ́=ὲ̃̀   yὲ   *gìdìgìdì*   tsɔ̃́
       child=DEF   have   boisterous   too.much
       "The child is too boisterous."   → property noun

2.6.3 Phonological features unique to ideophones

i) Marked sound sequences

Generally, Gã ideophones do not seriously violate the phonological rules of the language.

However, there are certain sound sequences which occur disproportionately in ideophones

compared to non-ideophones. For example **hr** [hɹ] is a sound sequence that is very rare in Gã. It

is found in only five lexical items in Dakubu's (2008b) dictionary, four of which are

ideophones (359). The one non-ideophone in the group, *hŕɔ́!nɔ̃́* 'blister' is a borrowing from

Akan and appears to be the source of the property noun, *hŕɔ̃́nɔ̃́hŕɔ̃́nɔ̃́* 'swollen'. Also, the

sequence **jr** [ʤɹ] is only found in the ideophone, *jrìbàjrìbà* 'restless' and [zɔ] only occurs in

zɔ̀zɔ̀rɔ̀. Finally, [uɛ] is not an attested vowel sequence within morpheme boundaries but is

found in *púɛ́ŋ́.*

(359)   *hŕébíí*   'mild, gentle, of the wind, fire, scent'

      hŕáŋ́   'profitably'

      hɾàŋmàā̀   'broad and heavy, of people'

      hɾɔ́nɔ̃́hɾɔ́nɔ̃́   'swollen'

      hɾɔ́!nɔ̃́   'blister'

ii) Extra lengthening of final vowel

If an ideophone terminates in a long vowel, that vowel may be lengthened even more for

dramatic effect. This discourse device cannot be employed for non-ideophones, except

interjections.

2.6.4 Tonosemantics

Ideophones that depict thin, slim or narrow entities tend to have high tone on all syllables while

those that depict big, broad, bulky entities tend to have low tones throughout (for singular

forms). These ideophones are property nouns. This phenomenon, where oppositions in

phonological qualities correlate with oppositions in meaning is termed synesthesia (Bodomo

2006:206). Bodomo describes a similar correlation in Dagaare (Niger-Congo, Gur) where high

toned ideophones refer to lighter, thinner and shorter entities and low-toned ones to heavier,

longer and fatter entities. In Dangme, the closest relative of Gã, a parallel situation obtains.

Dakubu (1998:8) observes that in Dangme, low tone is generally associated with large size,

mass, and weight, both physical and moral, while high tone is associated with the absence of these. She relates this association with the fact that Dangme verbs with low tone in the affirmative acquire high tone in the negative. Therefore, negation, absence, reduction (in size) and loss are all semantic kin and are all associated with high tone. She views this as an iconic representation of the position of the vocal apparatus in producing high tones, during which, according to Dakubu (1998:15), there is constriction of the vocal cords leading to reduction in aperture and amplitude. This explanation may not hold because although there is reduction in sound amplitude, there isn't necessarily any reduction in the aperture between the vocal cords during the production of high-pitched sounds. The high pitch is due only to the relatively rapid frequency of vibration of the vocal cords. A more direct iconic relationship exploited by speakers who make this association (between small size and high pitch) may be that between the sounds made by small creatures versus big creatures in nature. This idea was put forth by Suzanne Kemmer (p.c). She observed that small children and animals (e.g. mice, guinea pigs, cats) make higher-pitched sounds as compared to adult humans and larger animals (e.g. bears, dogs, lions). It may be this association, rather, that informs the tone pattern seen in ideophones.

High tones throughout: thin, narrow, light people and objects:

(360) *légélégé*   'slender'

      hábáhábá   'thin, light (of people)'

bĺóbĺó	'thin, narrow' (both people and things)
dã̌mã̌dã̌mã̌	'very slim'
lómílómí	'slender (of people)'
kã̌nyã̌kã̌nyã̌	'skinny'
wédéwédé	'unhealthily thin, frail'
léléóó	'narrow'
fíŋ́tɔ̃́ŋ́ŋ́	'narrow'

Low tones throughout (singular) OR *low tone on first two syllables, high tones on last two syllables (plural): big, fat, broad, heavy people and objects:*

(361)	*gòjòò, gójógòjòò (pl.)*	'big and tall'
	kpòyòò, kpóyókpòyòò (pl.)	'big'
	gbàbùù, gbábúgbàbùù (pl.)	'big and unwieldy'
	gbèmɛ̀ɛ̀	'big and broad'
	gàbòò, gábógàbòò (pl.)	'big and shapeless'
	gĺòmòò, gĺómógĺòmòò (pl.)	'big and tall'
	gídígàndã̀ŋ̀	'big and unwieldy'
	gbàyàà, gbáyágbàyàà	'wide open'
	kùbɔ̀ɔ̀, kùbɔ̀kùbɔ̀ɔ̀	'very big'
	gbɔ̀ŋ̀gbɔ̀ŋ̀	'fat'
	tɔ̀tr̀ɔ̀ɔ̀	'fat'
	tɔ̀gbɔ̀ɔ̀	'fat'
	tɔ̀fũ̀ũ̀	'fat'

Exceptions to this pattern are *zèŋ̀ŋ̀* 'thin' and *tsɔ́bɔ́tsɔ́bɔ́* 'fat, flabby'. The ideophone *gbédémóó*

meaning 'huge' can occur with either all high tones or all low tones *(gbèdèmòò)*, without a

change in meaning. These exceptions are few in number and do not refute the fact that Gã, like

many other languages with ideophones, associate high tones and low tones with opposing

values on the size scale.

A quick perusal of the example words above also reveals another phonosemantic

feature; the existence of a phonestheme or related phonesthemes in the voiced velar stop /g/

and voiced labio-velar stop /gb/. These phonemes tend to be associated with words depicting

entities that are large or heavy. Eight out of the thirteen ideophones in (346) depicting large

entities begin with or contain the phonemes /g/ or /gb/.

2.6.5 Morpho-syntactic features unique to ideophones

The only morphological processes ideophones undergo is pluralization and this only occurs

with ideophones which function as modifiers in NPs. For those with high tones, pluralization is

achieved by suffixing the plural suffix -*i* (362). For those with low tones throughout (usually of

the form $C_1\grave{V}C_2\grave{V}\grave{V}$), the plural is obtained by reduplicating the word, shortening the vowel on

the second syllable and replacing the low tones on the first two syllables with high tones, as

can be seen in (361) above and (363) below.

(362) a.   òbl̀á-yòò   *légélégé*
               life-female   slender
               "a slender young woman"

        b.   òbl̀á-yè-ì   *légélégé-!í*
               life-female-PL   slender-PL
               "slender young women"

(363) a.   nṳ̀ṳ̃   ***gòjòò***
            man   big.and.tall
            "a big and tall man'

    b.   hḭ̀ḭ̃   ***gójógòjòò***
            men   big.and.tall.PL
            "big and tall men'

Non-onomatopoeic property noun or adjectival ideophones may be modified by degree adverbs such as *tsɔ̃́* 'too much' and *'wàà'* 'very' (364) but these modifiers cannot be used with adverbial ideophones, which tend to be onomatopoeic (365).

(364) ákú   é-fèé   ***wédéwédé***   ***wàà***
      Aku   PERF-do   thin   very
      "Aku has become very thin."

(365) *nḭ̀   àmɛ̃́=bà-yí   shḭ̀kpɔ̃̀ŋ   ***zɔ̀zɔ̀rɔ̀ wàà***
      and   3PL=VENT-land   ground   IDEO very
       'And they landed very smoothly on the ground.'

From the discussion above, it is obvious that ideophones are not a marginal class in Gã. They constitute a large chunk of the property noun and manner adverb word classes but differ slightly from non-ideophone members in phonological tendencies, morphology and to a slight extent, syntax. They are invaluable to speakers for providing an effective, vivid and sometimes comical means of expressing descriptive properties.

2.7 Interjections

Interjections have not enjoyed universal recognition among linguists as a separate word class.

Ameka (1992) writes that some linguists have subsumed them under particles, others under

discourse markers or pragmatic markers, others under adverbs, and yet others have dismissed

them as non-words. Ameka notes however, that, they constitute a word class on their own, with

distinct syntactic and semantic features. He defines interjections as "relatively conventionalized

vocal gestures (or more generally linguistic gestures) which express a speaker's mental state,

action or attitude or reaction to a situation (Ameka 1992:106)." He notes that interjections do

not form an integral syntactic part of the constructions with which they occur and they are also

capable of occurring as utterances all by themselves. They are marked by unique phonological

qualities, such as phonotactics and phonemes that are otherwise disallowed in the language.

They ordinarily do not take inflections.

Gã has a number of interjections which are essential to speakers for conveying emotions

and attitudes succinctly and vividly. They are usually accompanied by facial expressions and

bodily gestures that serve to reinforce the emotions and cognitive states expressed by these

interjections. Most interjections occur in sentence initial position, in a separate intonation unit

from the following sentence. Some may occur at the end of the sentence, within the same

intonational unit. All of them can occur alone as utterances. Gã interjections are marked by

special phonological characteristics. For instance, many of them consist of just one syllable consisting of a vowel, often with falling tone. No other word class has vowel-only monosyllabic words. In a few interjections there is free variation between the vowels /ɛ̃/ and /ã/, e.g. *èhɛ́/àhá̃, èhɛ́ɛ̀/àhá̃ã̀*. No such free variation of vowels occurs elsewhere in the lexicon. The vowel sequence, **uɛ**, can be found in the interjection *kúɛ̀* (as well as the ideophone *púɛ̃́ŋ*), but is otherwise disallowed in the language. Morphologically, interjections in Gã cannot be inflected.

A number of them will be explicated below. This is far from a comprehensive description; there are many interjections, each with several nuances of meaning. Examining them all thoroughly will be a major project. The following represents a cursory survey of the more ubiquitous interjections in the language. They also represent those that were well exemplified in the natural data available. An attempt is made at presenting all the various shades of meaning of each interjection, although this may in some cases fall short.

ê - This can occur in both sentence-initial and sentence-final position. It is one of the commonest interjections in Gã with several different uses, some of which are hard to pin down. Only a few will be explicated here. When it occurs alone as an utterance or in sentence-initial position, it indicates a variety of reactions; surprise, disbelief or doubt, confusion, worry, being impressed.

In (366), it reflects worry or concern on the part of the story-teller that a child who

cannot swim has fallen into a river.

(366) è=jὲ ŋwὲ̀ŋ ŋwὲ̀ŋ hùù fàà kò mì̃ŋ kĺóbótóŋ́
     3SG=come.from up up IDEO river INDEF inside IDEO

     ê̂ gbé!ké̋ né̋!ɛ̋ ní̋ lé fàà-wú-mɔ̀ né̋!ɛ̋ nì̃
     IJ child this NMLZ know.NEG river-swim-NOM this FOC

     é=yà-gbèé fàà mì̃ŋ nὲké̋ né̋!ɛ̋
     3SG.PERF=VENT-fall river inside like.this this
     "He came from way up and fell into the river with a splash! Ei, this child who cannot
     swim has fallen into a river!" [PAT:162]

In the following conversation, Kai's *"ê̂"* expresses surprise and amusement at Mr. Mensah's

(MM) directness and impoliteness in telling someone his negative feelings about them.

(367) MM: ì̀=kὲɛ́ lὲ
        1SG=say 3SG.OBJ
        "I said, "Him""

        è=bέ nɔ̋=!kó nɔ̋=!kó ní̋
        3SG=have.NEG thing=INDEF thing=INDEF NMLZ

        è=bàá-nyɛ̋ é=!féé é=hɛ̋ !mí̋
        3SG=FUT-able 3SG.SBJV=do 3SG.SBJV=give 1SG.OBJ
        "There's nothing that he can do for me."

   Kai: ê̂ [LAUGHTER]
        IJ
        "Ei!"

ê can also be used to mark self-repair, or in the following example, attempted self-repair, where

it is uttered immediately before the correction. In (368) Tina is narrating a story and identifies a

creature tentatively as a bat. She is not quite sure if this is right and attempts a repair. She

utters the interjection *ê* to signify that she may be wrong and asks her listeners to confirm

whether it is indeed a bat. Aku corrects her, saying it is an owl.

(368) Tina: è=ną̀̃   ápùtù--
               3SG=see   ba--
               "He saw a ba--"

               ê   ápùtùm̀pátâ
               IJ   bat
               "Ei a bat?"

               nį̀̃   è=bà-gbèé   !shį́̃
               and   3SG=VENT-fall   down
               "And he fell down."

       Aku: àyɛ́-lòófòlɔ̀̃
              witch-bird
              "An owl."

ê is also used to mark that the sentence that follows it is something that the speaker just

realized or just remembered. In relation to this, it can serve as a sentence opener.

When *ê* occurs at the end of a sentence, it may signal that the speaker believes that the

addressee held a belief contrary to the supposition in the sentence. The interjection functions as

an alert or signal of caution, as in (369). This cautionary use is also seen in (381) and (382)

below.

(369) nɔ́   ní   ò=nã̀-ã̀   á!kɛ́--
       NM   NMLZ   2SG=see-HAB   as
       "What you are seeing as--"

       ò=nã̀-ã̀   lɛ̀   á!kɛ́   nũ̀   lóó   nɔ́=!kó=!ɛ́
       2SG=see-HAB   3SG.OBJ   as   water or   thing=INDEF-DEF
       "You are seeing as water or something"

       jééé   nũ̀   ê
       NEG   water   IJ
       "It's not water!"

       ŋ̀shɔ̀
       sea-water
       "Sea-water."   [OYO:294]

ê at sentence-final position can also function as an intensifier, in addition to an expression of

surprise or counter-expectation.

(370) è=dà   ê
       3SG=be.big   IJ
       "It's really big!"

ɔ̂ - This is another common interjection in everyday Gã speech, with several functions. It only

occurs at sentence-initial position or as a lone utterance. In (371), it has a function similar to ê

in (369), in that it marks what follows as contrary to an addressee's statement or perceived

assumption.

(371) Kai: è=yè   *Canada*   ólô

           3SG=be.located   Canada   still

           "Is he still in Canada?"

      MM: *ô*   é--   é=yè   *America*

           IJ   3SG 3SG=be.located   America

           "Oh, he's in America."

      Kai: ǎ̀ǎ̀

           IJ

           "I see."   [MM:11]

In (372) it functions as a sentence opener or marker of topic change. Sally is talking about how

a man has died young, and she goes on to give information about the man's immediate family.

When she mentions one name, Kwei, Dina (who probably believes she knows Kwei), interrupts

to ask if Kwei is the one who works at T.D.C. The introduction of this sub-topic is prefaced by

ô. *ô* in Dina's first turn is an expression of sympathy.

(372) Sally: è=ná̌-kò   *fifty*   pó

            3SG=get-NEG.PERF   even

           "He hasn't even turned 50."

      Dina: ô

           IJ

           "Aww"

      Sally: kpàákóò   é=!ná   *fifty-six*

           now   3SG.PERF=get

           "He just turned 56."

Dina: [ɛ̀ɛ́ɛ̀]
 IJ
 "Really?"

Sally: [nì̃] é = bà-gbó   nɛ́!ɛ́
 and 3SG.PERF = VENT-die this
 "And he has died."

 nò hèwɔ́ = !ɔ́ è kɛ̀ á-- ákú bí kwèí
 that sake = TOP 3SG and Aku child Kwei
 "So he and Aku's child, Kwei"

Dina: ɛ̀hɛ́ [Kwèí]
 IJ Kwei
 "Yes, Kwei."

Sally: [è = kɛ̀] lɛ̀ yɔ̀ tɛ̀mɑ́!ɑ́
 3SG = take him be.located Tema-DEF
 "He is with him at Tema."

 é = yè   bɔ́--
 3SG.PERF = eat
 "He's spent--"

Dina: ɔ̂ kwèí = !ɛ́ *T.D.C* è = yɔ̀
 IJ Kwei = TOP T.D.C 3SG = be.located.HAB
 "Oh, is Kwei the one at T.D.C?" [DF:1]

As mentioned above, ɔ̂ may also express sadness or disappointment in combination with surprise. In (373), it expresses sadness.

(373) ɔ̂ á = !fééé   *operation* = ɛ́ = !ɛ́ nì̃ è = gbô
 IJ 3PL.IMPERS = do.NEG   = DEF = DEF and 3SG = die
 "Oh, the operation wasn't done before he died?" [FH:134]

It may also function as what I term a quotation opener. Here, *ô* is the first element uttered in a

quote. It serves no obvious emotive purpose except to reiterate that what follows is a direct

quote.

(374) shĩ   mɔ̃=kò   é=bà-kèɛ́   !bó   á!kɛ́
       but   person=INDEF   3SG.PERF-VENT-tell   2SG.OBJ   NMLZ

       ô   ní!í=!ɛ̃́   è=yè   jɛ̃́!mɛ̃́
       IJ   thing=DEF   3SG=be.located   there
       "But someone has come and told you that, "Oh, the thing, it exists."   [CH:166]

áò/áà - The equivalent of this interjection in English would be 'aww'. It relays a speaker's

sympathy at a situation. *áà,* especially, must be accompanied by a facial expression expressing

sorrow, as it may also express disgust or indignation when accompanied by the appropriate

facial expressions. In the following excerpt, Sally is sorrowfully reporting the words of a friend

who had lost a child and how the child was helpful to his mother. Dina's *áò* is uttered with a

sad countenance in an expression of sympathy for the tragic story. *ô* in the first line also

expresses sadness.

(375) Sally: è=kèɛ́   ô   í=bí
               3SG=say   IJ   1SG=child
               "She said, "Oh, my child.""

lè	jí	í̋=bí	*number one*
3SG.OBJ	COP	1SG=child	

"He is my first-born child."

Dina: m̀ḿ!ḿ

Yes

Sally:	nò	hèwɔ́=!ɔ́	è=kwɛ́-ɔ̀	lè
	that	sake=TOP	3SG=look-HAB	3SG.OBJ

"So he looks after her."

Dina: m̀ḿ!ḿ

"Yes"

Sally:	è=kwɛ́-ɔ̀	è=màmí=!ɛ́
	3SG=look-HAB	3SG=mother=DEF

He looks after his mother.

Dina: *áɔ̀*

Aww   [FH:179]

â - This interjection relays confusion or doubt about a situation or comment (376). It is often followed by a question which seeks an answer to clarify the situation. Its use suggests that the speaker has been pondering over the confusing situation. This is seen in (377).

(376)	*noise*	kò	yè	*hall*=ɛ́=!ɛ́	nò	hèwɔ́=ɔ̀	nǐ
	INDEF	be.loc		=DEF=DEF	that	sake=TOP	and

è=tè	shǐ	è=yà-kwɛ́	*hall*=ɛ=ɛ	á!kɛ́	*â*	àlóó
3SG=rise	down	3SG=ITIV-look	=DEF=DEF	NMLZ	IJ	or

	armed robbers	kòmɛ̃ĩ	é-bà-tò	lɛ̀	gbɔ̀
		some	PERF-VENT-find	3SG.OBJ	guest

"There was a noise in the hall so he got up to go and have a look…perhaps some armed robbers had broken in." (Lit:…some armed robbers had come to visit him.)   [CH:248]

(377) Aku:	**â**	nĩ̀	à=yè-ɔ̀		bàá=!á	hṹ
	IJ	and	3PL.IMPERS=eat-HAB		herb=DEF	too

"And are the herbs too eaten?"

Yoomo:	bàá=!á	à=yééé
	herb=DEF	3PL.IMPERS=eat.NEG

"The herbs are not eaten."

Aku:	**ã̀hã́ã̀**
	IJ

"That's what I thought/I figured."   [YM:184]

ã̀hã́ã̀ - This interjection is used exclamatorily to relay a couple of meanings. In (377) above, it indicates that a situation that was unclear has been resolved by the addressee's previous statement, and this resolution is in line with the speaker's expectation. A variant of this interjection is *ɛ̃̀hɛ́ɛ̃̀*. It could also signify emphatic agreement or confirmation, as in English, "Precisely!", "Exactly!", "You got it". This is exemplified in (378) below, where Sally had been explaining various intricate family relations.

(378) Dina:	nò	hèwɔ́=!ɔ́	lɛ́=!ɛ́		~Dr. Benson	jí	lɛ̀
	that	sake=TOP	3SG.OBJ=TOP		~Dr. Benson	COP	3SG.OBJ

"So as for him, he is called ~Dr. Benson?"

Sally: *èhɛ́ɛ̀*

IJ

"Exactly!"   [DF:210]

It could also be used to indicate that the speaker has finally come upon some information that

he or she was searching for in lost memory. Related to this, is its use as a sentence opener.

ǎ̀ǎ̀ - This basically expresses acknowledgement and understanding of a statement or explanation

given by the addressee. It may be followed by English, "OK", as we see in KK's turn in the

excerpt below.

(379) Kwei: ò=bàá-!nɑ́   fɛ́ɛ́   gbékè   nɛ́!ɛ́
                    2SG=FUT-see   all   evening   this
                    "You will see it all this evening."

                    because   í=nɔ́=!ɔ́--
                                     1SG=NM=DEF
                    "Because mine--"

                    í=nɔ́=!ɔ́   ní   ò=nɑ̀-ǎ̀   àmɛ́=!ɛ́
                    1SG=NM=DEF   NMLZ 2SG=see-HAB   3PL=DEF
                    they were 8 months nĩ̀   wɔ=bà-fèê
                                     and   1PL=VENT-do
                    "Mine that you see, they were 8 months old when we came to do it."

       Aku: [ǎ̀ǎ̀]
                    IJ
                    "Ok, I see"

KK: [ằằ]   *OK*

                 IJ

                 "Oh ok"

ằhá̃/ềhế - This is a backchannelling device, used to assure the interlocutor that one is following the conversation and to urge them to proceed. An example is given in (380) below, as well as (372) above.

(380) Dina: bíὲ   jí   àfíĕ!ná̃
             here be   Afiena
             "This is Afiena."

      Sally: ềhế̀ề   bíὲ   jí   àfíĕ!ná̃=!á̃
             IJ   here COP Afiena=DEF
             "Exactly, this is Afiena."

      Dina: *ềhế*
             IJ
             "Yes, go on."

      Sally: nῖ   stíítì kò   ká̃   bí!έ
             and   street INDEF lie   here
             "And there's a street here."

kúὲ - This may function as a vocative, similar to "Hey". It is considered impolite. As such, it is a fitting interjection used by speakers who want to intimidate their addressees. The sentence in (382) is a stereotypical utterance attributed to Gãs by non-Gãs. *kúὲ* is not necessarily always accompanied by *ê*. It may occur alone as an utterance, where it signals that the speaker is impressed with a situation. Here, the final vowel is often lengthened.

(381) **kúɛ̀** ĩ̀=kɛ̀ í=nã̀ã̀nyó=ɛ̀ ŋ̀-yà ê
　　　IJ 1SG=take 1SG=friend=DEF PROG-go IJ
　　　"Hey, I'm taking my friend away." [DEB:170]

(382) **kúɛ̀** mã́=yì bò ê
　　　IJ 1SG.FUT 2SG.OBJ IJ
　　　"Hey, I will beat you up!"

Other interjections will only be described briefly. *ôhòô* expresses disapproval and a sense that an action or situation went overboard. *ɛ̌* indicates that the speaker did not hear what the addressee said and would like for them to repeat it. It is considered impolite. It could also express shocked disapproval accompanied by a mocking attitude. *ájéî* is roughly equivalent to English, "ouch", used when one is physically hurt. *kpóò* means 'sorry'. *ɛ̀ɛ́ɛ̀* is 'yes' with a question intonation and is used to signal a surprised reaction to new information, akin to English, "Really?!". An example of this was seen in Dina's second turn in (372). *káî* signals the speaker's disgust or disdain.

It is hoped that this snapshot of Gã interjections and the power that they possess in communicating various crucial meanings will encourage more ambitious studies of these little words in this and other languages.

2.8 Summary

This chapter has seen the presentation and discussion of the phonological word (§2.1.2) and the grammatical word (§2.1.3) in Gã. It has been shown that in many instances they are one and

the same (§2.1.8). The various word classes and their accompanying morphology have also

been discussed. Nouns, the grammatical categories associated with them, as well as pronouns

and possession were presented in §2.3. Property concepts were the subject of §2.4. Gã was

shown to have three main grammatical types of property concepts: those that manifest as verbs

(§2.4.1), those that manifest as adjectives (§2.4.2) and those that manifest as nouns (§2.4.3).

Grammatical differences between property verbs and non-property verbs were also noted

(§2.4.1.3 and §2.4.1.4). The same was done with property nouns and regular nouns (§2.4.3.1

and §2.4.3.2). The various semantic types of adverbs pertinent to Gã were discussed in §2.5.

Finally, in §2.6 ideophones were recognized as a phonosemantic class of words with

membership in the property noun and adverb classes. Their unique phonological and morpho-

syntactic characteristics were discussed. Finally, interjections, were covered in §2.7.

Chapter 3: Verbs and simple clauses

3.0 Introduction

Verbs are words which ascribe an action or property to a noun referent. Therefore, the function

of a verb is to predicate. Words belonging to other classes may also predicate e.g. adjectives,

but the task of predication in many languages is to a large extent performed by verbs.

3.1 Types of verbal predicates

There are three main syntactic types of verbal predicates in Gã. These are simple verbs, serial

verbs and inherent complement verbs (ICVs). Simple verbs are singleton verbs which constitute

just one phonological as well as one grammatical word and which take only one inflectional

marking for each relevant verbal category. Serial verbs, on the other hand, consist of two or

more verbs which constitute separate grammatical words. Each verb in the series is overtly

marked for a particular verbal category (although the grammatical morphemes on each verb

must be semantically compatible). Although they contain multiple verbs, the verbs in a serial

verb together express a unitary concept. Inherent complement verbs (ICVs) consist of two

grammatical words; the first is a verb and the second is a noun which functions as a

complement to the verb. Examples of these three types of verbal predicates are given in (1).

(1a) contains the simple verb, *mằ* 'build'; (1b) contains the serial verb *tsí shwìê* 'throw away

(lit: push pour)' and (1c) has the inherent complement verb, *shá fòì* [snatch race] 'run'.

(1)   Simple verb:

    (a)   é = ***mằ***   tsừ
             3SG.PERF = build   house
             "He has built a house."   [MM:16]

    Serial verb:

    (b)   à = yàá-***tsí***   nyề = jwέ!í   á = *!shwíê*
             3SG.IMPERS = PROS-push   2PL = rubbish 3PL.IMPERS.SBJV = pour
             "Your rubbish is going to be poured away."   [LIB:20]

    Inherent complement verb (ICV):

    (c)   è = gbèé = !έ   hừ   ***shá***   ***fòì***
             3SG = dog = DEF   too   snatch race
             "His dog too ran."   [NAR:57]

The bulk of the discussion and examples in this chapter will focus on simple verbs, although

the semantic generalizations with respect to tense, aspect, mood and polarity marking will hold

for all the different verb types. ICVs will be dealt with specifically in §3.4 and serial verb

constructions will be the topic of the whole of chapter 4.

3.2 Verb Morphology

The Gã verb word is made up of the lexical verb head and a number of clitics and inflectional affixes which encode the pronominal subject and various tense, aspect, mood and polarity values. The only obligatory element in the verb word is the verb head itself. This verb head may be preceded by a pronominal clitic, a future, progressive, subjunctive or perfect prefix, and a deictic auxiliary verb. The elements that may follow the verb head are the negative and habitual suffixes as well as the iterative/distributive suffixes.

The template in table 8 shows verbal morphemes and the order in which they appear in the verb word. There are three pre-head slots and two post-head slots. If a slot can be occupied by more than one TAMP category, then these categories are mutually exclusive for the slot in question. Also, slot 3, containing the negative subjunctive prefix *ká-* may occur only in the presence of the subjunctive prefix *á-* in slot 2. There are two deictic pre-verbs: *ba-* is the ventive (VENT) pre-verb and generally indicates motion towards the deictic centre while *ya-* is the itive (ITIV) pre-verb and indicates motion away from the deictic centre. However, see §3.2.5 for a discussion of how these auxiliaries in some contexts have lost the semantic component of motion.

Table 8: Verb template for non-imperative verb word

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(SUBJ clitic)	(subjunctive *á-*)	NEG SBJV (*ká-*)	(deictic *ba-, ya-*)	VERB	ITER	(negative -*V́V̂*)
	(future *bàá-*)					(negative future -*ŋ*)
	(perfect *é-*)					(negative perfect -*kò*)
	(progressive *ŋ-*)					(habitual -*ɔ̀, -à*)
	(negative *é-*)					

The subject of the verb may be a pronominal proclitic which occurs as the first element in the verb word. This is seen in (2) and (3) below. In (4), the subject is a full NP (*gbèéɛ̀ kɛ̀ tɔ́!ɔ́ fɛ́ɛ́* 'both the dog and the bottle'), therefore there is no subject clitic on the verb. As discussed in §2.3.2.1 this is evidence that the subject markers are not agreement prefixes but simply bound pronouns.

(2) nằkằ̀ĩ̀ ékòmé=!ɛ́ lɛ́ *è=yè-ɔ̀* shìká
    that one=DEF TOP 3SG=eat-HAB money
    "As for that other one, it costs a lot of money." [DT:21]

(3) nyɛ̀̃ gbɛ́!kɛ́=!ɛ́ *wɔ̀=yà-tsɯ́* nĩ̀ĩ yɛ̀
    yesterday evening=TOP 1PL=ITIV-work thing be.located

    ŋ̀shɔ́=ɔ̀ nằằ̀
    sea=DEF mouth
    "Yesterday evening, we went to do some work at the seaside." [YH:43,20]

(4) | shì̃ | kòmé | tóó | gbèé=ɛ̀ | kɛ̀ | tɔ́=!ɔ́ | fɛ́ɛ́ | *bà-gbèé* |
|------|------|------|---------|-----|--------|--------|-----------|
| instance | one | only | dog=DEF | and | bottle=DEF | all | VENT-fall |
| !shí́ |
| down |

"Suddenly, the dog and the bottle all came and fell down." [PAT:47]

Each of the TAMP categories and their formal markers will now be examined in detail.

3.2.1 Tense

Comrie (1976:1) states that "tense relates the time of the situation referred to, to some other time, usually the moment of speaking." When the time of a situation is described in relation to the time of speaking it is known as absolute tense, and when it is described in relation to some other time it is known as relative tense (Comrie 1976:2). It is important to note that a language can only be said to have a particular tense if it is morphologically (overtly) marked. This leads to the categorization of languages with no morphological means of time reference as tenseless languages. Strangely, this restriction is not imposed on aspect, and it is normal and common to speak of periphrastic and adverbial means of realizing aspect.

Many languages of West Africa have little morphology and are classed as tenseless languages. Dakubu (2008a:97) comes to much the same conclusion for Gã, noting that tense is at best only marginally marked in Gã. This is true to a limited extent; although Gã indeed makes no morphological distinction between past and present, as Dakubu (2008a:97) rightly notes, there is such a distinction between future and non-future. Therefore Gã grammaticalizes

time reference of a situation that is slated to take place after the time of speaking but does not

do so for a situation that occurs before the time of speaking. Because of the presence of future

time marking, it cannot be designated a tenseless language. The future will be discussed in

§3.2.1.2 after a discussion on bare verbs, which are often interpreted as referring to past events.

3.2.1.1 The temporal and aspectual reference of bare verbs

As previously mentioned, a verb in Gã may occur without any affixes, but it must have a full

NP subject or a clitic subject. In the absence of temporal adverbials, most bare verbs are given

a past interpretation, but some may also have a habitual or progressive interpretation. In terms

of the TAMP interpretation of Gã bare verbs, three groups of verbs can be recognized:

Group A: Verbs that always receive a past interpretation in their bare forms.

Group B: Verbs that receive either a past or progressive interpretation depending on context

Group C: Verbs that always receive a habitual aspectual interpretation

Each group will be looked at in detail below:

Group A

Verbs in this group are assigned only past time reference when they occur in their bare forms.

This group consists of all dynamic verbs, be they durative (Vendler's (1957) Activity and

Accomplishment verbs), or punctual/instantaneous (Achievement verbs). Examples are *yè* 'eat',

nǎ 'see', *yì* 'beat', *kwê* 'look', *ŋmɔ̀̃* 'laugh'. In sentences (5)-(8), the past interpretation of the

bare verbs is evident in the English translation.

(5) *ĩ̀=shí* nyɛ̀̃ mǎ̀ŋ=ã̀ mĩ̀ŋ áfí-!í é!tɛ́
  1SG=leave 2PL country=DEF inside year-PL three
  "I left your country three years ago." [DT:15;42]

(6) gbé!kɛ́-nṹ̈́=ɛ̀̃ *fũá* lɛ̀
  child-male=DEF hug 3SG.OBJ
  "The boy hugged him." [BOR:17]

(7) nò hèwɔ́=!ɔ́ nɛ́ *ɑ̀mɛ̀̃=nǎ* bɔ̀nɛ́ è=fé-ɔ̀
  that sake=TOP when 3PL=see how 3SG=do-HAB

  lɛ́=!ɛ́ nɔ́́ŋ́ŋ
  3SG.OBJ=DEF immediately
  "So immediately they saw how it was affecting him…" [FH:121]

(8) *è=yóó* *!mĩ̀*
  3SG=recognise me
  "She recognised me" [DF:140]

Group B

These verbs may be interpreted as past or progressive depending on context. They comprise

two main semantic types of verbs: stative verbs which are durative, and grooming verbs.

Examples of such durative, stative verbs are stance verbs such as *dɑ̀mɔ̀̃* 'stand', *kɑ̃́* 'lie', *tá*

(!shɛ́) 'sit (down)' and *jwélé* 'be.located (of several relatively small items)'. Examples of

grooming verbs are *wò* 'wear (clothes, shoes, jewelry)', *bú* 'wear (hat, glasses or cloth)' and

ŋmɔ̀ 'wear (watch)'.

In bare form, group B verbs indicate either a situation that unfolded in the past (past

time reference) or is ongoing in the past or present (progressive aspect). Examples (9a) and

(9b) provide a good contrast for this phenomenon. In (9a), the presence of the adverbial *bíânɛ̂*

'now' is proof that the posture verb, *kɑ̂́* 'lie' refers to an event that is ongoing at the moment of

speaking. In (9b) the same verb refers to a past event as is evidenced from the fact that it is the

second of a chain of three successive events, the other two of which also have past time

reference. Indeed, the first event is coded by *tèè*, the past of *yà* 'go' and this suppletive verb is

the only overt indicator of past time in Gã. No other verb has overt past tense marking.

(9a) hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   bíânɛ̂=!ɛ̂   òbl̀á-nũ̀ũ̀=!ɛ̂   ***kɑ̂́***   shĩ̀kpɔ́!ŋ́
     sake=TOP   now=TOP   life-male=DEF   lie   ground
     "So now the young man is lying on the ground."   [SAM:70]

(9b) nɪ̃́   ã̀mɛ̃̀=tèè   nɪ̃́   ***ã̀mɛ̃̀=kɑ̂́***   !shɪ̃́   nɪ̃́   ã̀mɛ̃̀=wɔ́   !lɛ́
     NMLZ   3PL=go.PST NMLZ 3PL=lie   down   NMLZ 3PL=sleep   DEF
     "When they went and lay down and slept..."   [MAV:9]

In (10), another posture verb is unmarked but is interpreted as past. One clue to this

interpretation is that it occurs as the second verb in a serial construction where the first verb is

interpreted as past; in serial verb constructions the verbs must have the same temporal value.

Recall also that all dynamic verbs have past time interpretation in their unmarked forms.

Therefore the first verb, *wó* 'carry' must be predicating a past event.

(10) nĩ̀   è=wó   gbèé=ɛ̀   ***è=tá***   è=kɔ̌ŋ   nɔ̃̀
     and   3SG=carry dog=DEF   3SG=sit   3SG=shoulder top
     "And he carried the dog and sat him on his shoulder."   [MA:81]

A similar scenario is seen in (11) where *wò* 'wear' is the predicate in the second of two

conjoined clauses. Since the verb in the first clause has past meaning, it is strong indication that

wò 'wear' has the same time reference.

(11) è=bà-tè   shĩ̀   nĩ̀   ***è=wò***   è=shúú=!ɛ́
     3SG=VENT-rise   down   and   3SG=wear   3SG=shoes=DEF
     "He got up and wore his shoes."   [TIN:12]

   In theory, these unmarked stance and adornment verbs should be ambiguous when it

comes to time reference, but as the examples show, in actual talk there is hardly any confusion

because the prior and successive talk, time adverbials and the discourse situation always guide

the addressee to the speaker's intended meaning.

Group C

These verbs are always given a default habitual interpretation in their bare forms. This group

contains just two verbs, *lè* 'know' and *sùmɔ̃̀* 'love, like'

(12) jééé   fɛ̃́ɛ̂   ***wò=lè***   gbèí=!ɛ́
     NEG   all   1PL=know   name=DEF
     "It is not all of them whose names we know."   [OYO:245]

(13) gbé!kḛ́-bí!í=!ɛ́   ékò-mèí=!ɛ́   *à̰mɛ̰̀=sùmɔ̰̀* nḭ́   à̰mɛ̰́=yà
      child-PL=DEF   some-PL=DEF   3PL=like   NMLZ 3PL.SBJV=go

à̰mɛ̰́=yá-!ná̰
3PL.SBJV=ITIV-see
"Some of the children, they like to go and see it." [OYO:89]

The tendency for certain verbs to be given particular temporal meanings in their bare

form results from the lexical semantics and lexical aspect of those verbs and the interaction of

this with the language's available resources for temporal expression. For instance, Gã generally

codes present time by means of the progressive prefix *ŋ-*. Without the presence of time

adverbials coding a time other than the moment of speaking, the progressive prefix will impart

present time meaning. This prefix may be attached to dynamic verbs which are durative i.e.

Activities (*jò* 'dance', *yè* 'eat', *ŋmà̰* 'write') and Accomplishments (*mà̰ (tsũ̀)* 'build (house)').

The difference between Activities and Accomplishments is that the former is atelic while the

latter is telic (Smith 1999:481). Below are some sentences with dynamic, durative verbs

marked for the progressive.

(14) *wɔ̀=ŋ̀-yà*
      1PL=PROG-go
      "We are going."   [FH:159]

(15) *ằmɛ̀ɛ̀=ŋ-kwɛ́*   nɔ̌   nɛ́   yà-à   nɔ̌̀   yɛ̀
      3PL=PROG-watch   NM   NMLZ   go-HAB   top   be.located
      ŋwɛ̀ɛ́ŋ=!ɛ́
      up=DEF
      "They are watching what is going on up there."   [FL:43]

Because there is an overt means of expressing present time for these types of verbs, when they

occur in bare form, the only interpretation left to be assigned is past (recall that future is also

marked morphologically).

Achievement verbs are dynamic and telic but unlike Activity and Accomplishment

verbs, they are punctual/instantaneous, e.g. *jwà (pl̀ɛ́tè)* 'break (glass)', *shɛ̀* 'reach, arrive', *yóó*

'recognise'. Use of a progressive with these verbs is semantically odd since the actions coded

by them take up so little time that one cannot speak of them as ongoing or in progress. As a

result they cannot occur with the progressive morpheme, hence cannot be assigned present time

reference. This leaves past time as the only viable temporal interpretation for such verbs in

their bare form.

Stative verbs are durative, but their co-occurrence with the progressive marker does not

impart present time meaning as it does with dynamic verbs. Rather it gives an inchoative

meaning; a change into the state in question and therefore the creation of a brief period of

dynamic-ness. As Smith (1999:482) notes, the beginnings and endings of states are dynamic

because they involve changes of state. Examples are given in (16) and (17).

(16) *èè=ká̋*   !shí̋
      3SG.PROG=lie   down
      "She is in the process of lying down/She is about to lie down."

(17) nɨ̀ɨ̋mó=ɛ̀   *ɲ̀-bú*   fàí
      old.man=DEF   PROG-wear   hat
      "The old man is putting on a hat/The old man is about to put on a hat."

Sentences like (16) and (17) are uncommon in the spoken language but nonetheless are an option in those special cases when a speaker may want to emphasize that a subject is about to assume a particular state. Their existence however, means that for stative verbs, the progressive marker is not a candidate for imparting present time semantics. Therefore, the unmarked form may take on a present or past meaning depending on context.

Verbs that take on habitual meaning in their bare form, e.g. *lè* 'know', *sùmɔ̀* 'like, love' are also stative verbs but the difference between them and the stance and adornment/grooming statives discussed above is that while the latter class of verbs can in certain circumstances have clearly demarcated beginning and end points and therefore become dynamic, the former cannot. So while use of the progressive with stance and adornment verbs is acceptable and yields inchoative semantics, this is not possible with *lè* 'know' and *sùmɔ̀* 'love'. These two verbs are truly static and so there is no change of state to be grammaticalized. Sentences such as (18) below with the progressive are ungrammatical:

(18)   *èè=lè   àkú
        3SG.PROG=know   Aku
        "She is knowing Aku."

In addition, if a state of affairs pertains unbounded by time, then it takes on a generic sense and

can be interpreted as habitual.

3.2.1.2 Future bàá-

In analyzing the morpheme *bàá-* as future time marker, I differ from Dakubu (2008a:108), who

names the future marker as *àá-* and notes that it is primarily a modal rather than a tense

category. She writes that when unqualified by the spatial deictic markers *ba-* 'ventive' and *ya-*

'itive', the future marker, *àá-* is not interpreted as a simple future but as a conditional or

subjunctive. Translations of the following examples from Dakubu (2008a:108) exemplifying

the use of *àá-* suggest that a future meaning is one of several possibilities. Glosses are mine.

(19)   a.   gbekɛbii   lɛ   àá-bí
                children   DEF   FUT-ask
                "The children might/would/will ask"

        b.   èé=bí
                3SG.FUT=ask
                "S/he will ask (of his/her own free will)"

Dakubu (2008a:118) acknowledges that most speakers translate verbs marked by *bàá-* as having

future temporal deixis but notes that this form is simply a combination of the deictic (ventive)

marker *ba-* with the future prefix *àá-*. Another future marker formed this way is *yàá-* which

combines the deictic (itive) marker *ya-* with *àá-*. Dakubu refers to *bàá-* and *yàá-* as deictic

futures. The auxiliaries generally indicate movement towards (*ba-*) or away from (*ya-*) the

deictic centre. They are homophonous with the verbs *bà* 'come' and *yà* 'go'. Examples (20) -

(22) show future use of the prefix *bàá-*. In these examples, it marks the action coded by the

verb as slated to occur subsequent to the moment of speech. As such it represents a prediction

of a particular state of affairs by the speaker.

(20) shǐ   kɛ́   è=lé   kẃráá bɛ́   ***è=bàá-!kásé***
      but   if   3SG=know.NEG   even QP   3SG=FUT-learn
      "But even if she doesn't know she will learn, won't she." [DT: 4;20]

(21) bè   kò   ***bàá-!shɛ́***   kɛ̃́   nɪ́   è=sὲὲ   ***bàá-!fó***
      time   INDEF   FUT-reach   surely NMLZ   3SG=back   FUT-cut

      nɪ̀   núŋ́!tsɔ́=ɔ   ***bàá-wò***   è=hɪ̃̂ɛ̃   nyɛ́ḿ
      and   lord=DEF   FUT-put   3SG=face   glory
      "There will surely come a time when it will end and the Lord will show his glory."
      [CH:428]

(22) ***è=bàá-!mɛ̃́***
      3SG=FUT-wait
      "She will wait."   [YM:204]

(23) kɛ́   wɔ̀=ŋ̀-yá=!á   ***mɛ̃́=hɛ̃́***   wɔ́=tsɔ̃́   jé!ŋ́
      when   1PL=PROG-go=DEF   1SG.FUT=give   1PL.SBJV=pass   there
      "When we are going, I will let us pass by there"   [FH:10]

Dakubu's account of the etymology of *bàá-* is most likely accurate. It is evidenced in

the first singular future proclitic, which is *mɛ̃́*, presumably *mɪ̃́ + àá*, with the deletion of all

vowels but the last one. This is seen in (23). But one wonders why *àá-* should be recognized as

the future marker when by itself it does not mark future and can only do so when accompanied

by spatial deictic pre-verb auxiliaries, especially ventive *ba-*. It is simpler to analyse *bàá-* as

one indivisible morpheme. One reason for this approach is that the morphological components

and accompanying semantics of *bàá-* are not transparent to speakers. Although *bàá-* contains

the ventive pre-verb auxiliary, *ba-*, it does not express ventive spatial deixis or any kind of

motion, physical or metaphorical. In (20) for example, the use of *bàá-* does not imply any

motion in association with the subject's learning. The same can be said for (22) and especially

(21), where the first two subjects, *bè kò* 'a time' and *èsèè* 'it's back' are inanimate and

incapable of motion. Further proof that the deictic morpheme in *bàá-* does not contribute to the

meaning of the morpheme comes from the fact that *bàá-* can co-occur with *ya-*, the itive prefix.

Since these two prefixes *ba-* and *ya-* have opposite meanings, it should not be possible to have

one verb qualified by both. But this is a regular occurrence in the language. (24a) provides one

such example. (24b) shows that *bàá-* can also co-occur with the full, independent verb *yà* 'go'.

(24a) *à = bàá-!yá-mĩ̀ã̂*   mĩ̀
       3PL.IMPERS = FUT-ITIV-squeeze   1SG.OBJ
       "I will be groped" (Lit: "They will go and squeeze me")   [LIB: 1,57]

(24b) à = kɛ̀   nyɛ̃̀   fɛ́ɛ́   *bàá-!yá*
       3PL.IMPERS = take   2PL   all   FUT-go
       "All of you will be taken away."   [OYO:88]

Another reason why I maintain *bàá-* as the future marker and not *àá-* is for the simple

reason that *àá-* appears to have fallen out of use. In my entire corpus, there were just four

tokens of *àá-;* three were uttered by the same speaker. In three instances it co-occurred with the

epistemic adverb, *àléénɔ́* 'perhaps (lit: 'one does not know thing')' to indicate uncertainty over

whether the event coded by the verb will come to fruition. Two of those sentences are given in

(25) and (26). When *àá-* is preceded by the third singular pronoun, the pronoun is lengthened,

the segments of *àá-* are deleted and only its tones remain and are borne by the lengthened

pronominal vowel, as in (25).

(25) nĩ̀   è=yà-kɔ̀   tsò   kĺóŋ!kĺóŋ   á!kɛ́   àléénɔ́
      and   3SG=ITIV-climb   tree   another   NMLZ   perhaps

  èé=nã̀   kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né=ɛ̀ yὲ   tsó=ɛ̀   nɔ̃̀   ló
  3SG.FUT=see   frog=DEF   be.located   tree=DEF   top   QP
  "And he climbed another tree so that perhaps he would see the frog on the tree."
  [NAR:53]

(26) nĩ̀   è=kὲέ   gbèé=!ɛ́   á!kɛ́   gbèé=!ɛ́   á-!féé   díóó
      and   3SG=tell   dog=DEF   NMLZ dog=DEF   SBJV-do   quiet

  á!kɛ́   àléénɔ̃̀   kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né=ɛ̀ ***àá-!hí̃***   jɛ̃̀mὲ̃ ló
  NMLZ   perhaps   frog=DEF   FUT-be.located   there   QP
  "And he told the dog that the dog should be quiet, that perhaps the frog would be
  there."   [NAR:78]

It is also very rare for *àá-* to be used in everyday speech, even in formal contexts such as

sermons. Its only niche remains the Gã Bible, where it marks future time (27a) on par with

modern Gã *bàá-*. It was also used once in my corpus, by a preacher giving a sermon (27b).

Based on all this evidence, *bàá-* should be viewed as one morpheme.

(27a)

yèhówà	**ààá-!bú**	ó = !hé	ké-!jé	éfɔ̀ŋ	fɛ́ɛ́	mlɛ̀
Jehovah	FUT-protect	2SG = body	take-come.from	evil	all	inside

èèé = !bú	ó = wàlà	hè	shwéshwééshwé
3SG.FUT-protect	2SG = life	body	well

"Jehovah will protect you from all evil. He will preserve your life."
[BSG:762; glosses and tones mine]

(27b)

shɛ̀	nyɔ̀ŋmɔ̃	jí	mɔ̃	nɛ́	kèé	!wɔ́	á!kɛ́
but	God	COP	NM	NMLZ	tell	1PL	NMLZ

nyɛ́ = bí-à	nɛ̀	**àá = hɛ́**	nyɛ̀
2PL.SBJV = ask-IMP.PL	and	3PL.IMPERS.FUT = give	2PL

"But God is the one who said that you should ask and you will be given." [CH:286]

3.2.1.3 Modal uses of bàá-

I have so far refrained from referring to *bàá-* as a future tense marker, although all the examples given above would suggest that it is precisely that. This is because *bàá-* can be used in some very limited past time situations where it indexes epistemic modality. This occurs when the discourse setting is a hypothetical one. Such hypothetical worlds are often indicated by grammatical event nominalizations marked by *á!kɛ́* (a.k.a complement clauses) and *ló,* the question particle (QP). It may also be indexed by conditional adverbials with past time reference. As such, it is possible for *bàá-* to occur in discourses that are set in the past as long as the action modified by *bàá-* is a hypothetical or unrealized one. The use of *bàá-* in these

contexts does not imply speaker prediction nor does it mark future time in relation to speech time. Rather, it indicates that the situation is only a potential one and as potential situations go, the speaker cannot be definite that it will be actualized. It is the existence of this modal component of *bàá-* that allows it to be used in hypothetical past contexts. We see this in (28), where the sentence occurs with past time reference and yet one of its verbs is marked by *bàá-*. It is inconsequential that the verb marked by *bàá-* is in fact an English verb that is produced as a result of codeswitching, a common phenomenon among many educated Gã speakers. The significance of this marking is that a true future tense morpheme would not be able to occur with past time reference. Therefore *bàá-* in (28) must be performing some other function and not future tense. I propose that it functions modally to index uncertainty about the realization of the action coded by the verb it modifies. This uncertainty is further evidenced by the lexical epistemicity of the conative verb, *bɔ̀ mɔ́dɛ́ŋ* 'try' as well as the nominalizer *á!kɛ́*, which may be translated, depending on the discourse context, as 'that' or 'whether'. In (29), it is best translated as 'whether' because of the presence of the question particle, *ló* which imparts a modal sense of uncertainty.

(28) nǐ è=yè *four days* kὲ ní!í ní àà=bɔ̀
and 3SG=eat and thing NMLZ 3PL.PROG=create

mɔ̃́déŋ á!kέ **à=bǎá-*revive*** lὲ
strength NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS=FUT-revive 3SG.OBJ
"And he spent four days etc. during which they were trying to revive him." [FH:139]

(29) nò mǐ̃ŋ=!ɛ̃́ èè=fí!lí sáḿfèlέ=ὲ mǐ̃ŋ sɔ̃́ŋŋ
that inside=TOP 3SG.PROG=peep window=DEF inside constantly

á!kέ mɔ̃̀=kò ***bǎá-púè*** ló
NMLZ person=INDEF FUT-emerge QP
"At that time, she was constantly peeping out of the window, (to see) whether anybody would appear or not."

Another context which licenses the use of *bàá-* in past time is conditionals and counterfactuals (30). This is consonant with the use of *bàá-* in hypothetical situations.

(30) è=yì mǐ kű!έ í̃=pàpá hű ***bàá-yì*** lὲ
3SG=beat 1SG.OBJ CTF 1SG=father too FUT-beat 3SG.OBJ
"If he had beaten me, my father would also have beaten him."

Example (31) demonstrates that *bàá-* cannot be used in non-hypothetical past contexts. The last sentence in (31) is odd-sounding. This is because neither the future nor modal sense of *bàá-* can be ascribed to the proposition. It cannot be interpreted as future because the discourse is temporally located in the past and it cannot be interpreted as an epistemic modal because the discourse context is an actual one, rather than a hypothetical one.

(31) | wɔ̀=shĩ́ĩ́ĩ́ | | òyá | é!jáá!kɛ́ | | nò | mĩ̀ŋ=!ɛ́ | | wɔ̀=ŋ̀-mɛ̀
| 1PL=leave.NEG | | early | because | | that | inside=TOP | | 1PL=PROG-wait

mã́ã̀
mum

| ?kpàákóò | | nò | mĩ̀ŋ=!ɛ́ | **è=bàá-!yé** | | nĩ́!ĩ́
| now | | that | inside=TOP | 3SG=FUT-eat | | thing

"We did not leave early because we were waiting for mum. She was just then going to eat."

The second line in (31) is best rendered with the prospective "future" marker, *yàá-* (§3.2.2.1):

(32) | kpàákóò | | nò | mĩ̀ŋ=!ɛ́ | **è=yàá-!yé** | | nĩ́!ĩ́
| now | | that | inside=TOP | 3SG=PROS-eat | | thing

"She was just then going to eat."

Alternatively, it could be expressed with a nominalized purpose construction which functions as

the object of *bà* 'come'. This construction is often utilized to express prospective actions.

(33) | kpàákóò | | nò | mĩ̀ŋ=!ɛ́ | **èè=bà** | | **nɛ́**
| now | | that | inside=TOP | 3SG.PROG=come | | NMLZ

é=bá-!yé | | **nĩ́!ĩ́**
3SG.SBJV=VENT.SBJV-eat | | thing

"She was just then about to eat." (Lit: "She was just then coming to come and eat.")

Clear-cut cases of modal-only use of *bàá-* are restricted to past time discourses

involving conditionals and nominalizations marked by *á!kɛ́*. In many of these instances there

are additional markers of epistemicity. This suggests that the modal meaning of *bàá-* is

secondary to the future referential function, which is possible in all other construction types. It

appears then, that *bàá-* is more tense-like than modal-like in semantics. Its functions of future

time reference and uncertain modality have in common the semantics of irrealis situations,

where the speaker imagines a possible situation and makes a claim about it. The question of

whether a particular marker encodes future tense or modality or both has proven to be a

contentious one. Some, like Palmer (1974), argue that the English future *will* is a modal

category and that the time reference function is a result of the hypothetical nature of the modal,

while Wekker (1976) argues for the reverse; that the uncertainty of future situations is what

conditions the modal sense of *will*. Comrie (1985:44) notes that "it is possible to have future

time reference which is not necessarily modal". In Gã, it is relatively clear that future reference

is the primary function of *bàá-*, its modal use being confined to specific constructions and

discourse times. It appears, then, to be on its way to becoming a fully-fledged future tense

morpheme.

3.2.1.4 Future and modal àá-

The archaic future marker *àá-* is on rare occasions used in current speech where it always

indexes an epistemic meaning of uncertainty. One crucial difference between the modal

functions of *bàá-* and *àá-* lies in the speaker's degree of confidence in the actualization of the

situation. While *àá-* indicates a lower degree of certainty about the realization of the event, *bàá-*

reflects a much higher degree of certainty on the part of the speaker that the event will indeed

come to fruition. Although, I maintain that *àá-* is not a future marker, it does have some

connotation of future time which results from its irrealis semantics; the same way that the

English modal auxiliary, *might* connotes a future event. However, in present-day Gã, it is *bàá-*

which does the job of indexing future time.

Givón (2001a:308) observes that epistemic senses rise diachronically out of deontic

ones. Therefore, a form that expresses intention will over time begin to express uncertainty.

This may be the case with *àá-*. It originally may have marked future time and intention and

through semantic bleaching lost the temporal deictic and intent component to become the

epistemic marker that it is today. Even so, it is rarely used in an epistemic function, with

speakers preferring to use adverbials instead, together with *bàá-.* An example of this is given in

(34).

(34)	àlóó	hã́	nī́	wɔ́=kwɛ́	nɔ̃́	nī́	yɔ́ɔ̀	tsò
	or	give	NMLZ	1PL.SBJV=look	NM	NMLZ	be.located.HAB	tree

	nḗɛ̃̀	sɛ̀ɛ̀	á!kɛ́	***àléénɔ̃́***	***wɔ̀=bàá-nã́***	wà-mɔ̃̀	kò
	this	back	NMLZ	perhaps	1PL=FUT-receive	help-NOM	INDEF

	kè-jè	jɛ́ŋ̃	ló
	take-come.from	there	QP

"Or let's see what is behind this tree. Perhaps we will receive some help from there."

[PAT: 183]

It must be stressed that *bàá-* is not a recently-adopted marker of future time. It appears

to have co-existed with *àá-* for some time, before supplanting it. There are a few instances of

its use as a future marker in Zimmerman (1858:185, 190, 195, 199). Indeed it appears more

frequently there than *àá-* and Zimmerman (1858:2) considered *àá-* to be the contracted form of

bàá-. By the time the Bible was being translated into Gã in 1971, scholars on that project

translated future tense with *àá-* and the same was done with the latest edition in 2006.

Interestingly, in the foreword to the 2006 edition, *bàá-* is the future marker of choice.

According to Dakubu (n.d), one of the earliest writings on Gã, Protten (1764) had only *àá-* as

future. Protten translated 'you will come' into Gã as *o-va ba* where orthographic **v** represented

[w].

Without more historical sources, it is mere guesswork to attempt to trace the

development of these two prefixes through time. It is fair to conclude however, that in Gã as

presently spoken, the future marker is *bàá-*. *àá-* as a future marker has been fossilized in old

written works such as the Gã Bible. It may also be used by people in formal speech situations.

Few vestiges of its future sense remain in casually spoken Gã, where it is used epistemically to

index speaker uncertainty about a proposition.

3.2.2 Aspect

Comrie's (1976:3) well-known definition of aspect is that aspect refers to the "different ways

of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation." The main distinction between

aspectual categories is that between perfective aspect and imperfective aspect. According to

Dahl (1985:78) "a perfective verb will typically denote a single event, viewed as an unanalysed whole, with a well-defined result or end-state, located in the past." An imperfective verb, on the other hand, will pay attention to the internal temporal phases of the situation. One important divide between the traditional, historical treatment of tense and aspect is that while a language can only be said to have a particular tense if it is morphologically marked, no such restriction is in place for aspect. Therefore, even if a particular aspectual category is not grammaticalised in a language, one can speak of the language exhibiting that aspectual "meaning".

With that being said, there is no special marker for perfective and therefore no perfective grammatical category in Gã. Perfective meaning is inherent in bare verbs that have past time reference. Perfectivity is therefore not an especially relevant category in the grammar of Gã and so merits no further discussion.

The imperfective aspect in Gã, on the other hand, finds representation in the progressive and habitual aspects. These will be discussed below. But first, let us examine the prospective aspect, because it is very closely related to the future marker *bàá-* discussed in the previous section.

3.2.2.1 Prospective *yàá-*

This prefix is capable of functioning in a similar fashion to the future marker *bàá-*, by marking an action as scheduled to take place after the moment of speaking. This has led some (e.g.

Dakubu 2008a) to label it a deictic future marker. However, its reference time is not restricted

to the moment of speech; it is capable of occurring in past situations as well. Its main function

is to mark that the relevant situation is imminent. One could thus say that *yàá-* expresses

prospective meaning, which is the term Comrie (1976:64) uses for forms that express

"imminent futurity". As such, the prospective links a present state with a future action. The

future interpretation is a side-effect of this focus on an impending action i.e. something which

has not happened yet.

    yàá- is grammaticalized from the verb *ya* 'go', so in many contexts, it implies

movement on the part of the subject, away from some deictic centre i.e. itive motion. Some

examples are given in (35)-(37).

(35)   è=kèɛ́   !mɪ̃́   á!kɛ́   é=fèé   è=yìŋ   á!kɛ́
      3SG=say   1SG.OBJ   NMLZ   3SG.PERF=do   3SG=mind   NMLZ

      è=yàá-hé   wò-jɪ̃̌=ɛ̃̀   yè   è=dèŋ
      3SG=PROS-get   paper-PL=DEF   be.located   3SG=hand
      "She told me that she's made up her mind that she's going to take the papers from
      him." [DT:21;50]

(36)   gbé!kɛ́-nũ̀ũ̀   fí!óó yè   pìá=à   mĩ̀ŋ   nɪ̃̀   jèŋ   é-nã̀
      child-male   little be.located   forest=DEF   inside and   world PERF-see

      è=yàá-kã̃́   !shɪ̃́   nɪ̃́   é=!wɔ́
      3SG=PROS-lie   down and   3SG.SBJV=sleep
      "The little boy is in the forest and it's dark. He is going to lie down and sleep."
      [AKU:1]

(37) ké   *à=yàá-tsí*   á=shwíé=!ɛ́   mɔ̃̀
      when 3PL.IMPERS=PROS-push   3PL.IMPERS.SBJV=pour=DEF   person

      nɛ́   télé-!ɔ́   è=yí-ɔ̀   è=nɔ̃̀
      NMLZ carry.on.head-HAB   3SG=pass-HAB   3SG=top
      "When they are going to throw it away the one who carries (it) becomes possessed (by a spirit)."   [YM:192]

The question of where the deictic centre is is a tricky one. It appears to be a conceptual space or environment in which both the speaker and the subject or agent of the clause are situated. This space need not coincide with the actual physical space that the speaker and agent occupy since they may be in two totally different locations (as the case may be if they are talking on the phone). For example, when the speakers utter the sentences in (35) to (37), they indicate that the respective subjects/agents will move away from their current locations in order to carry out their respective actions. My reason for postulating that the speaker and the agent share the same conceptual space is that *yàá-* cannot be used when the speaker is predicating an action that will affect the speaker or addressee (the first person or second person). In other words, *yàá-* may not qualify a verb when it is the speaker (38c) or addressee (38a), (38b) that is the object or patient of the verb. This is true whether the agent is a third person (38a), or the speaker himself i.e. first person (38b). These sentences are not acceptable because in such

pragmatic contexts, the speaker and addressee share the same physical space[9] and so it is

ungrammatical for the speaker to use a deictic morpheme which indexes movement away from

that space if indeed the endpoint of the action (the patient) is confined to that same location. If

the deictic centre was just the agent alone or speaker alone, it would be very difficult to explain

the ungrammaticality of (38). In these instances, the future marker *bàá-* is preferred (39a),

(39b). These examples show that in addition to its future time semantics, *yàá-* still has traces of

its original motional sense and is not merely a future marker.

(38a) *òkó *yàá-yì*   bò
       oko   PROS-beat   2SG.OBJ
       "Oko is going to beat you."

(38b) **í̵=yá-yì*[10]   bò
       1SG=PROS-beat   2SG.OBJ
       "I'm going to beat you."

(38c) *òkó *yàá-yì*   mḭ̀
       Oko   PROS-beat   1SG.OBJ
       "Oko is going to beat me."

(39a) òkó   *bàá-yì*   bò
       oko   FUT-beat   2SG.OBJ
       "Oko will beat you."

---

[9] Barring special discourse contexts such as phone conversations and letters, an exchange in which the subject is first person and the object is second person takes place in one and the same location.

[10] When the prospective marker occurs with the first singular pronoun, the first vowel of the prospective marker is elided.

(39b) **mɑ́=yì**   bò
   1SG.FUT=beat 2SG.OBJ
   "I will beat you."

There are also contexts in which the use of *yàá-* expresses no sense of physical motion on the

part of the subject. This is especially obvious when the subject is inanimate, as in (40a). But

even with animate subjects, in some contexts a motional interpretation is unsuitable (40b).

(40a) plɛ́!té=ɛ̀ **yàá-gbéé** !shɪ́
   plate=DEF PROS-fall down
   "The plate is going to fall down."

(40b) é=ŋà nɪ́ è=nɑ̃́ nɪ́   è=kɛ̀ lɛ̀
   3SG=wife NMLZ 3SG=get NMLZ 3SG=take 3SG.OBJ

   yàá-fɔ́   è= *first born*   *three*
   PROS-give.birth 3SG=
   "His wife whom he had gotten whom he was going to have his first born (child) with,
   (they had) triplets." [OYO:162]

3.2.2.1.1 Differences between future bàá- and prospective yàá-
One major difference between *bàá-* and *yàá-* is that events marked by *yàá-* are sensed to be

more immediate than those marked by *bàá-.* In the examples seen so far, the use of *yàá-* gives a

sense of immediacy to the action that is missing when *bàá-* is used. The determination of

temporal proximity of the event marked by *yàá-* is relative. The event need not happen

immediately. The speaker may employ this marker as long as she wishes to communicate that

the action is imminent. For instance, in (35), it will be a couple of weeks before the person

referred to gets the opportunity to reclaim her documents. In (36), replacing *yàá-* with *bàá-* will result in an odd proposition when considered in light of the previous propositions. The speaker is narrating a story by first setting the scene. After describing the scene she predicates the first action about to be taken by the protagonist. *bàá-* is less appropriate for this predication because it is vague as to when in the future the action will take place, whereas *yàá-* is more specific as to the immediacy of the action. The use of *yàá-* is more consonant with the sequentiality of events characteristic of narratives, because *yàá-* specifically tells the addressee that the action is temporally proximal to the preceding action in the sense that there is no intervening action.

Consider (41a) and (41b), where the first conjunct consists of a proposition involving a future action. The second conjunct then asserts that there is yet another future time action that will precede that predicated in the first conjunct. The sentence with *bàá-* in the first conjunct (41a) is appropriate, but not so much the sentence with *yàá-* in the first conjunct (41b). Because *bàá-* refers simply to any future time, its modification of *yè* 'eat' implies that Kojo's eating may occur in the near or distant future and so it is possible to have other events preceding the eating. This is the case for (41a). However, since *yàá-* connotes an impending or more immediate event it is odd to assert a proposition qualified by *yàá-* and then assert that another event will precede it, as (41b) and to some extent, (41c) do.

(41a) kòjó **bàá-!yé**   nɛ́!ɛ́   shɛ̀   **è=bàá-jù**   è=hè   dã́ŋ
       kojo FUT-eat   thing but   3SG=FUT-bathe   3SG=body   before
       "Kojo will eat but he'll take a bath before that."

(41b) ?kòjó **yàá-!yé**   nɛ́!ɛ́   shɛ̀   **è=bàá-jù**   è=hè   dã́ŋ
       kojo   FUT-eat   thing but   3SG=FUT-bathe   3SG=body   before
       "Kojo is going to eat but he'll take a bath before that."

(41c) ?kòjó **yàá-!yé**   nɛ́!ɛ́   shɛ̀   **è=yàá-jù**   è=hè   dã́ŋ
       kojo   FUT-eat   thing but   3SG=FUT-bathe   3SG=body   before
       "Kojo is going to eat but he's going to take a bath before that."

(41d) is acceptable since the event marked by *yàá-* is preceded by that marked by *bàá-*.

(41d) kòjó **bàá-!yé**   nɛ́!ɛ́   shɛ̀   **è=yàá-jù**   è=hè   dã́ŋ
       kojo FUT-eat   thing but   3SG=FUT-bathe   3SG=body   before
       "Kojo will eat but he's going to take a bath before that."

Related to this sense of immediacy associated with *yàá-* is that of present relevance.

This is a component of the function of future markers in other languages that have been

grammaticalized from the word for 'go' and is described at length for the English *be going to*

future in Haegeman (1989). The prospective future marker *yàá-,* unlike *bàá-,* marks an event

that is in some way relevant to the current situation or context. For example, if I live with my

sister (Aku), and Aku's friend (Oko) comes by to visit her I could utter (42a) after the

necessary greetings, to explain Aku's whereabouts. I would not utter (42b) because it is

pragmatically inappropriate. (42a) is appropriate because *yàá-* indicates that the action or event

it qualifies is relevant to the present circumstances; that the event will take place within a time

frame that is pertinent to the prevailing circumstances. (42a) is relevant to Oko because it

signals that there will be a delay before the visit can commence. (42b), on the other hand, only

notes that Aku will take a bath sometime in the future. It may be in a few minutes or the

following day. This proposition is not relevant to the present circumstances because its time

reference is too vague to be relevant to Oko and his visit; it does not give him enough

information about the time of Aku's bath to decide whether and how it will affect his visit.

(42a) ákú   *yàá-jù*   è=hè
       Aku   FUT-bathe   3SG=body
       "Aku is going to take a bath."

(42b) ákú   *bàá-jù*   è=hè
       Aku   FUT-bathe   3SG=body
       "Aku will take a bath."

Yet another difference between *bàá-* and *yàá-* is that only the latter can be used when

talking about situations that are set in the past; what is sometimes called "the future in the

past". This makes it the preferred future marker for narratives, for instance. Examples are given

in (43)-(45).

(43) nĩ̀   gbì   kò   gbɛ́kɛ̀   nĩ́   *à=yàá-kɛ̃́*
     and   day   INDEF   evening   NMLZ   3PL.IMPERS=PROS-lie

     !shĩ́=!ɛ́
     down=DEF
     "And one evening, when they were going to sleep…"   [PAT:6]

(44) è＝bí-nṹṹ̃   lὲ   hṹ   ***è＝yàá-fɔ̃***   é!kó＝!ɛ́
      3SG＝child-male   3SG.OBJ   too   3SG＝PROS-give.birth   some＝TOP
      lὲ   hṹ   *three*
      3SG.OBJ   too

"His son…he too he was going to have some (＝a baby)…he too had three (babies i.e. triplets)."   [OYO:197]

(45) nɪ̃̀   ã̃mɛ̃̀＝bɔ̃́ĩ̀   nyĩ̃ɛ̃́-!mɔ̃́   á!kɛ́   ***ã̃mɛ̃̀＝yàá-táò***   kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né＝!ɛ́
      and   3PL＝start   walk-NOM   NMLZ   3PL＝PROS-search   frog＝DEF

"And they started walking in order to search for the frog"   [DEB:30]
(Lit: "They started walking in order that they were going to search for the frog.")

yàá- cannot occur with the independent verbs *yà* 'go' or *bà* 'come' (46). Only *bàá-* can

be used with these verbs for future reference (47).

(46a) ****è＝yàá-!yá***
       3SG＝FUT-go
       "He is going to go."

(46b) ****è＝yàá-!bá***
       3SG＝FUT-come
       "He is going to come."

(47a) ***è＝bàá-!yá***
       3SG＝FUT-go
       "He will go."

(47b) ***è＝bàá-!bá***
       3SG＝FUT-come
       "He will come."

This indicates that *yàá-* has not proceeded as far down the grammaticalization cline as *bàá-*,

which can co-occur with both deictic verbs. *yàá-* retains enough of its spatial semantic meaning

to render co-occurrence with *yà* 'go' unnecessary and co-occurrence with *bà* 'come' a

contradiction, hence their ungrammaticality.

Also, while *bàá-* can occur with any kind of verb, *yàá-* cannot occur with stative verbs

and achievement verbs. (48a) and (49a) show that use of *yàá-* with stative verbs is

ungrammatical, unlike (48b) and (49b) where the same verbs can occur with *bàá-*.

(48a)   *tátálé＝ɛ̀   ***yàá-ŋɔ̃́ɔ̃́***   tsɔ̃́
        food.type＝DEF   PROS-be.sweet   too.much
        "The *tatale* is going to be too sweet."

(48b)   tátálé＝ɛ̀   ***bàá-ŋɔ̃́ɔ̃́***   tsɔ̃́
        food.type＝DEF   FUT-be.sweet   too.much
        "The *tatale* will be too sweet." (If for example, you put too much sugar in it.)

(49a)   *gbé!kɛ́ɛ̃́＝ɛ̃̀   ***yàá-!kɛ́***
        child＝DEF   PROS-be.tall
        "The child is going to be tall."

(49b)   gbé!kɛ́ɛ̃́＝ɛ̃̀   ***bàá-!kɛ́***
        child＝DEF   FUT-be.tall
        "The child will become tall."

The same pattern of acceptability obtains for achievement verbs in (50) and (51). The verbs *shè*

'reach' and *yóó* 'recognize' cannot occur with *yàá-* but can occur with *bàá-*.

(50a)   ****è＝yàá-!shɛ́***   shĩ̀ã̀   nɔ̃́ŋ́ŋ́
        3SG＝PROS-reach   house   soon
        "She's going to reach home soon."

(50b) *è=bàá-!shέ*   shî͂ầ   nő͂ή́ή́
      3SG=FUT-reach   house   soon
      "She will reach home soon."

(51a) **è=yàá-yóó*   !mî͂
      3SG=PROS-recognize   1SG.OBJ
      "She's going to recognize me."

(51b) *è=bàá-yóó*   !mî͂
      3SG=FUT-recognize   1SG.OBJ
      "She will recognize me."

This may be because while the main purpose of *bàá-* is to make a prediction about a future state of affairs (which could involve any type of situation, be it state or event) without any focus on a particular phase of the situation, *yàá-* focuses the addressee's attention on an impending situation and thus puts emphasis on the beginning phase of the situation. This situation must then have a beginning or starting point. This occupation with the inception of a situation means that only dynamic events can be qualified by *yàá-*, because such events consist of different heterogenous stages. For example, cooking might involve first cutting up vegetables, heating up oil in a pan and then pouring in the vegetables. States on the other hand, have no internal stages, no beginning or end points. Smith (1997:32) notes that states "consist of an undifferentiated period without internal structure" and that a state holds uniformly for an indefinite period of time unless an external force acts to bring about a change. Thus, the prospective marker is inappropriate for qualifying stative verbs.

Along the same lines, Achievement verbs although they are dynamic, are instantaneous

and also impossible to differentiate internally i.e. there is no palpable beginning and end stage

and therefore the prospective marker is incompatible with these verbs.

A corollary of the stative-non stative syntactic restriction on *yàá-* is that it cannot be

used with ambitransitive or labile verbs in which the subject of the verb is the semantic patient

or undergoer of the action. This is because in such constructions these otherwise dynamic verbs

take a stative interpretation. In (52a) *bó!dá* 'be mangled' has a stative interpretation when it

occurs intransitively with a patient subject and is marked by the perfect. Therefore, it cannot be

marked for prospective aspect (52b), only future (52c).

(52a) ló!lé＝!έ   é-bó!dá
       car＝DEF   PERF-be.mangled
       "The car is mangled."

(52b) *ló!lé＝!έ   *yàá-bó!dá*
       car＝DEF   PROS-be.mangled
       "The car is going to be mangled."

(52c) ló!lé＝!έ   *bàá-bó!dá*
       car＝DEF   FUT-be.mangled
       "The car will be mangled."

As the sentences in (53) below demonstrate, the inability of *yàá-* to occur intransitively with

labile verbs has nothing to do with the animacy of the subject; even with animate subjects, such

constructions are ungrammatical (53b).

(53a) ákú *é-pìlá*

Aku PERF-get.hurt

"Aku is hurt."

(53b) *ákú *yàá-pìlá*

Aku PROS-get.hurt

"Aku is going to get hurt."

(53a) ákú *bàá-pìlá*

Aku FUT-get.hurt

"Aku will get hurt."

3.2.2.2 Progressive *ŋ̀-*

The progressive prefix, *ŋ̀-* is attached to a verb to indicate that the action is ongoing. The

progressive aspect is not concerned with beginning and end points nor is it concerned with the

time of the event, only that the event is unfolding at a particular point in time. This prefix is

actually a homorganic nasal but will be represented orthographically as *ŋ̀-*. When the prefix is

attached to the second singular (*o=*) and third singular (*e=*) pronominal clitics, the pronoun is

lengthened, the nasal segment is deleted and its low tone remains and is borne by the second

vowel of the lengthened pronoun. E.g. *òò=bà* 'you are coming'; *èè=bà* 's/he is coming'.

When the first singular pronoun is in the progressive, it is realized orthographically as *mĩ́ĩ̀=*.

Below are some sentences which exhibit progressive aspect.

(54) nĩ̀ *èè=tá!ó* nĩ́ é=mã̀ tsũ̀ é!kóŋ́ŋ́

and 3SG.PROG=want NMLZ 3SG.SBJV-build house again

"And he wants to build another house." [MM:17]

(55) ófáìnɛ̃́   èè=bà   fí!óó
     please   3SG.PROG=come little
     "Excuse him, please." i.e. "Make way" (Lit: "Please, he's coming a little.")

                                                              [OYO:26]

(56) wɔ̀=ŋ̀-yè   hɔmɔ̃̀wɔ́
     1PL=PROG-eat   *Homowo*
     "We are celebrating *Homowo* (festival)."   [YM:243]

In many cases, as in (54)-(56), the progressive aspect is given a present time interpretation. It is

often used to index actions or events that take place concurrent with the time of speaking. But

since the progressive is neutral with regard to time, it can be used for events that take place in

the past as well as the future, where it indicates that the event was or will be in progress at that

particular time. The reference time may be stated by means of a time adverbial, as in (57); or it

could be gleaned from the time reference of other verbs in the clause or immediate discourse.

(57) lèé!bí   nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́   *mĩ̋í=!gbá*   *first service* bí!í=!ɛ́   sɛ̃̀nè kò
     morning   this   1SGP.ROG=narrate   people=DEF story INDEF
     "This morning, I was narrating a story to the people at the first service." [CH:1]

Also, the presence of the adverbial, *nò mĩ̀ŋ́* 'at that time', signals that the time of the event is

some other time and not the present. *nò*, in this adverbial, is a discourse deictic demonstrative

noun (§2.3.1.3) which refers to an event just described. In (58), it refers to a time in the past.

(58) nò   mĩ̀ŋ́=!ɛ́   nĩ̋   *mĩ̋í=!bá=!á*   *èè=bí*
     that   inside=TOP NMLZ 1SG.PROG=come=DEF   3SG.PROG=ask

!mɛ́	á!kɛ́	nɛ́gbɛ̀	jí	sùá!lábà
1SG.OBJ	NMLZ	where	be	Sualaba

"When I was coming, she was asking me that "Where is Sualaba*?*"   [FH:44]

In the following sentences, a future action is marked as ongoing by the presence of the progressive prefix.

(59)
wɔ́	bé	nɛ́	ò=bàá-!bá=!á	wɔ̀=jwélé	!nɔ́	nɛ́
tomorrow	time	NMLZ	2SG=FUT-come=DEF	1PL=lie	top	NMLZ

wɔ̀=ŋ̀-hòó	nɛ́!ɛ́
1PL=PROG-cook	thing

"By the time you come tomorrow, we'll be busily cooking."   [YM:292]

(60)
è=bàá-tɔ̀	nyɛ̀	ààhṹ	bɛ̀	gbé!kɛ́-bí!í=!ɛ́
3SG=FUT-toil	2PL	continuously	then	child-PL=DEF

ə̃̀mɛ̃̀=ŋ̀-jè	nyɛ̀	dɛ̃̀ŋ
3PL=PROG-exit	2PL	hand

"You'll toil continuously, and then the children will be getting out of control."

[OYO:137]

A verb marked for the progressive may also be given a future interpretation without the presence of any future time adverbials. With most verbs, this is a prospective or immediate future. The action in (60) could be interpreted as co-temporaneous with the moment of speech (present) or subsequent to the moment of speech (future), depending on the context i.e. whether the speaker is in the shower or not. Progressive marking of the verbs *bà* 'come' and *yà* 'come' more often results in a future interpretation than a present interpretation (61) (62).

(60) **mĩ́ĩ=!jú**   í́=!hé

      1SG.PROG=bathe   1SG=body

      "I'm taking a bath." OR "I'm about to take a bath"

(61) è=bí   !lé-!ɛ́[11]   ní́   !bá=!á   **èè=yà**

      3SG=child   DEF-DEF   NMLZ   come=DEF   3SG.PROG=go

      "His child who came is going, leaving." i.e. He's going to go, leave.   [DF:20]

(62) **mĩ́ĩ=!bá**

      1SG.PROG=come

      "I'm coming (in a short while)"

In (63) the temporal noun, *August,* confirms that the action marked by the progressive takes

place in the future.

(63) hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   *August*=ɛ́=!ɛ́   **wɔ̀=ŋ̀-fêê**

      sake=TOP   =DEF=DEF   1PL=PROG-do

      "So in August, we're doing (it)."   [OYO:162]

3.2.2.3 Habitual -ɔ/-a

These habitual suffixes are used to mark actions that occur regularly. The typical habitual

sentence expresses an action which has occurred at least more than once anterior to the moment

of speaking and is reasonably expected to continue posterior to the moment of speaking. The

---

[11] It is not entirely unusual for the definite article to modify a noun twice. The most notable example is the inalienable noun *bí* 'child' which is always marked twice:

ó-bí   lé-!ɛ́

2SG-child   DEF-DEF

"Your child"

In many such cases, the first article marks definiteness and the second marks topicalization. See Chapter 7 for more on this.

habitual suffix is realized as *-a* when the immediately preceding phoneme is /a/. It is realized as

-ɔ in all other phonetic environments. All types of verbs, including stative verbs (67), are

capable of occurring with habitual aspect. In (64), *tsɛ́* 'call' is marked habitual to indicate that

Mr. Addo is addressed by that name all the time. In (65), the habitual suffix marks the verb *tsṹ*

'work' as something that Saakor does habitually, probably everyday. Similarly, in (66) the

speaker is inquiring about the boys' returning from school, which is an event that occurs on

most days. The verb for 'return', *jè bà* (lit: 'come.from come) is a serial verb, so each verb in

the series is marked with the habitual suffix. The examples in (64)-(66) all indicate habits.

(64) *à=tsɛ́-ɔ̀*   lὲ   Mr. Addo
      3PL.IMPERS=call-HAB   3SG.OBJ   Mr. Addo
      "He is called Mr. Addo" (Lit: They call him Mr. Addo)   [DF:87]

(65) héwɔ̀   wɔ̀=nyɛ̃mí̋   Sààkɔ́   lὲ   hṹ   jɛ́ŋ   nɔ̋ŋ́ŋ́
      sake   1PL=sibling   Saakor   3SG.OBJ   too   there   exactly

      è=tsṹ-ɔ̃̀   ní̋!í̋   yὲ
      3SG=work-HAB   thing   be.located
      "So our sister Saakor, she too, that's where she works."   [DF:11]

(66) shí̋   òblá-hĩ̋ĩ̌=!ɛ̋   mɛ̋!ɛ̋   *time*   *ǎmɛ̌=jè-ɔ̀*
      but   life-male.PL=DEF   what   3PL=come.from-HAB

      ní̋-kàsé-mɔ̋=ɔ̃̀   *ǎmɛ̌=bà-à*
      thing-learn-NOM=DEF   3PL=come-HAB
      "But the young men, what time do they come back from learning (school)." [DT:13;52]

The habitual suffix also marks generics which, according to Dahl (1985:99), are sentences

which describe the typical properties of a species or individual, as in (67).

(67) àbónúá   *jó-ɔ̀*
      lime   be.bitter-HAB
      "Limes are bitter."

There are other generic-like meanings with varying semantic nuances that are expressed by the

habitual. One of these is the expression of a general or culturally-sanctioned truth or fact (68),

(69).

(68) jù-ù   kὲ   fɔ̃́   *jwà-à*   mã̀ŋ̀
      steal-NOM   and   fraud break-HAB   country
      "Corruption destroys a country."

(69) sàbólàí   *hã́-!ã́*   nĩ́yènĩ́!ĩ́   *ŋɔ̃́-ɔ̃̀*
      onion   give-HAB   food   be.sweet-HAB
      "Onions make food sweet."

The expression of a permanent or semi-permanent state or condition (70), (71).

(70) té!shĩ́ house=ɛ́=!ɛ́   *è=bótè-ɔ̀*   àkòtó làntέ   mĩ̀ŋ̀
      Teshie   =DEF=DEF   3SG=enter-HAB   Akoto Lante   inside
      Teshie House, it forms part of Akoto Lante (Lit: It enters Akoto Lante). [FH:68]

(71) kɔ̀ɔ̀lé=ɛ̀   *yà-à*   ŋshɔ́=ɔ̀   mĩ̀ŋ̀
      Korle=DEF   go-HAB   sea=DEF   inside
      "The Korle (lagoon) goes into the sea."

The expression of attitudes, qualities or properties of individuals or entities (72)-(77).

(72)   kòfí   hè   *tsɛ́-ɔ̀*   mì̃
        kofi   body   envy-HAB   1SG.OBJ
        "Kofi envies me."

(73)   ákú   *bà-à*   è=hè   shì̃
        aku   come-HAB   3SG=body   down
        "Aku is humble." (Lit: Aku brings herself down)

(74)   *è=wó-ɔ̀*   è=hè   nɔ̃̀
        3SG=lift-HAB   3SG=body   top
        "He is arrogant" (Lit: He lifts himself up)

(75)   lòó=ɛ̀   *jè-ɔ̀*   sɑ̃̀
        fish=DEF   emit-HAB   foul.smell
        "The fish smells bad."

(76)   òkó   ŋɑ̃́=ɑ̃̀   *yɛ́-ɔ̀*
        Oko   wife=DEF   be.white-HAB
        "Oko's wife is very light-skinned."

(77)   *ò=jì̃mɛ́-ɔ̀*
        2SG=be.stupid-HAB
        "You are stupid."

The difference between the predicates in (64)-(66) on one hand, and those in (70)-(77) on the other hand, is that those in the former group represent events that are episodic, that are repeated at certain intervals throughout a specific span of time while those in the latter group denote properties or states that hold at all times within a specific time frame. This latter group is often represented by stative verbs but could also include dynamic verbs (e.g. *è=jò-ɔ̀ wàà* [3SG=dance-HAB very.much] 'She dances well').

It is not possible to express grammatically, a future habitual event in Gã. Habitual

actions which are wholly confined to past time (translated into English with "used to") may be

expressed with the habitual suffix in combination with the general time adverbial, *nò mìĩ̀ŋ* 'at

that time'. In many cases, though, there is no overt adverbial indicating past time; the addressee

must depend on the time reference of the surrounding discourse in order to deduce that the

habitual action is restricted to the past. Two examples from conversation are given below. In

(78), Sally is narrating the ordeal of a sick relative at the hospital prior to his death. Like most

narratives it has past time reference. In line 2, *kɔ̀ɔ̀* 'bites (i.e. hurts)' occurs with habitual

aspect. Since the entire story is being told with past time reference the event marked by the

habitual is also understood as occurring in the past; during the same period as the rest of the

events in the story. In this particular example, the time reference couldn't be more unequivocal

because the subject or protagonist is dead. Lines 4 and 6 also contain habitual verbs which have

past time reference.

(78) 1 Sally: à=kèέ nɔ́=!kó έὲ làŋmɔ̀̃

           3PL.IMPERS=say thing=INDEF IJ navel

    2 è=mìĩ̀ŋ *kɔ̀-ɔ̀* lὲ è=mìĩ̀ŋ *kɔ̀-ɔ̀*

        3SG=inside bite-HAB 3SG.OBJ 3SG=inside bite-HAB

        lὲ

        3SG.OBJ

        "They said something…errm…(his) navel. It used to hurt him all the

        time."

3   ní   è=*complain*=ɛ́=!ɛ́   ní è=tèè ɛ̀ɛ̀

       NMLZ   3SG-   DEF=DEF NMLZ 3SG=go.PST IJ

       Cathedral Clinic=ɛ́=!ɛ́

           =DEF=DEF

4   jɛ́ŋ *è=yà-à*

       there 3SG=go-HAB

       "When he complained and he went to…errm…the Cathedral

       Clinic…that's where he used to go."

5 Dina: m̀hm̀

       IJ

       "Yes, go on."

6 Sally: nò hèwɔ́=!ɔ́ ní ã̀mɛ̃́=nã̀ bɔ̀ní *è=fé-ɔ̀*

       that sake=TOP NMLZ 3PL=see how 3SG=do-HAB

       lɛ́=!ɛ́   nɔ́ŋ́ŋ́

       3SG.OBJ=DEF immediately

7   nĩ̀ ã̀mɛ̃́=*refer* lɛ̀   *to* kɔ̀lè-bú

      and 3PL=   3SG.OBJ   Korle-Bu

      "So when they saw how it was bothering him, immediately they referred

      him to Korle-Bu (hospital).   [FH:116]

Habitual markers in rare cases may double as present time markers. At least one verb, *ká!í*

'remember', exhibits this characterisitic. In (79), Dina is reporting to Sally what she had

previously said to another person she had run into. She reports that she told the person that she

remembers her (line 4). *ká!í* 'remember' here is marked as habitual but in fact has present time

reference.

(79) 1 Dina: ĩ̀=bí   !lɛ́   á!kɛ́   è=bà-hĩ̀
              1SG=ask   3SG.OBJ   NMLZ   3SG=VENT-live

              Auntie àmɛ̀ɛ́!lé   ŋɔ̀̃   ló
              Auntie Amerley   place QP
              "I asked her whether she came and lived with Auntie Amerley."

      2 Sally: ɛ̀ɛ́!ɛ́
              "Yes"

      3 Dina: è=kɛ̀ɛ́   ɛ̀ɛ́!ɛ́
              3SG=say   yes
              "She said yes"

      4   ĩ̀=kɛ̀ɛ́   *ĩ́=kàì-ɔ̀*   lɛ̀   yɛ̀
              1SG=say   1SG=remember-HAB   3SG.OBJ   be.located

              jɛ́!ŋ́
              there
              "I said I remember her from there."   [DF:130]

The habitual marker can also impart present time meaning in a very specific

construction and under specific discourse conditions. This occurs in focus constructions and

only when the speaker refers to a specific event. Specificity of an event is signaled by the

presence of the definite article clitic on the final element of the clause (80a) and (80b).

(80a) kòjó   nĩ̀   *jò-ɔ̀*   yɛ̀   jɛ́!mɛ́=!ɛ́
       kojo   FOC   dance-HAB   be.located   there=DEF
       "It is Kojo who is dancing over there."
       *"It is Kojo who dances over there."

(80b) kòjó nĩ̀   *fó-ɔ̀=ɔ́=!ɔ́*
      kojo FOC cry-HAB＝DEF＝DEF
      "It is Kojo who is crying."
      *"It is Kojo who cries."

Without the final definite article, the clause has a default habitual interpretation, as in (81). This

sentence may be uttered in a scenario where for example, there is disagreement over who

performs on a street corner.

(81) kòjó nĩ̀   *jò-ɔ̀*   yɛ̀   jɛ̃́!mɛ̃́
      kojo FOC dance-HAB   be.located   there
      "It is Kojo who dances over there."
      *"It is Kojo who is dancing over there."

Similarly, (82) could be in response to the question of which baby cries a lot.

(82) kòjó nĩ̀   *fó-ɔ̀*
      kojo FOC cry-HAB
      "It is Kojo who cries."
      *"It is Kojo who is crying."

This means that it is possible for the habitual to impart present time meaning in all WH-

questions/question-word questions. This is because in Gã, interrogative words always occur as

focused NPs, unless they are in situ (§3.6). Although, a habitual reading is still possible in such

interrogatives, there are usually enough cues in the linguistic and extra-linguistic context to

dispel ambiguity. In both sentences below, only a present time reading is possible for the verbs

marked by the habitual.

(83) ê   í̃ = *master*   í̃ = nã̀ã̀nyõ̀   nế!ế   mế̃nì̃   kẃráá   mế̃nì̃   ɔ̀ = *fế-ɔ̀*

      IJ   1SG =   1SG = friend   this   what   at.all   what   2SG = do-HAB

      nế̃!ế̃

      this

      "Oh, my master, what at all…what are you doing?"   [FLO:99]

(84) nắmɔ̃̀ hè   (nĩ̀)   *nyễ̀ = wíé-ɔ̀ = ɔ́ = !ɔ́*

      who   body   (FOC) 2PL = talk-HAB = DEF = DEF

      "Who are you talking about?"

      *"Who do you talk about (on a regular basis)?"

A focused clause marked with the habitual can have habitual meaning only if it contains some

time adverbial with habitual semantics, as in (85), which contains the temporal adverbial

clause, *kế èfêê* 'sometimes, once in a while (lit: when it does)'.

(85) nắmɔ̃̀ hè   nĩ̀   *kế*   *è = fêế = !ế̃*   *nyễ̀ = wíé-ɔ̀ = ɔ́ = !ɔ́*

      who   body   FOC   when   3SG-do = DEF   2PL-talk-HAB = DEF = DEF

      "Who do you talk about from time to time?"

Indeed, the habitual morpheme is the only means of expressing present time in focus clauses

and questions, because use of the progressive (which is the normal means of present time

expression) in this context is ungrammatical (86).

(86a) *nắmɔ̃̀ hè   *ɔ̀ɔ̀-wíê*

       who   body   2SG.PROG-talk

       "Who are you talking about?"

(86b) *ɔ̀kó   nĩ̀   ŋ̀-bó-!lɔ́

       Oko   FOC   PROG-shout-ITER

       "It is Oko who is shouting."

The progressive is acceptable in a question as long as the question-word is in situ (87).

(87)   *òò=wìé*   nằmɔ̀ hè
       2SG=talk   who   body
       "You are talking about who?"

When the interrogative word is in situ, there is no focus marker (overt or covert) and use of a

habitual marker in such sentences results in a habitual rather than a present interpretation (88).

(88)   *ò=wìé-ɔ*   nằmɔ̀ hè
       2SG=talk-HAB   who   body
       "You talk about who (on a regular basis)?"
       *"You are talking about who (right now)?"

It is as yet unclear to me why the habitual and progressive will interact with focus

constructions in such a seemingly idiosyncratic manner.

      Another construction which conditions a present interpretation for habitual verbs is the

grammatical nominalization marked by *ní* (with high tone, as opposed to the low tone of the

focus marker). Such nominalizations may be interpreted as habitual or present depending on

context. In the following example, it clearly has a present time meaning.

(90)   ówúlà   nɛ́!ɛ̃́ mɔ̃̀ ní   *yà-á=!á*   lè   jí
       gentleman this   NM   NMLZ   go-HAB=DEF   3SG.OBJ   be

       í́= *first born*
       1SG=
       "This gentleman, the one who is going, he is my first born."   [OYO:379]

Just as with the focus constructions, the progressive marker is not possible in a grammatical

nominalization marked by *nî́.*

(91) *ówúlà   nɛ́!ɛ́   mɔ̃̀   nî́   *ŋ̀-yà=!á*
      gentleman   this   person NMLZ   PROG-go=DEF
      "This gentleman, the one who is going…"

For both the focus particle, *nî̀* and the nominalization particle, *nî́* to trigger a present tense

reading of verbs marked by the habitual aspect indicates that these two markers have a

relationship that goes beyond simple isomorphism. In §6.8, I theorize about what this

relationship could be.

     The habitual is also the aspectual marker of choice for verbs in grammatical event

nominalizations which function as complements of the verb *yɛ̀ hè gbɛ̀* 'have the right (lit: have

body way)'. No other verb requires its complement to have a habitual verb.

(89) hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   ò=bɛ́   hè   gbɛ̀   nî́   *ò=jù-ɔ̀*
      sake=TOP   2SG=have.NEG   body way   NMLZ   2SG=steal-HAB

      mɔ̃̀kò   kápl̀ɛ̀
      somebody   pesewa[12]
      "So you don't have the right to steal someone's money."   [DT:20;32]

---

[12] A pesewa is a the smallest unit of Ghanaian currency and is used metonymically to mean "a small amount of money".

3.2.2.4 Perfect é-

The perfect is a verbal category that relates a present state to a past situation. In Gã it is

encoded morphologically by the prefix *é-* when the subject of the sentence is a full NP, as in

(90)-(92).

(90) shĩ́   nǔṹ=!ɛ̃́   lɛ̀   ***é=fã̀***   gbɛ̀
      but   male=DEF   TOP   3SG.PERF=take.off way
      "But as for the man, he has travelled."   [DF:147]

(91) bɔ̀ɔ̀té hǔ   kɛ̀ɛ́   ò=kɛ̀   lɛ̀   ***é-wìê***   hèwɔ́=!ɔ́
      Bortey too   say   2SG=take   3SG.OBJ   PERF-speak   sake=TOP

      è=lɛ̀   *time* nĩ́   ò=bàá-bá=à
      3SG=know   NMLZ   2SG=FUT-come=DEF
      "Bortey too said he has spoken with you so does he know what time you're coming?."
      [DT:6;03]

(92) è=kɛ̀ɛ́   ɛ̀ɛ̃́   mɔ̃̀   nĩ́   ***à=kɛ́-bà***   nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́
      3SG=say   IJ   NM   NMLZ   3PL.IMPERS=take.PERF-come   this

      è=tsùí   ***é-fã̀***
      3SG=heart   PERF-take.off
      "He said errm, this person who has been brought here, he is frightened. (Lit: His heart
      has taken off)."   [FH:129]

When the subject is a pronoun, the perfect is realized as a high tone on the final pronominal

vowel (93). When the verb is immediately preceded by the auxiliary verb *kɛ*, the perfect is

realized as a high tone on the auxiliary (92).

(93) *àmɛ́=yè*   fὲ   áfĭ   yὲ   ó=ŋɔ̃̀
      3PL.PERF=eat   surpass   year   be.located   2SG=possession
      "Have they been at your place for more than one year?"   [DT:15;30]

Although Comrie (1976) classifies it as an aspect, it is not a prototypical aspectual category

because it does not reveal anything about the internal temporal workings of a situation. It rather

highlights the present result of a completed activity. It is this semantic feature of "present or

current relevance" that is considered to be the hallmark of the perfect aspect and that

differentiates it from the past tense. Langacker (1991:211) illustrates this with the two

sentences, *I have broken my leg* and *I broke my leg*. He notes that while the former implies

that my leg is still broken, the latter does not. Therefore use of the perfect implies that the

event is not done with totally because its effects remain in the present time. The same is true

for the Gã perfect. For instance, the question in (93) implies that the agents, *àmɛ̀=* 'they' are

still in residence at the said location, whereas if the verb were unmarked and therefore had past

interpretation, as in (94), it would imply that the guests were no longer there.

(94) *àmɛ̀=yè*   fὲ   áfĭ   yὲ   ó=ŋɔ̃̀
      3PL=eat   surpass   year   be.located   2SG=possession
      "Were they at your place for more than one year?"

Comrie (1976) identifies four types of meanings conveyed by the perfect: the perfect of

result, otherwise known as the stative perfect, the perfect of persistent situation, the experiential

perfect and the perfect of recent past. The experiential perfect is not found in Gã. There is

instead another function of the perfect that is not mentioned by Comrie. I term this the

narrative perfect. Each of these will be discussed below.

3.2.2.4.1 The perfect of result

This is the most common interpretation ascribed to perfect clauses in Gã and other languages. It

is precisely what is illustrated in Langacker's "broken leg" example. The focus on present

result carries with it the implication that this resultant state did not obtain in the past i.e. there

has been a change of state. Thus, in Gã, the perfect is used to express change of state or

resultatives. This is especially evident with property verbs, which when unmarked, denote a

state (95a), (96a), but when marked by the perfect denote a change of state (95b), (96b). The

(b) sentences suggest that the subject did not exhibit that property in the past but has recently

acquired the property and is currently exhibiting it.

(95a) kòjó   kὲ
       kojo   be.tall
       "Kojo is tall."

(95b) kòjó   *é-kὲ*
       kojo   PERF-be.tall
       "Kojo has become tall."

(96a) bĺòdó=ὲ   wà
       bread=DEF   be.hard
       "The bread is hard."

(96b) bĺòdó = ɛ̀   *é-wà*
       bread = DEF   PERF-be.hard
       "The bread has become hard."

When used with dynamic verbs, the perfect indicates a present state and is equivalent to the

English present stative.

(97)   àtàlé = !ɛ́   *é-!tsé-!lɛ́*
       dress = DEF   PERF-tear-ITER
       "The dress is torn."

(98)   shìkpɔ́!ŋ́   *é-fɔ̀*
       floor   PERF-make.wet
       "The floor is wet."

(99)   wó!nú = !ɛ́   *é-!fíté*
       soup = DEF   PERF-spoil
       "The soup is spoiled i.e. has gone off"

(100) jé   !lɛ́ = ɛ̀   mĩ̀ŋ   *é-!gbélé*
       world DEF = DEF   inside 3SG.PERF-open
       "The world is open-minded now, has advanced intellectually now"   [OYO:155]

        What the examples in (95)-(100) have in common is that the perfect verbs denote stative

properties or characteristics of entities that are physically visible or apparent to the

interlocutors. In most uses of the perfect, however, the resultant state or consequence is not

tangible. Regardless of that, the use of the perfect is still warranted as long as the state denoted

by the perfect verb still persists in the present, as in (90) above, repeated here as (101) where

the perfect implies that the man is still out of town, or (102), where Dotty must still be in the

regional office at the time of the utterance.

(101) shí   nṹṹ=!ɛ́   lɛ̀   *é=fà̰*   gbɛ̀
       but   male=DEF   TOP   3SG.PERF=take.off road
       "But as for the man, he has travelled."   [DF:147]

(102) Dina: ò=kɛ̀ɛ́   Dotty hṹ   bɛ́   jɛ́!ŋ́   dɔ́ŋ́ŋ́
                     2SG=say   Dotty too   be.located.NEG   there anymore
                     "You said Dotty too is not there anymore."

       Mensah: ɛ̀ɛ́!ɛ́   à=kɛ̀   lɛ̀   *é-tèè*   *region*
                     yes   3PL.IMPERS=take 3SG.OBJ   PERF-go.PST
                     "Yes, she has been taken to the regional office."   [MM:141]

3.2.2.4.2 Perfect of recent past

In other contexts the present relevance of a perfect clause is even more difficult to decipher.

Comrie (1976:60) observes that sometimes the present relevance of a perfect situation may

simply be that of temporal closeness i.e. that the past situation is relatively recent. As Comrie

notes, recency is relative and as long as the addressee is hearing the information for the first

time, the speaker - by using the perfect - is presenting it as recent news. It is for this reason that

the perfect of recent past is sometimes known as "hot news perfect".

Sometimes the current relevance in a perfect construction could be both its temporal

proximity to the present as well as some other reason which may be explicated in the

succeeding discourse. This is seen in (91) which is repeated here for convenience as (103).

Here, the speaker (Tess) states that Bortey has told her that he has spoken to the addressee

(Dina). She uses the perfect form of the verb, *wìê* 'speak'. Then Tess goes on to explicate why

this comment is significant for the current conversation: if indeed Bortey has spoken to Dina,

then Tess is wondering whether he knows what time Dina (who is due to visit soon) is arriving.

Tess explicitly states the reason for her initial statement and further introduces it with the

discourse marker *hèwɔ́* 'so/sake'.

(103) bɔɔ́té hṹ   kɛɛ́   ò=kɛ̀   lɛ̀   ***é-wìê***   hèwɔ́=!ɔ́
       Bortey too   say   2SG=take   3SG.OBJ   PERF-speak   sake=TOP

       è=lɛ̀   *time* nĩ́   ò=bàá-bá=à
       3SG=know   NMLZ   2SG=FUT-come=DEF
       "Bortey too said he has spoken with you, so does he know what time you're coming?"
       [DT:6;03]

Similarly, in (104) the speaker (a preacher) states, using the perfect, that he and his colleagues

have just recently come back to Accra from postings to Twi-speaking areas. He goes on to tell

the congregation the significance of this; that while in those areas, he often code-mixed Gã and

Twi, and so this might happen while he is preaching.

(104) ***wɔ́=yà-fò***   shĩ̀   yɛ̀   *Twi*   *area*=à
       1PL.PERF=ITIV-cut   down   be.located   Twi   =DEF

       hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   jɛ́!mɛ̃́=!ɛ̃́   wìé-mɔ́=!ɔ́   wɔ̀=fútù-ɔ̀   lɛ̀
       so=TOP   there=DEF   speak-NOM=DEF   1PL=mix-HAB   3SG.OBJ
       "We have gone and roamed around in the Twi-speaking areas so, over there we mix up
       the languages."   [CH:25]

This discourse-pragmatic use of the recent perfect has been described for English by Nishiyama

and Koenig (2006) and is termed by them as "commonsense entailment".

3.2.2.4.3 Perfect of persistent situation

In this use the perfect denotes situations that start in the past and still persist into the present

(Comrie 1976:60). This is seen in (105) and (106), for example.

(105) yòómó = !ɛ́   *é-!fó*   ã̀ã̀hű̃ű̃
      old.woman = DEF   PERF-cry   continuously
      "The old woman has cried continuously."   [FH:170]

(106) *é-!tsű̃*   ní̃!í̃   yè   jɛ́!mɛ̃́ é-tsɛ̀
      3SG.PERF = work   thing   be.located   there   3SG.PERF-last.long
      "She has worked there for a long time."

3.2.2.4.4 Narrative perfect

In Gã, there is a special use of the perfect optionally employed for the narration of a sequential

set of events. This set of events comprises a temporally ordered series of activities that are

presented as formulaic, fixed and methodical. Discourse genres where this perfect is abundant

include procedural narratives, where a speaker describes the methods or steps involved in

accomplishing some activity. Descriptions of everyday routines also make good candidates for

perfect marking, as well as any set of events that is felt to be sequentially-ordered.

The temporal frame for such discourses could be past or future. Although the verbs in

these discourses are marked for the perfect, they may invite a habitual interpretation when the

actions are presented as regularly-occurring. The clauses marked for perfect are usually

introduced by adverbs such as *kèkè* '(and) then' or *bè* '(and) then' which signal the sequential

nature of the events.

A few examples from discourse will shed further light on this phenomenon. In the

following examples, each clause will be translated literally where tense/aspect is concerned,

then a free translation into standard English will be given at the end of the example. In (107),

the speaker is describing how a herbal concoction is made. The time frame is given by the

temporal adverbial marked with *kɛ́* 'when' in the first line. Each subsequent event is then

relayed as an ordered series using perfect aspect.

(107) nò   hèwɔ̀   kɛ́   à＝fɔ̀   wùɔ́＝!ɔ́   nɛ́
        that   sake   when 3PL.IMPERS＝cut   chicken＝DEF   and

        à＝kè   lá＝!á   wò   nɛ́＝ɛ̃̀   mĩ̀ŋ́＝!ɛ́
        3PL.IMPERS＝take   blood＝DEF   put   water＝DEF   inside＝DEF
        "So when the chicken is cut and the blood is put in the water,"

        kèkɛ́＝!ɛ́   tòó＝!ɛ́   hɛ̃́   *à＝kɛ́-kpá!lá*   ãmɛ̃̀＝he
        then＝TOP   sheep＝DEF   too   *3PL.IMPERS＝take.PERF-smear* 3PL＝body
        "then the sheep too has been smeared on their body."

        kèkɛ́＝!ɛ́   nò   hɛ̃́   *á＝fɔ̀*
        then＝TOP   that   too   *3PL.IMPERS.PERF＝cut*
        "Then that one too has been cut."

à＝kὲ	lá＝!á	*é-wɔ̀*	nṹ＝ɛ̃̀	mĩ̀ŋ
3PL.IMPERS＝take	blood＝DEF	*PERF-put*	water＝DEF	inside

"The blood has been put in the water."

"So when the chicken is cut and the blood is put in the water, then the sheep too is smeared on their body. Then that one too is cut. The blood is then put into the water." [YM:128]

In the next example, the speaker is talking about her routine at the end of the day and ends with the utterance in (108). Again, after setting the time as "when I come (home)", the subsequent activity is described with perfect aspect. The use of the perfect here is especially odd, since the activity is clearly presented as a habit; a regularly occurring event.

(108)

kέ	ì-bà	nɔ́ŋ́ŋ́	kὲkέ＝!έ	*í̋＝bà-fèé*
when	1SG-come	immediately	then＝TOP	*1SG.PERF＝VENT-make*

í̋-smoothie				
1SG-				

"When I come, then immediately I have come and made my smoothie."

kέ	ì＝nũ̀	nɔ́ŋ́ŋ́	mĩ̀	í̋＝yà-à＝á＝!á
when	1SG＝drink	immediately	1SG.OBJ	1SG＝go-HAB＝DEF＝DEF

"Immediately after I drink it, I'm off."

"When I come (home) then I immediately make my smoothie. Immediately after I drink it, I'm off." [DT:13;10]

In the following exchange about some of the activities that form part of the twin festival, the predicate in Aku's question is habitual. In subsequent descriptions, it is the perfect rather than

the habitual that marks the predicates. The clauses containing the perfect predicates are also

introduced by *bὲ* 'then'.

(109) Aku: nῐ̀   *ằmὲ̃=fé-ɔ̀*   yὲ   ằmὲ̃=díὲ̃ŋtsὲ   ằmὲ̃=shῐ̃ã
        and   3PL=do-HAB   be.located   3PL=EMPH   3PL=house
        "And they do it in their own house?"

      Kwei: *yeah*

      Oyo: hὲ̃ὲ̃!ὲ̃   ằmὲ̃=díὲ̃ŋtsὲ   ằmὲ̃=shῐ̃ã   mῐ̀ŋ
         yes   3PL=EMPH   3PL=house   inside
         "Yes, in their own house."

      Aku: kὲkέ=!ɛ́   *àmɛ̃́=tsέ*   wὲkú-mὲ̃ĩ=!ɛ̃́
         then=TOP   *3PL.PERF=call*   family-PL=DEF
         "Then they have invited the relatives."

      Oyo: wὲkú-mὲ̃ĩ=!ɛ̃́   ὲ̀hɛ̃́ὲ̃̀
         family-PL=DEF   IJ
         "The relatives…exactly."

         kὲkέ=!ɛ́   *á=bà*   *á=bà-yὲ*
         then=DEF   3PL.IMPERS.PERF=come   3PL.IMPERS.PERF=VENT-eat
         hὲ   òdá!sé
         body   witness
         "Then they have come to witness it."

      Aku: And they do it in their own house?
      Kwei: Yeah
      Oyo: Yes, in their own house
      Aku: Then they invite the relatives
      Oyo: The relatives…exactly
           Then they come and bear witness.

The perfect in the above examples connote habituality. In the case of procedural

narratives (107), (109), this habituality is implied in the fact that one can describe how

something is done only if it has been done before and is expected to be repeated in future. In

the following example, the events marked by the perfect reflect a series of events that have

actually occurred but for which there is no implication that they will recur. That is, the events

have a habitual past interpretation. This is evidenced by the past time interpretation of the first

verb, *fó* 'cry' as well as the adverbial *nyɛ̀ sɛ̀ɛ̀* [yesterday back] 'some time ago'. The events in

(110) are construed as one unique set of events restricted to the past. Many of the perfect

clauses are introduced by the adverb *bɛ̀* 'then'. The narrative is about a toddler who cried

whenever he saw a picture of his parents.

(110) nyɛ̀ɛ̃̀   sɛ̀ɛ́=!ɛ́   lɛ́   è=fó   ààhṹ̃ṹ̃
       yesterday   back=DEF   TOP   3SG=cry   continuously
       "Some time ago, he cried continuously."

       bɛ̀   *é=yà-dàmɔ̃̀*   *fridge=ɛ́=!ɛ́*   hĩ̀ɛ̃̀
       then   *3SG.PERF=ITIV-stand*   =DEF=DEF   face
       "Then he has gone and stood in front of the fridge."

       ákú   kɛ̀   òkó   m̀fònírí   pɛ̀tɛ̀   jɛ̃́!mɛ̃́
       Aku   and   Oko   picture   stick   there
       "There's a picture of Aku and Oko there."

       bɛ̀   *é=!wó*   è=yítsò   nɔ̃̀
       then   *3SG.PERF=lift*   3SG=head   top
       "Then he has lifted his head up."

bè   èè=kwɛ́   ầmɛ̀
then   3SG.PROG=look   3PL
"Then he is looking at them."

bè   mɪ́ɪ́=kwɛ́   !lɛ́   á!kɛ́   ê   mɛ́nɪ̀ <LAUGHTER>
then   1SG.PROG=look   3SG.OBJ   NMLZ   IJ   what
"Then I am looking at him, (thinking) what (is it)?"

èè=fó   è=mầmɪ́   lóó   èè=fó   è=pàpá
3SG.PROG=cry   3SG=mother or   3SG.PROG=cry   3SG=father
<LAUGHTER>
"Is he crying for his mother or is he crying for his father?"

nɛ́mɔ̀̃   è=táò-ɔ̀
who   3SG=want-HAB
"Who does he want?"

é=yà-dầmɔ̀̃   shɪ̀   bè   *é=!fó*   ààhṹṹ̀
3SG.PERF=ITIV-stand down   then   *3SG.PERF=cry*   continuously
"He has gone and stood there then he has cried continuously."

bè   *é=bà*   ɪ́=ŋɔ̀̃
then   3SG.PERF=come   1SG=possession
"Then he has come to me."   [DT:1;26]

"Some time ago, he cried continuously. Then he would go and stand in front of the fridge. There's a picture of Aku and Oko there. Then he would lift his head up. Then he was looking at them. Then I was looking at him, (thinking), "Goodness! What is it? Is he crying for his mother or is he crying for his father?" Then he would go and stand there. Then he would cry continuously. Then he would come to me."

The use of the perfect to index habitual situations that occur in temporal succession is uncommon across languages, and it is hard to decipher the connection between perfect and habitual meaning. Further research with more data should provide some robust answers.

3.2.2.4.5 The perfect in the past and future

It is possible to express a perfect situation whose reference time is some time other than the moment of speech. This is done via adverbials which specify the reference time to give a 'past perfect' or 'future perfect' interpretation. The go-to general time adverbial *nò mì̀ŋ* 'then, at that time', is often deployed in such circumstances. Example (111) has a past perfect interpretation, while (112) gives a future perfect interpretation.

(111) *bee*=ὲ   tsàà   gbèé=ὲ   shĩ̀   ààhũ̂
      =DEF   chase   dog=DEF   down   continuously
     "The bees chased the dog for a long time."

     nò   *mì̀ŋ=!έ*   gbé!kɛ̃́-nũ̃ũ̃́=ὲ   lὲ   hũ̃́   òkpò   kò
     that   inside=TOP   child-male=DEF   3SG.OBJ   too   pigeon   INDEF

     έ-!mɔ̃́   lὲ
     PERF-catch   3SG.OBJ
     "At that time, the boy too, a pigeon had caught him."   [MAV:69]

(112) bὲ   nĩ́   ò=bàá-!shέ   bí!έ=!έ   nĩ́yènĩ́!ĩ́=ɛ̃́
     time   NMLZ   2SG=FUT-reach   here=DEF   food=DEF

     έ-bὲ
     PERF-be.cooked
     "By the time you get here, the food will be cooked."

3.2.2.5 Iterative and distributive aspects

These two aspectual categories will be treated together because they have a common core

semantic character and shared morphological manifestation. Iterative aspect indicates that the

event predicated by the verb occurs multiple times in relatively quick succession, while

distributive aspect indicates that the event is being executed or experienced/affected by multiple

participants. It is important to note that iterativity is different from habituality. Bybee et al

(1994) highlight this difference. They write (p. 160) that iterative "signals that an action is

repeated on a single occasion and differs from the habitual and frequentative, which both signal

the repetition occurred on different occasions". Some authors treat the distributive as a type of

iterative aspect. Due to the similar semantic function and identical formal marking of iterativity

and distribution in Gã, morphemes that signal either aspect will be glossed 'ITER', even if the

primary aspectual sense is that of distribution.

     In Gã, iterative and distributive aspects are signalled by suffixation or reduplication.

Suffixation is restricted to monosyllabic verbs while reduplication is used for poly-syllabic

verbs. There are two major suffixes that convey both iteration and distribution in monosyllabic

verbs. There is also one minor suffix which occurs with very few words. In any one predicate

marked with these suffixes, however, only one of these aspectual meanings is possible. The

form of the suffix depends on the final vowel of the verb. The first iterative/distributive suffix,

-mɔ̃ occurs with certain monosyllabic verbs ending in a high vowel or a nasalised vowel. The

second suffix, *-lV́ or rV́* (/l/ and /r/ are in free variation in some words) has three allomorphs: it

is realised as *-lɛ/-rɛ* if the final vowel of the verb is a mid front vowel, as *-lɔ/-rɔ* if the final

vowel is a mid back vowel, and as *-la/-ra* if the final vowel is the low back vowel, /a/. The

third iterative suffix, *-i* is reminiscent of the plural marker and can be viewed as being in a

polysemous relationship with it. It occurs with very few words. Examples of verbs and their

iterative/distributive forms are given below.

<p style="text-align:center">*Table 9: Some verbs and their iterative/distributive forms*</p>

Verb root	Iterative/Distributive	English gloss
Suffix *-mɔ̀*		
fǐ	*fǐmɔ̀*	'tie'
bú	*bú!mɔ̃́*	'lie upside down'
tsǐ	*tsǐmɔ̀*	'block'
kǔ̃	*kǔ̃mɔ̀*	'break'
dǔ̃	*dǔ̃!mɔ̃́*	'plant'
tsɔ̃́	*tsɔ̃́!mɔ̃́*	'pass through, turn, pour'
fɔ̃̌	*fɔ̃̌mɔ̀*	'throw'
kǎ̃	*kǎ̃!mɔ̃́*	'lie down'
	Suffix *-lɛ/-rɛ*	
kɛ̀	*kɛ́!lɛ́*	'be tall'
tsé	*tsɛ́!lɛ́*	'tear'

té	*té!ré*	'trip'
suffix *-lɔ*		
bò	*bó!lɔ́*	'shout'
fò	*fòlɔ̀*	'cut'
kɔ́	*kɔ́!lɔ́*	'pick up'
suffix *-la/-ra*		
ká	*ká!lá*	'knock'
ŋmæ̀	*ŋmǽ!lǽ*	'mark, write'
tá	*tá!rá*	'sit'
dà	*dá!rá*	'be big'
suffix *-i*		
gbó	*gbó!í*	'die'

Whether an iterative or distributive reading is obtained with these suffixes depends on the number of the subject and object. Generally, if the subject referent is singular and the verb is intransitive, the predicate is interpreted as iterative i.e. the subject referent carried out the activity several times. For example, in (113) the verb *bò* 'shout' has iterative marking and just one participant in the subject role: the second singular pronoun. In addition, it is intransitive so has no object referent. This leaves iterative aspect as the only interpretation of the suffix *-lɔ*. The verb describes a situation in which the agent shouted multiple times.

(113) nĩ̀   èè=bó-lɔ̀   kɛ̀-ŋ̀-wò   bú   !kó
       and   3SG.PROG=shout-ITER   take-PROG-put   hole   INDEF
       "And he's shouting into a hole."   [BOR: 33]

The same interpretation applies to the intransitive verb *tǔ* 'jump' in (114a). Here, the child is

jumping up and down over and over again, and this is conveyed by the iterative suffix, *-mɔ̃*. If

the subject referent is plural, as in (114b) a distributive reading would be triggered because

here several children are carrying out the activity concurrently.

(114a) gbé!kɛ̃́=ɛ̃̀   ŋ̀-tɛ̃́-!mɔ̃́   yɛ̀   jɛ̃́!mɛ̃́
       child=DEF   PROG-jump-ITER   be.located   there
       "The child is jumping over there."

(114b) gbé!kɛ̃́-bí!í=ɛ̃̀   ŋ̀-tɛ̃́-!mɔ̃́   yɛ̀   jɛ̃́!mɛ̃́
       child-PL=DEF   PROG-jump-ITER   be.located   there
       "The children are jumping over there."

In (115), the suffix *-i* imparts distributive aspectual meaning. The distributive use of this

morpheme is extremely limited. To the best of my knowledge, it may only be used with the

verb, *gbó* 'die'.

(115) énɛ̃́=!ɛ̃́   bɔ̀nĩ́-- bé   nĩ́   í=bí-ì=ɛ̀   gbó-!í
       this=DEF   how-- time   NMLZ 1SG=child-PL=DEF   die-ITER

       nĩ́   è=bà   è=bà-kwɛ́   í=yìsèɛ́=!ɛ́
       NMLZ   3SG=come   3SG=VENT-look   1SG=back.of.head=DEF
       "This one, how-- when my children died and he came and supported me…" [FH:111]

A distributive reading is also obtained where the object referent of a verb marked by the iterative/distributive suffix has plural number. In such a scenario, the agent executes the action multiple times in succession but each time on a different patient, such that there are multiple patients. This is seen in (116)-(118)

(116) ákú   **fì̃-mɔ̀̃**   kòtòkú-ì＝ɛ̀   à-nɑ̃̀ɑ̃̀   kpɔ́
       Aku   tie-ITER   sack-PL＝DEF   PERT-mouth   knot
       "Aku tied up the sacks into knots."

(117) òkó   **é-mɑ̀̃-mɔ̀̃**   tsũ̀-ì̃   pìì
       Oko   PERF-build-ITER   house-PL   many
       "Oko has built many houses."

(118) kápɛ́ńtà-fó-nyɔ̌＝ɛ̀   **ká-ǃlá**   pĺɛ̀gò-í＝ǃɛ́   è＝wò
       carpenter-AG-AG＝DEF   knock-ITER   nail-PL＝DEF   3SG＝put

       shĺnɑ̃̀ɑ̃́＝ɑ̃̀   mĩ̀ŋ
       door＝DEF   inside
       "The carpenter nailed the nails into the door."

Posture verbs and property verbs tend to give a distributive reading when marked by an iterative suffix. In the presence of the iterative suffix, such verbs can only occur with plural subject referents. This default distributive reading stems from the semantics of these verbs. The iterative meaning is impossible with posture verbs because one cannot assume a posture several different times on one occasion without changing from that posture. For instance, if one is lying down, then one remains in that position unless one changes one's posture (to sitting up or

standing, for example). Therefore, one cannot "lie down several times". However, multiple people can assume a lying down position concomitantly, and it is this distributive sense that is conveyed by the iterative suffix when it occurs on posture verbs.

(119) ò=bàá-!nɛ́   á!kɛ́   *àmɛ̀=bú-mɔ̀*   kɔ̀ɔ́ŋ   nɔ̀
         2SG=FUT-see   NMLZ   3PL=lie.face.down-ITER   shoulder   top
         "You will see that they (babies) are being carried on shoulders." (Lit: they are lying face-down on shoulders)   [OYO: 440]

(120) *àmɛ̀=tá-rà*   shɪ̀
         3PL=sit-ITER   down
         "They are sitting down/They sat down."

It is not possible to have a distributive posture verb occurring with a singular subject referent.

(121) *ò=bàá-!nɛ́   á!kɛ́   *è=bú-mɔ̀*   kɔ̀ɔ́ŋ   nɔ̀
         2SG=FUT-see   NMLZ   3SG=lie.face.down-ITER   shoulder   top
         "You will see that he is being carried on the shoulder."

(122) *è=tá-rà*   shɪ̀
         3SG=sit-ITER   down
         "He is sitting down/He sat down."

It has been observed that when it comes to posture verbs, especially the verb *tá* 'sit', Gã speakers are lax about the use of the iterative suffix when the subject is plural. As a result, sentences such as (123) and (124), where the plural subjects *do not* trigger iterative morphology on the verbs (as one would expect), are relatively common in the everyday repertoire of many Gã speakers. They are not considered ungrammatical or odd.

(123) ầmè̃ hū̃ ***ầmè̃=tá*** !shí dí́ŋ́ŋ
   3PL too 3PL = sit down quiet
   "They are also sitting down quietly." [DEB:117]

(124) mầŋkè̃ bè ní́ ***ầmè̃=ká́*** shì ààhū̃=!ɛ̃́
   middle.of.night time NMLZ 3PL = lie down continuously = DEF
   "In the middle of the night, while they were still lying down..." [PAT:13]

Distributive aspect may also be coded by complete reduplication of the verb followed by lengthening of the final vowel of the reduplicated verb and suffixation by the plural suffix -*i*. Reduplication is the primary means of expressing distributive aspect among poly-syllabic words as well as mono-syllabic words which do not take the iterative suffix. Knowing which words take the iterative suffix and which must be reduplicated is a matter of the speaker's competence. There is apparently no phonological, morphological or semantic rule which determines the choice of formal marking of iterativity on a particular verb. Examples (125)-(127) express distributive aspect by reduplication.

(125) ***á́=!tsákè***   ***tsàkèé-!í́*** ní́bíì pìì
   3PL.IMPERS.PERF = change change-PL things many
   "A lot of things have been changed." (Lit: "They have changed changed a lot of things.")

(126) má́ã̃bà nyɛ̃́=***gbélé*** ***gbèlèé-!í*** shí́nã̃à̃-í́=!ɛ̃́ nyɛ̃́=!fɔ̃́=!ɔ̃́
   why 2PL.PERF = open open-PL door-PL = DEF 2PL = throw = DEF
   "Why have you (pl.) left the doors wide open?"

(127) è=bí   bɨ̀í-ì   wɔ̀   sã̀jì̃   bàbàóó
      3SG=ask   ask-PL   1PL   questions   many
      "S/he asked us many questions."

It is also possible for a verb to be doubly marked, first by suffixation with the iterative suffix
and then by complete reduplication of the verb stem, as in (128). This construction exists
alongside those where there is only suffixation and no reduplication, as in (129).

(128) mã̀ŋ-bí!í=ɛ́   é-mã̀mɔ̀   mã̀mɔ̀ɔ́-!í   tsṹ-ì̃   yɛ̀   nɔ̃̀
      town-people=DEF   PERF-build   build-PL   house-PL   be.located   top
      "The towns people have built houses on it (the land)."

(129) mã̀ŋ-bí!í=ɛ́   é-mã̀mɔ̀   tsṹ-ì̃   yɛ̀   nɔ̃̀
      town-people=DEF   PERF-build   house-PL   be.located   top
      "The towns people have built houses on it (the land)."

Some speakers see no semantic or pragmatic difference between the pair in (128) and (129) and
between similar pairs containing different verbs. Others note that the sentence with the
reduplicated verb (128) connotes a sense of haphazardness or lack of planning associated with
the building of the houses i.e. several houses were built all over the place in a disorderly
fashion, while (129) without the reduplicated verb has no such connotation.

      The language does not require every event involving repetition and/or multiple
participants to be predicated with an iterative verb. That is, iterativity is not always signalled
formally. Certain verbs require formal marking while others do not. Others, such as the posture
verbs may or may not be formally marked.

3.2.3 Mood

This verbal category is often discussed in relation to modality, and the two are sometimes

viewed as indistinguishable. However, Palmer (2001:4) assumes an overarching category of

modality which is manifested in individual languages by mood systems or modal systems or

both. Palmer observes that while tense and aspect are concerned with features of the event

itself, modality is only concerned with the status of the proposition (Palmer 2001:1). This

relates to whether the proposition is presented as factual/non-factual or actualized/non-

actualized as well as the degree of the speaker's confidence in his assessment of that modal

status.

Mood systems are prototypically binary and consist of either realis or irrealis clauses. In

European linguistics this distinction is equivalent to that between the indicative and the

subjunctive. Typically, realis and indicative clauses predicate situations that have actually been

realized while irrealis and subjunctive clauses predicate situations and events that are

hypothetical or yet to be realized. As a result, in many languages that have the realis/irrealis

distinction, the future is marked as irrealis. This may or may not occur in combination with

other tense markers. Palmer writes that studies of various European languages have revealed

that the distinction between the indicative and subjunctive is better captured as one between

assertion and non-assertion. This is because the subjunctive, in addition to marking unrealized

events, is also found in propositions that express doubts about a statement's truth as well as

those propositions that are merely presupposed and not asserted (Palmer 2001:3).

Modal systems may also distinguish between realis and irrealis situations, but here there

are finer-grained distinctions relating to the speaker's evaluation of the factual status of the

proposition. The major division here is that between epistemic modality and deontic modality.

Givón (2001a:300) notes that these types of modalities code attitude towards a proposition and

they represent a judgment about the propositional content of the clause. This judgment could be

about truth, probability, certainty, belief, evidence (all epistemic modalities) or desirability,

preference, intent, ability, obligation and manipulation (all deontic modalities).

The facts of Gã show that it has a relatively simple modality system consisting of just

two irrealis moods, the subjunctive and imperative. The subjunctive is marked by the verbal

prefix *á-*. Together with various lexical verbs that possess inherent modal semantics, the

subjunctive is able to convey an array of modal meanings, all of which are deontic. This will be

the subject of the next section.

3.2.3.1 The subjunctive *á-*
The subjunctive prefix is realized as *á-* when the subject of the verb is a full NP (130).

(130) hèjɔ̀lɛ̀ *á-hɛ́*   nyɛ̃̀
      peace SBJV-give 2PL
      "Peace be unto you."   [CH:1]

When the subject is a pronoun, the segment /a/ of the subjunctive is deleted and its high tone

remains and docks on the final pronominal vowel (131).

(131) nɔ́-fɛ́ɛ́-nɔ́   ní   sà   bò   kèɛ́-mɔ́-!ɔ́

thing-all-thing   NMLZ fit   you   tell-NOM-DEF

ɛ́=!kɛ́ɛ́   bò
3SG.SBJV=tell   2SG.OBJ
"Everything that he needs to tell you, he should tell you." [CH:136]

If the verb stem is preceded by the auxiliary verb, *kɛ* 'take', the subjunctive is realized as a

high tone on *kɛ* (132).

(132) hé-mɔ́   ní   ó=*up and down*=ɛ́=!ɛ́   bè
get-IMP   NMLZ 2SG=   =DEF=DEF   then

ò=kɛ́-!wó   lɔ́lè
2SG=take.SBJV-carry   car
"Take this so that when you are running your errands, you can use it to pay for

transportation."   [FH:157]

The subjunctive is found in a number of syntactic environments but in all its

occurrences it conveys an imaginary, prospective or hypothetical event. Hence, it is irrealis.

There are two main syntactic environments which harbor the subjunctive: main clauses and

grammatical event nominalizations. In what follows, I outline the major modal meanings

conveyed by the subjunctive marker in each syntactic milieu.

A. Main clauses

i) Wishes, desires

Occasionally, the subjunctive is found in main clauses where it signals the speaker's wishes

and desires, as in (133) and (134).

(133) hèjɔ̀lɛ̀ *á-hɛ́*   nyɛ̀
     peace SBJV-give   2PL
     "Peace be unto you." OR "I wish you peace."   [CH:1]

(134) wɔ̀=tsɛ̀   ní   yɔ̀ɔ̀   ŋwɛ̀ĩ ó=gbɛ́ĩ   hè   *á-tsé*
     1PL=father NMLZ   be.HAB   up   2SG=name   body   SBJV-be.pure

     ó=mã̀ŋtsɛ̀-yé-lí   *á-!bá*
     2SG=king-eat-NOM   SBJV-come
     "Our father, who is in heaven, may your name be sanctified. May your kingdom come."
     [From "The Lord's Prayer"]

ii) Weak obligation, suggestion, recommendation

The subjunctive may also express a suggestion, recommendation or weak obligation.

(135) è=tsùí   é-fã̀   hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   *á=!mɛ́*   dɛ́ŋ
     3SG=heart   PERF-take.off   sake=TOP   3PL.IMPERS.SBJV=wait   before
     "He is afraid, so they should wait (before the surgery is done)."   [FH:130]

iii) Jussive

The subjunctive also plays a prominent role in imperative constructions; it is used to index

jussive mood, which is simply the equivalent of the first person (136) and third person (137)

imperative.

(136) *í̋=tä̋*   nyȅ   àlóó   *í̋=ká-tä̋*   nyȅ
       1SG.SBJV = narrate   2PL   or   1SG.SBJV = NEG.SBJV-narrate   2PL
       "Should I tell you (a story) or should I not tell you (a story)[13]?"

(137) mȍfïä̋mȍ   *á-féé*   díŋ́ŋ́
       everyone   SBJV-do   quiet
       "Everyone should be quiet."

B. Event nominalizations

So far, the examples have illustrated marking of the subjunctive on main clause predicates.

However, the vast majority of subjunctive predicates are found in event nominalizations

marked by the nominalizer, *ní̋*(See chapter 6 for a thorough discussion on grammatical

nominalizations). In traditional terminology these are known as subordinate clauses and *ní̋*is

termed a complementizer. Other nominalization markers are *kóní̋* and *á!ké.* Most of these event

nominalizations are complements of verbs with inherent deontic semantics such as *tá!ó* 'want',

sùmȍ 'like' and *bȍ mȍ̋déŋ́* 'try'. These verbs thus select event nominalizations that denote

hypothetical situations. The nominalizers may be overt, as in *á!ké* in (138a) or they may be

absent (138b).

(138a) è = kɛ̀ɛ́   á!kɛ́   *ɛ́ = !bá*
       3SG = say   NMLZ   3SG.SBJV = come
       "He said that s/he should come."

---

[13] This is a formulaic opener used in storytelling.

(138b) è=kɛ̀ɛ́   *é=!bá*
      3SG=say   3SG.SBJV=come
      "He said s/he should come."   [MM:93]

Below are the functions that they carry out.

i) Wishes, desires

The nominalizations may function as complements of verbs with inherently (deontic) modal senses such as *tá!ó* 'want' and *sùmɔ̀* 'like' in (139) and (140) respectively. These express the speaker's wishes or desires.

(139) nĩ̀   èè=tá!ó   nɪ̃́   *é=mã̀*   tsũ̀   é!kóŋ́ŋ́
     and   3SG.PROG=want   NMLZ   3SG.SBJV=build   house again
     "And he wants to build another house." (Lit: "He wants that he should build another house.")   [MM:17]

(140) hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   mã́=sùmɔ̀   kónɪ̃́ wɔ́=!ɔ́   *ɔ́=!bá*
     sake=TOP   1SG.FUT=like   NMLZ tomorrow=TOP   2SG.SBJV=come
     "So I would like for you to come tomorrow." (Lit: "I would like that tomorrow, you should come.")   [YM:291]

ii) Ability, possibility, permission

A deontic meaning of ability (141), possibility (142) or permission (143) is obtained when the event nominalization is the complement of *nyɛ̃́* 'be able to' and *nyɛ̃́* is in the future tense.

(141) è=bɛ́   nɔ̃́=!kó   nɔ̃́=!kó   nɪ̃́
     3SG=have.NEG   thing=INDEF   thing=INDEF   NMLZ

è=bàá-nyɛ̂   *é=!fɛ́ɛ́*   *é=hɛ̂́*   !mí

3SG=FUT-able   3SG.SBJV=do   3SG.SBJV=give   1SG.OBJ

"There is nothing that s/he can do for me." [MM:4]   → Ability

(142) hèwɔ̀ è=bàá-nyɛ̂   *é=dàmɔ̀*   *junction=ɛ́=ɛ̀*   mĩ̀ŋ

sake   3SG=FUT-be.able   3SG.SBJV=stand   =DEF=DEF   inside

"So she can stand at the junction." [YM:219]   → Possibility

(143) ò=bàá-nyɛ̂   nĩ́   *ó=tá*   !shĩ́

2SG=FUT=be.able NMLZ   2SG.SBJV=sit   down

"You may sit down."   → Permission

iii) Purpose complements

Event nominalizations that function as purpose complements must always have their predicates

marked for the subjunctive. *nĩ́* is the most widespread marker in such purpose complements

but *á!kɛ́* is also used. In (144), the event nominalization marked for subjunctive expresses

purpose and therefore intention.

(144) wɔ́=bà   nĩ́   *wɔ́=bá-já*   lè   kónĩ́

1PL.PERF-come   NMLZ 1PL.SBJV=VENT-worship 3SG.OBJ   NMLZ

wɔ́=bá-wò   wɔ̀=hé-mɔ̃̀   kè   yé-lí   mĩ̀ŋ

1PL.SBJV=VENT.SBJV-put   1PL=get-NOM   and   eat-NOM   inside

hèwàlè
strength
"We have come to worship him so that we will strengthen our faith."   [CH:9]

In (145), the subjunctive in the event nominalization gives the deontic meaning of supplication.

(145) wɔ̀=kɛ̀-bàá-tsɔ̃́ɔ̃́   àtàá   nàǎ́¹⁴   nyɔ̃ŋmɔ̃̀   á!kɛ́
       1PL=take-FUT-show   title.male   title.female   God   NMLZ

é=!jɔ́ɔ́   bàà   nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́   nɔ̃̀
3SG.SBJV=bless   leaf   this   top
"We will show it to God that he should bless these herbs."   [YM78]

In (146) it conveys a suggestion or weak obligation.

(146) fòsú   bèèbí=!ɛ́   kɛ́   ĩ̀=bá=!a   nǐ
       Fosu   baby=DEF   when   1SG=come=DEF   NMLZ

wɔ́=yá-sĺá   lɛ̀
1PL.SBJV=ITIV.SBJV-go   3SG.OBJ
"Fosu's baby, when I come, we should go and visit him." [DT:6;45]

iv) Strong obligation

When the event nominalization containing the subjunctive is a complement of the verb *sà* 'fit',

the clause expresses a strong obligation, (147), (148).

(147) à=kɛ̀ɛ́   ô   è=sà   nǐ   *á=!féé*
       3PL.IMPERS=say   IJ   3SG=fit   NMLZ   3PL.IMPERS.SBJV=do

lɛ̀   *operation*
3SG.OBJ
"They said oh, they had to perform an operation." [FH:125]

---

¹⁴ *àtàá* is a respectful form of address for older men. *nàǎ́* is a title commonly attached to most female Gã names. The two forms of address only occur together as a form of address for God.

In (148), there are two event nominalizations marked by *nî́*. The first is a complement of *sà* 'fit'

and expresses strong obligation while the second is a purpose complement.

(148) mɛ̀ĩ̀ nî́   à=fèé   nî́!î́-!ɛ́   è=sà   nî́
      people NMLZ   3PL=do   thing=DEF   3SG=fit   NMLZ

      ằmɛ̃́=dàmɔ̀̃   shĩ̀   nî́   *á=yè*   ŋ̀kpá!í
      3PL.SBJV=stand   down   NMLZ   3PL.IMPERS.SBJV=eat   prayer
      "Those who did the thing, they have to stand up so that prayers can be offered."
                                                                        [LIB:20]

v) Polite requests

In conjunction with the interjection, *ófáìnɛ̃́* 'please', the *nî́*-marked nominalization provides a

polite and more formal means of making requests, as exemplified in (149).

(149) mɛ́ã̀ ófáìnɛ̃́ nî́   *ó=wó*   ó=gbèè   nɔ̀̃
      mother please NMLZ   2SG.SBJV=lift   2SG=voice   top

      ó=hɛ̃́   !wɔ́   fĩ!óó
      2SG.SBJV=give   1PL   little
      "Mother, can you please raise your voice a little for us?"   [OYO:19]

3.2.3.2 Imperative mood

The imperative mood is also an irrealis category because it encodes actions that have yet to be

carried out; it encodes commands made of second persons. The form of the imperative depends

on the form of the verb in question. If it is a H-tone monosyllabic verb, its imperative form

remains unchanged, as we see with *tsɔ́* 'pour' and *shî́* 'leave' in (150) and (151) respectively.

(150)   *tsɔ́*   *tsɔ́*   nî   ó = !tɔ́

         pour   pour   NMLZ   2SG.SBJV = be.drunk

         "Go on, pour it! So you can get drunk."   [LIB:2,10]

(151)   *shî*   lɛ̀

         leave   3SG.OBJ

         "Leave her alone."

If the verb has monosyllabic L-tone, the imperative is realized as a H-tone copy of the final

vowel. We see this with *yà* 'go' (152) and *mɛ̀̂* 'wait' (153).

(152)   *yàá-hɛ́*   yɛ̀   è = dè

         go.IMP-take   be.located   3SG = hand

         "Go and take it from her."   [MM:138]

(153)   *mɛ̀ɛ̂*   míí = !bá

         wait.IMP   1SG.PROG = come

         "Wait, I'm coming."   [OYO:338]

If the verb is disyllabic, or is monosyllabic with a contour tone, the imperative is formed by the

suffixation of the morpheme *-mɔ́.* This is how the imperatives of *kɛ̀ɛ̂* 'tell', *hɛ̂* 'get' and *sɔ̀lè*

'pray' are formed in (154)-(156).

(154)   *kɛ̀ɛ́-mɔ́*   !lɛ́   á!kɛ́   míí = !yá

         tell-IMP   3SG.OBJ   NMLZ   1PROG = go

         "Tell her that I am going."   [MM:97]

(155)   *hɛ́-mɔ́*   nî   ó = *up and down* = ɛ̀ = !ɛ́   bɛ̀

         get-IMP   NMLZ   2SG =   = DEF = DEF   then

ò=ké-!wó   lɔ́lè
2SG=take.SBJV-carry   car
"Take this so that when you are running your errands, you can use it to pay for transportation."   [FH:157]

(156)   *sɔ́lé-mɔ̃́*   ó=hɑ̃́   ó=!hé
        pray-IMP   2SG.SBJV=give   2SG=body
        "Pray for yourself."   [CH:132]

A command issued to more than one addressee is formed with a high tone on the final

pronominal vowel and a suffix -*à*, as in (157). The high tone on the final vowel of the pronoun

is reminiscent of the subjunctive marker. Subjunctive marking on imperative constructions will

not be unusual, considering they both express irrealis mood.

(157)   *nyɛ̃́=mɔ̃́-à̃*   lè   nã̀kã̀ĩ̀   ó=nũ̀
        2PL.SBJV=hold-IMP.PL   it   like.that   2SG=hear
        "Take it as it is, ok?"   [CH:29]

When the imperative verb is *hɑ̃́* 'give' and its complement is an event nominalization with a

first plural subject, an hortative meaning results. The verb in the event nominalization must be

marked for the subjunctive. In (158) the command is issued to one individual, while in (159) it

is issued to more than one individual.

(158)   *hɑ̃́*   nĩ́   *wɔ́-tá*   tsò   nɛ̃́ɛ̃̀   nɔ̃̀
        give.IMP   NMLZ   1PL.SBJV-sit   log   this   top
        "Let us sit on this log."   [PAT:182]

(159) nyɛ́=hɑ́-!ɑ́   wɔ́=mɑ̀-mɔ̀-ɑ̀   wɔ̀=yítsè-ì
       2PL.SBJV=give-IMP.PL   1PL.SBJV=bend-ITER-IMP.PL   1PL=head-PL

à-shɪ̃̀
PERT-down
"Let us bow down our heads."   [CH:130]

It has been shown that the subjunctive marker á- and its (tonal) allomorphs encode

various modal meanings, all of them deontic. The expression of deontic modal meaning by the

subjunctive often goes hand in hand with the use of modal verbs such as tá!ó 'want', sùmɔ̀̃

'like' and nyɛ́ 'be able to'. Equally important is the role played by event nominalizations (a.k.a

subordinate clauses) marked by á!kɛ́, kónɪ́ and especially, nɪ́. The presence of a complement

introduced by nɪ́ all but guarantees subjunctive marking in the complement. Frajzyngier (1995)

makes a case for recognizing complementizers as modality markers. He writes that

"complementizers are lexically separate modality markers that happen to occur in a specific

syntactic position." (Frajzyngier 1995:475). According to him, they are just one means of

coding modality. I would not go as far as to make the same claim for nɪ́ and its cohorts because

they occur in other syntactic environments where there is no modal expression and where there

are realis rather than irrealis propositions. For instance, nɪ́ is the marker of verb-based

argument nominalizations in modification use (a.k.a relative clauses). What all these various

constructions marked by nɪ́ have in common appears to be that they are not asserted. This is the

case for Spanish and other European languages that have indicative/subjunctive mood marking; the subjunctive occurs in propositions that are not asserted (Palmer 2001:3).

The subjunctive does not convey any epistemic meanings. This function is left to epistemic adverbials such as *é!kólé!é* 'maybe' and *bèkɛ́* 'maybe'. See §2.5.4 for more examples of epistemic adverbials.

3.2.4 Negation

There are fewer aspectual distinctions among negative sentences in Gã than affirmative ones. This is a fact that has been recorded for neighbouring Akan by Osam (1994:87) and is also attested to cross-linguistically by Givón (1979:121).

3.2.4.1 Negative imperfectives and negative bare verbs

Dakubu (2008a:112) sets up two classes of verbs, based on their lexical tone, which differ according to how they form the negative of bare verbs, imperfective verbs and future verbs. She refers to the groups as verb tone classes. Her characterization of these tone classes is accurate and worth reproducing here. She notes that verbs in class 1 have their initial syllable lexically specified as low, while those in class 2 do not i.e. they have high tone or they are underspecified. Dakubu (2008a:113) notes that verbs with underspecified tone such as *ye* 'eat' and *nu* 'hear' have cognates in Dangme that have mid tone. The underspecificity of tone in

these verbs hearkens to a time historically when Gã had mid tones as well, that have since been

lost. It is these former mid tone verbs that are presently underspecified.

Class 1 verbs - first syllable low e.g. *yì* 'beat', *fɔ̀* 'throw', *kɔ̀* 'bite', *gbèé* 'fall', *shwìê* 'sack'
Class 2 verbs - first syllable high e.g. *yí* 'pass', *kɔ́* 'take', *tsá!ké* 'change', *fíté* 'spoil'
      OR   first syllable underspecified e.g. *ba* 'come', *ye* 'eat', *nũ* 'hear'
OR   disyllabic low-low e.g. *shã̀tã̀* 'tear off (esp. meat)', *sèlè* 'swim', *dã̀mɔ̀* 'stand'

      Class 2 verbs are negated by assigning a high tone to the final vowel of the verb and

lengthening it. In pre-pausal position the high pitch of the vowel falls during its final phase.

When not followed by a pause it has high tone throughout. Class 1 verbs are negated with the

prefix *é-* in addition to final vowel lengthening. In the following examples, the (a) sentences are

in the affirmative while the (b) sentences have the corresponding negative forms.

Bare verb - class 1
Affirmative
(160a) ákú   ***yì***   álɔ̀ǹté＝!ɛ́
       aku   beat   cat＝DEF
       "Aku beat the cat."

Negative

(160b) ákú   ***é-!yíí́***   álɔ̀ǹté＝!ɛ́
       aku   NEG-beat.NEG   cat＝DEF
       "Aku did not beat the cat."

(160c) *ákú   ***yíí́***   álɔ̀ǹté＝!ɛ́
       aku   beat.NEG   cat＝DEF
       "Aku did not beat the cat."

Bare verb - class 2

Affirmative

(161a) ákú   *!yí*   tsṹ=ɛ̀̃   sèè

aku   pass   building=DEF   back

"Aku passed (went via) the back of the building."

Negative

(161a) ákú   *yííí*   tsṹ=ɛ̀̃   sèè

aku   pass.NEG   building=DEF   back

"Aku did not pass (go via) the back of the building."

(161c) *ákú   *é-yííí*   tsṹ=ɛ̀̃   sèè

aku   NEG-pass.NEG   building=DEF   back

"Aku did not pass (go via) the back of the building."

Habitual aspect - class 1

Affirmative

(162a) ònṹfṹ   *kɔ̀-ɔ̀̃*   mɔ̀̃

snake   bite-HAB   person

"Snakes bite."

(162b) ònṹfṹ   *é-!kɔ́ɔ́ɔ́*   mɔ̀̃

snake   NEG-bite.NEG   person

"Snakes do not bite."

Habitual aspect - class 2

Affirmative

(163a) nǎná! á   *kɔ́-ɔ̀*   tsòfà̃   dáá   lèé!bí

nana   take-HAB   medicine   everyday   morning

"Nanaa takes medicine every morning."

Negative

(163b) nǎnǎ́!ǎ́   *kɔ́ɔ́ɔ́*   tsòfà̃   dáá   lèé!bí

        nana   take.NEG   medicine   everyday   morning

        "Nanaa does not take medicine every morning."

Progressive aspect - class 1 verb

Affirmative

(164a) òkó   *ŋ̀-shwìé*   wùɔ́-!í=ɛ́

        Oko   PROG-sack   chicken-PL=DEF

        "Oko is sacking the chickens (i.e. shooing them away)"

Negative

(164b) òkó   *é-shwíɛ́ɛ́ɛ́*   wùɔ́-!í=ɛ́

        Oko   NEG-sack.NEG   chicken-PL=DEF

        "Oko is not sacking the chickens"

Progressive aspect - class 2 verbs

Affirmative

(165a) òkó   *ŋ̀-sèlè*

        Oko   PROG-swim

        "Oko is swimming."

(165b) òkó   *séléê*

        Oko   swim.NEG

        "Oko is not swimming."

When the subject of a class 1 verb is a pronoun, the negative prefix segment is deleted

and its high tone is carried by the final syllable of the pronoun. The tone of the first syllable of

the verb stem is downstepped. The pronoun subject of a class 2 verb has low tones on all

syllables and there is no downstepping in the verb stem. Compare (166a) with the class 1 verb

and (166b) with the class 2 verb.

(166a) *àmɛ́ = !yɪ́ɪ́ɪ́*   álɔ̃̀nté = !ɛ́
       3PL = beat.NEG   cat = DEF
       "They did not beat the cat."

(166b) * à̃mɛ̃̀ = yɪ́ɪ́ɪ́*   tsɛ̃́ = ɛ̃̀   sɛ̀ɛ̀
       3PL = pass.NEG   building = DEF   back
       "They did not pass (go via) the back of the building."

3.2.4.2 Negative future

For class 2 verbs, the future is negated by the suffix *-ŋ̀*. For class 1 verbs, the negative prefix *é-*

is employed in addition to the negative future *-ŋ̀*. Only examples with full noun phrase subjects

will be given, but the tonal changes with regards to pronominal subjects that were illustrated

for bare and imperfective negatives are applicable here as well.

Class 1 - affirmative

(167a) kòjó   *bàá-sɛ̃̀*   kɛ̃̀né = !ɛ́
       Kojo   FUT-turn.on   light = DEF
       "Kojo will switch on the light."

Negative
(167b) kòjó   *é-sɛ̃́-ŋ̀*   kɛ̃̀né = !ɛ́
       Kojo   NEG-turn.on-NEG.FUT   light = DEF
       "Kojo will not switch on the light."

Class 2 - affirmative

(168a) è=ŋá̋   *bàá-!shí̋*   lè

       3SG=wife   FUT-leave   3SG.OBJ

       "His wife will leave him."

Negative

(168b) è=ŋá̋   *shí̋-ŋ̀*   lè

       3SG=wife   leave-NEG.FUT   3SG.OBJ

       "His wife will not leave him."

A negative future proposition can also be expressed by means of final vowel

lengthening, a strategy that, as has been shown, is ordinarily reserved for imperfectives and

bare verbs. It can convey future negation as long as it has been established in the discourse

context or extra-linguistic context that a future event is being referred to. For example, in (169)

when A asks B if she will attend a funeral (in future), B's negative response is not marked with

the negative future suffix -*ŋ*, but rather with the imperfective/bare verb negation strategy of

vowel lengthening.

(169) A: *ò=bàá-yà*   yàlá=à

             2SG=FUT-go   funeral=DEF

             "Will you go to the funeral?"

      B: *í̋=!yááá*

             1SG=go.NEG

             "I won't go."

3.2.4.3 Negative perfect

The negative perfect marker is the suffix, *-ko*. Class 1 verb stems take the additional negator *é-*.

This is manifested as a high tone on a pronominal subject and a downstepped high on the initial

stem syllable, as in (171) and (172) with the class 1 verbs *nã̀* 'see' and *tsɛ̀* 'be.long (duration)'.

Example (173) has the class 2 verb, *sɔ̀lè* 'pray (baptize)'

(171) è=bà   í=ŋɔ̃̀   nǐ   ǐ̃=kɛ̀ɛ́   *í=!ná-kò*
       3SG=come   1SG=presence   and   1SG=say   1SG.NEG=see-NEG.PERF

       dollar dã́ŋ
             before
       "He came to see me and I said I have not seen dollar currency before."   [MM:64]

(172) ǐ̃=bà   *é=!tsé-kò*   kɍáá   ê
       1SG=come   3SG.NEG=be.long-NEG.PERF   at.all   IJ
       "I came not very long ago." (Lit: "I came, it has not been long at all")   [FH:106]

(173) á=sɔ̀lè   bò   òò
       3PL.IMPERS.PERF=baptise   2SG.OBJ   IJ

       à=sɔ́lé-kò   bò   òò
       3PL.IMPERS=baptise-NEG.PERF   2SG.OBJ   IJ

       dáá   áfǐ=!ɛ́   à=bàá-féé   á-hã̋
       everyday   year=TOP   3PL.IMPERS=FUT-do   3PL.IMPERS.SBJV-give
       bò
       2SG.OBJ
       "Whether you've been baptized or you haven't been baptized, every year it will be done
       for you."   [OYO:152]

3.2.4.4 Negative subjunctive

This is marked by the prefix *ká-*. It is the only negative prefix that co-occurs with its

affirmative counterpart i.e. it co-occurs with, and immediately follows, the subjunctive prefix

á-. This is seen clearly in (174).

(174) nǐ̃   è=télé   è=gbèé=!ɛ́   kóní̃   gbèé=!ɛ́
       and   3SG=carry.on head   3SG=dog=DEF   NMLZ   dog=DEF

       nṹ=!ɛ̃́   *á-ká-fɔ̀*   lè   tsɔ́
       water=DEF   SBJV-NEG.SBJV-get.wet   3SG.OBJ   too.much
       "And he carried his dog on his head so that the dog would not get too wet."
       [DEB:143]

In (175), the subjunctive is marked as a high tone on the pronoun subjects.

(175) T: í̃=kɛ̀ɛ́   !lɛ́   á!kɛ́   nyɔ̃̀ŋmɔ̃̀   kɛ̀ɛ́
            1SG.PERF=say   3SG.OBJ   NMLZ God   say

            é=!tsá   lè   hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   *é=ká-!yá*
            3SG.PERF=heal   3SG.OBJ   sake=TOP   3SG.SBJV=NEG.SBJV-go
            "I've told her that God says He has healed her so she should not go."

       D: hɛ̀ɛ́!ɛ̃́   *é=ká-yà*   mòŋ́
            yes   3SG.SBJV=NEG.SBJV-go   indeed
            "Yes. Indeed, she should not go."   [DT: 17;20]

3.2.4.5 Negative imperative
An imperative (issued to a single addressee) is negated by employing the subjunctive marker *á-*

in combination with the negative subjunctive prefix, *ka-*. The difference is that *ka-* in these

negative imperatives occurs before the subjunctive marker. In negative subjunctives, the

negator occurs after the subjunctive marker. It is more useful, then, to think of the morpheme,

ká- as a negative irrealis marker since it functions to negate irrealis propositions generally.

Examples (176) and (177) contain negative imperative propositions.

(176) *kà-á-fó*   nĩ́   ó=yítsò bà-gbá bò
   NEG.SBJV-SBJV-cry NMLZ 2SG=head VENT-split 2SG.OBJ
   "Don't cry and give yourself a headache." [FH:178]

(177) ô Mr. Mensah *kà-á-!shwíé*   ĩ́=hĩ́ɛ̃
   oh Mr. Mensah NEG.SBJV-SBJV-pour 1SG=face

   à-shĩ̀
   PERT-down
   "Oh, Mr. Mensah, don't embarass me." (Lit: "…don't pour my face down.")
   [MM:49]

An imperative given to more than one addressee is negated by the negative irrealis

prefix *ká-* occurring immediately after the plural pronoun. The subjunctive is marked on the

plural pronoun by a high tone.

(178) *nyɛ̃́=ká-gbá-á*   ĩ́=nã̀ã̀
   2PL.SBJV=NEG.SBJV-split-IMP.PL 1SG=mouth
   "Don't bother me."

The following table summarizes the negative morphemes in Gã:

Table 10: Negative marking in Ga

	Class1	Class 2
Bare verb	é-STEM-v́v́	STEM-v́v́
Progressive		
Habitual		
Future	é-STEM-ŋ́, é-STEM-v́v́	STEM-ŋ́, é-STEM-v́v́
Perfect	é-STEM-kò	STEM-kò
Subjunctive	á-ká-STEM	
Imperative (2nd singular)	kà-á-STEM	
Imperative (2nd plural)	ká-STEM-à	

3.2.5 Deictic auxiliaries ba- and ya-

These auxiliary verbs are attached to the verb root in the immediate pre-verb position. They are

homophonous with the independent verbs *bà* 'come' and *yà* 'go', except for tone; the deictic

auxiliaries are toneless and receive their tone from adjacent syllables. They are not considered

affixes because in many contexts they are optional and they have content meaning - they

indicate motion towards (ventive *ba-*) or away from (itive *ya-*) some deictic centre. There are

other contexts in which the ascription of a motional interpretation is not optimal, and here the

deictic verbs perform functions ranging from time reference to change in Aktionsart. These

grammatical functions are performed primarily by *ba-*.

The data shows that Gã speakers are particularly attuned to explicating the paths of travel of subject referents in accomplishing actions or carrying out events. This is done by indicating motion toward the deictic centre with *ba,* and motion away from the deictic centre with *ya*. The deictic centre may be the speaker or some third person, or in narratives it could be the narrator's imagined location in the scene. In (179), the speaker is reporting a directive given by one Auntie Kai in which Auntie Kai asks her to come and pick something up. Here, Auntie Kai is the deictic centre and the speaker is to move to her location, hence the use of the ventive auxiliary, *ba-*.

(179) Auntie Kai   kèɛ́   * í̃=bá-kɔ́*   níǐ=!ɛ́
       Auntie Kai   say   1SG.SBJV=VENT-take   thing=DEF
       "Auntie Kai says I should come and take the thing."   [MM:123]

In (180), the deictic centre is the speaker, a traditional priestess who makes a herbal preparation through which people make supplications during the twin festival. The ventive marker indicates motion towards the location of the herbal preparation, which is also the home of the priestess. The location of the herbs is therefore the deictic centre in this situation.

(180) nɔ̃́   ní̃   bò   *ó=bà-bí̃=!ɛ́*   hã̀ã̂jĩ̃=!ɛ́
       NM   NMLZ   2SG.OBJ   2SG.PERF=VENT-ask=DEF   twins=DEF

       àmɛ̃́=fèé   àmɛ̃́=!hɛ̃́   bò
       3PL.PERF=do   3PL.PERF=give   2SG.OBJ
       "What you have come and asked for…the twins, they have done it for you."
       [YM:103]

In (181), the itive auxiliary, *ya,* conveys motion away from the deictic centre, which is the speaker.

(181) ò=sùmɔ̃̀   nĩ́   *mã́=!yá-hé*   shìká=!á   yὲ   è=dè
       2SG=want   NMLZ 1SG.FUT=ITIV-take money=DEF be.located   3SG=hand
       "Do you want me to go and take the money from her?"   [MM:136]

A deictic auxiliary verb may be optional or obligatory, and the decision to use one is based on how much information about the event the speaker wishes to communicate. For example, (181) without itive *ya-* will communicate the core of the message that the speaker is sending i.e. whether the addressee will like him to retrieve the money from the third person. Crucially, it will remain ambivalent on the third party's location because without *ya-*, the third party could be in the same location as the participants of the conversation and could even be privy to the exchange. However, use of *ya-* makes it unequivocal that the third party is not in the same location and that the speaker will need to move to the third party's location in order to claim the money. Similarly, (180) without *ba-* will be devoid of information on the location of the asking. Example (179) is parallel to (181) with regard to the semantic effect of the deictic auxiliary. Without it, the more natural interpretation is one where "the thing" is in fact *not* in Auntie Kai's possession. Therefore, although not obligatory, in certain pragmatic contexts, non-use of a deictic auxiliary may lead to flouting of Grice's maxim of manner, due to the ambiguity or vagueness that results.

There are other contexts in which the use of a deictic auxiliary is crucial to an adequate understanding of the message because it gives temporal information that maintains text coherence. This is often the case when the deictic auxiliary occurs with a bare verb which has a default present tense interpretation. The use of a deictic auxiliary with such a verb gives a past interpretation. In the last line of (182), for instance, the verb *dɑ̀̃mɔ̃̀* is marked by the ventive auxiliary, *ba-* which expresses the movement of the boy and dog to the window. Hoewever, *ba-* plays an indispensable role in signifying that the event occurred in the past. Without it the sentence would be given a present tense interpretation ("They are standing by the window"), which would be temporally incongruous with the prior and successive texts, all of which have past time reference.

(182) kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né=!ɛ́   bɛ́   è=tɔ́=ɔ̀   mὶ̀ŋ
       frog=DEF   be.located.NEG   3SG=bottle=DEF   inside

       é=làájé   nò   hèwɔ́ nὶ̀   ɑ̀̃mɛ̃̀=bɔ́!í   tsɛ̃́=!ɛ̃̀   mὶ̀ŋ
       3SG.PERF-go.missing   that   sake   FOC   3PL=start   room=DEF   inside

       tàò-mɔ̃̀   ɑ̀̃mɛ̃̀=wósò   àtàlé-!í   *boots* nɛ́   !jí   àspáàtr̀é
       look.for-NOM   3PL=shake   dress-PL   which   COP   shoe

       àgbò-ì   nɛ́   kɑ̃́-!mɔ́   jé!mɛ́ gbèé=ɛ̀   kɛ̀   è=yítsò
       big-PL   NMLZ   lie-ITER   there dog=DEF   take   3SG=head

       hɔ̀   *jar*   mὶ̀ŋ   fɛ́ɛ́   àmɛ́=!nɑ́ɑ́ɑ́   lɛ̀   *ɑ̀̃mɛ̃̀=bà-dɑ̀̃mɔ̃̀*
       put   inside all   3PL=see.NEG   3SG.OBJ 3PL=VENT-stand

sámfèlɛ́=ɛ̀	nã̀ã̀
window=DEF	mouth

'The frog was not in his bottle. He was missing. So they started to look for him. They shook the clothes, boots, which are the big shoes lying over there. The dog even put his head into the jar but they still couldn't find him. They came and stood by the window.' [DEB:7]

In the same vein, while *ká̃* 'lie' in (183a) may have a past or present time interpretation, *yà-ká̃* in (183b) can only have a past interpretation.

(183a)

gbèé=ɛ̀	*ká̃*	sàà-tsó=ɛ̀	nɔ̃̀
dog=DEF	lie	bed-wood=DEF	top

"The dog is lying on the bed/The dog lay on the bed."

(183b)

gbèé=ɛ̀	*yà-ká̃*	sàà-tsó=ɛ̀	nɔ̃̀
dog=DEF	ITIV-lie	bed-wood=DEF	top

"The dog went and lay on the bed"

Sometimes the deictic auxiliaries occur with verbs without any accompanying sense of motion. Such non-motional senses typically occur with telic and punctual verbs i.e. Accomplishment verbs. In (184), although the verb *gbó* 'die' is marked by ventive *ba-*, it is not being suggested that the subject referent moved from one location to the speaker before giving up the ghost.

(184)

kpàákóò	é=!ná̃	*fifty-six*	nĩ̀	*é=bà-gbó*
just	3SG.PERF=get		and	3SG.PERF=VENT-die
né̃!ɛ̃́				
this				

"He has just turned fifty-six, and he has died (lit: "he has come and died")."   [DF:3]

The agent of the verb with ventive marking, *óyí!tsó* 'your head', in (185) is inanimate and

therefore incapable of motion, so *ba-* is not indicating spatial deixis, which prompts the

question of what work it must be doing.

(185) kà-á-fó   nî́   ó=yítsò   **bà-gbá**   bò
       NEG.SBJV-SBJV-cry   NMLZ   2SG=head   VENT-split   2SG.OBJ
       "Don't cry and give yourself a headache." (Lit: "Don't cry or else your head will come
       and ache you)   [FH:178]

The same question can be posed of the function of *ba-* in (186), where its subject referent, *twí!ɛ́*

é!kó 'some Twi', clearly lacks any capacity for motion. To provide some context, (186) is a

continuance of the utterance in (104).

(186) hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   kɛ́   àléénɔ̂   twí=!ɛ́   ékò   **bà-fútù**
       so=TOP   if   perhaps   Twi=DEF   some   VENT-mix

       mî̀ŋ=!ɛ́   nyɛ̂=mɔ̂-à̀   lè   nàkà̀ì
       inside=DEF   2PL.SBJV=hold-IMP.PL   3SG.OBJ   like.that

       ó=nũ̀
       2SG=hear
       "So, if perhaps some Twi gets mixed in (with my speech), take it as it is, ok?" (Lit: "If
       perhaps some Twi comes and mixes (with my speech)…")[CH:28]

I propose that the function of the deictic auxiliary in situations where there is obviously

no spatial meaning is to indicate the occurrence of a change of state by highlighting the

beginning point of the state change. It therefore has an ingressive aspectual function, where

emphasis is placed on the entering into of a new state. So when a verb is marked by a deictic

auxiliary and imparts motional semantics, the verb is viewed perfectively. However, when the

deictic auxiliary conveys no sense of motion, then the focus is on one stage of the event rather

than the whole. It is often the ventive auxiliary, *ba-* which performs this aspectual function.

This semantic difference is reflected in the incompatibility of *ba*-marked verbs (without

motional semantics) with the temporal adverbial clause, *étsὲ* 'long time ago'.

(187a) *è=gbó* é=tsὲ
   3SG=die 3SG.PERF=be.long
   "He died a long time ago" (Lit: "He died, it has been a long time")

(187b) **è=bà-gbó*   é=tsὲ
   3SG=VENT-die 3SG.PERF=be.long.time
   "He died a long time ago" (Lit: He came and died, it has been a long time)

(188a) *è=tsákè* è=jwὲ̀ŋ-mɔ̀̃   é=tsὲ
   3SG=change 3SG=think-NOM 3SG=be.long.time
   "He changed his mind a long time ago."

(188a) **è=bà-tsákè*   è=jwὲ̀ŋ-mɔ̀̃   é=tsὲ
   3SG=VENT-change   3SG=think-NOM 3SG=be.long.time
   "He came and changed his mind a long time ago."

As mentioned above, deictic auxiliaries which lack a motion dimension tend to be telic, and in

narratives this association is effectively exploited as a means of ensuring discourse cohesion

(Campbell 2014:92).

   The deictic auxiliaries can co-occur with all TAM markers except the progressive (189).

(189) *ầmɛ̃̀-ŋ̀-yà-wìé   pìì
      3PL-PROG-ITIV-speak   plenty
      "They are going to talk a lot."

They also cannot occur with the generic habitual i.e. habituals which indicate the typical

properties of an entity (190).

(190) *àbónúá   bà-jó-ɔ̀
      lime   VENT-bitter-HAB
      "Lime comes to be bitter."

This incompatibility of the deictic auxiliaries with these two imperfective categories is the

result of the strong association of the auxiliaries with past time reference. Since the progressive

and generic habitual have present time reference in many contexts, a contradiction results when

they are combined with the deictic auxiliaries. Dynamic habituals, on the other hand, do not

have a present time interpretation and so are free to occur with the deictic auxiliaries, as (191)

shows.

(191) ònű̄kpá-ì   yà-à   à=yà-tsé-ɔ̀   kɛ̀-bà-à
      adult-PL   go-HAB   3PL.IMPERS=ITIV-pluck-HAB   take-come-HAB

      nĩ̀   ầmɛ̃̀=bà-hɔ̃́-ɔ̃̀
      and   3PL=VENT-sell-HAB
      "Adults go and pluck them (herbs) and bring them and sell them."   [OYO:230]

If the verb is explicitly marked for the future, the past semantics of the deictic auxiliaries is

overridden, and the two categories can coexist:

(192) *à=bàá-!yá-mĩã̂*   mĩ̀
  3PL.IMPERS=FUT-ITIV-squeeze 1SG.OBJ
  "I will be groped" (Lit: They will go and squeeze me) [LIB: 1,57]

It must be stressed that the deictic auxiliaries are not tense markers. As discussed in

§3.2.1.2 the combination of the deictic auxiliaries and the archaic future/modal marker *àá-* gave

rise to the modern future marker *bàá-* and the prospective marker *yàá-*. They also function as

ventive and itive imperative markers, as in (193) and (194).

(193) *bàá-!yé*   nĩ́!ĩ́
  come.IMP-eat thing
  "Come and eat."

(194) *yàá-kɔ́*
  go.IMP-take
  "Go and take (it)" [MM:125]

3.3 Transitivity and grammatical relations

The verbal clause in Gã comprises a verb and at the minimum, one argument. This single

argument corresponds to the subject and Dixon (2010) refers to this argument as being in S

function. Such a clause is thus an intransitive clause. In (195) the single argument and subject

of the clause is *yòómó!ɛ́* 'the old woman'. In (196) it is *mã̃́*, a portmanteau comprising the first

singular pronoun and the future marker. In (197) it is the third singular pronoun *è=* and in

(198) it is *nũ̀ũ̃́=!ɛ̃́.*

(195) *yòómó=!ɛ́*   é-!fó   ã̀ã̀hű̃ù̃

       old.woman=DEF   PERF-cry   continuously

       "The old woman has cried continuously."   [FH:170]

(196) ɛ̃̀ɛ̃́!ɛ̃́   *mɑ̃́=!mɛ̃́*

       yes   1SG.FUT=wait

       "Yes, I will wait."   [YM:201]

(197) *é=*tã̀

       3SG=be.finished

       "It's finished."   [MM:219]

(198) *nṹ̀ṹ=ɛ̃̀*   shɑ̃́!né

       man=DEF   slip

       "The man slipped."

The argument in S function may be an agent (195), (196), or patient (197), (198). All S

arguments of verbal property words bear the semantic role of patient, e.g. (199) and (200).

(199) *òkó*   *yítsò-ŋ̀*   wà

       Oko   head-inside be.hard

       "Oko is wicked."

(200) *è=*kwɔ̀

       3SG=be.tall

       "She is tall."

       A verb may also have two arguments, resulting in a transitive clause. In most cases, one

argument is the actor, agent or initiator of the action coded by the verb and the other is the

entity that is affected by the action. But this is not always the case and in this regard, Dixon

(2010:128) provides a definition that encapsulates the various roles of what he terms the A

function. He writes: "That role which is most likely to be related to the success of the activity is placed in A function." Here, A refers to the transitive subject argument. The A function may therefore be occupied by an agent or even a patient. On the other hand, "that role whose referent is most likely to be significantly affected will be placed in O function" (Dixon 2010:130). This is the transitive object argument and is often taken up by the semantic role of patient. It is more widely referred to as the most patient-like argument (therefore P) and it will be referred to as such in the remainder of this work. For Gã, the object argument is also frequently taken up by locations and goals; places where subject arguments move to or from.

Gã is strictly verb-medial: the subject always precedes the verb and the object always follows the verb. In (201) and (202), the subjects, *é=* '3SG' and *gbé!ké̃-nṹṹ !lé* 'the boy' respectively, bear the roles of agent while the objects, *gbé!ké̃!ẽ́ gú!gɔ̃́* 'the child's nose' and *tsò àgbò kò* 'a big tree' are both patients.

(201) *è=* bà-kɔ̃̀   *gbé!ké̃=!ẽ́*   *gú!gɔ̃́*
       3SG = VENT-bite   child = DEF   nose
       "He came and bit the child's nose." [PAT:91]

(202) *gbé!ké̃-nṹṹ*   *!lé*   hṹ   nã̀   *tsò*   *àgbò*   *kò*
       child-male   DEF   too   see   tree   big   INDEF
       "The boy also saw a big tree."   [MAN:62]

In (203) and (204) the objects are locations - *mã̀ŋsèè* 'abroad' and *ódèŋ̀* 'your palm' respectively.

(203) *èè=*yà   *mã̀ŋ-sèè*
       3SG.PROG=go   country-back
       "He's going abroad."   [DF:21]

(204) *èè=*jè   *ó=dè̀ŋ*
       3SG.PROG=exit   2SG=palm
       "He's dying."   [CH:76]

3.3.1 Evidence for subjecthood and objecthood

From the above discussion and example sentences given so far, it is clear that word order in Gã

is strictly SVO, but so far the terms 'subject' and 'object' have been used without any real

justification. In order to determine whether Gã has the grammatical relations of subject and

object, there needs to be determined whether there are any syntactic phenomena that apply

equally to the arguments that have been labelled as subjects and which do not apply to those

arguments labelled as objects. In other words, are A and S arguments treated alike while P

arguments are treated differently in Gã? If the answer to this is affirmative, then Gã

grammatical relations are functionally similar to those in languages like English where A and S

undergo various syntactic phenomena from which P is excluded. A and S are then subjects and

P is object, giving a nominative-accusative case system.

The syntactic behaviours in Gã that establish A and S as one grammatical relation

distinct from P are word order, pronominalization, raising and indispensability of A and S.

These will be examined in turn.

i) Word order

A and S arguments always occur before the verb while P occurs after the verb in the immediate

post-verbal position. As hinted at earlier, the A or S argument need not necessarily be an agent.

It may be a patient, instrument, recipient, location or benefactor. The P argument, on the other

hand, cannot be an agent. It is usually a patient, location or recipient. Switching the order of the

A and P arguments results in a different meaning. Example:

(205a) tsàtsú !tsɛ́   òkó
       ant   sting Oko
       "An ant stung Oko."

(205b) òkó   !tsɛ́   tsàtsú
       Oko   sting ant
       "Oko stung an ant."
       *"An ant stung Oko."

In a few verbs, the patient occurs in object position but the subject is not an agent. Rather it is a

dummy subject, the third singular pronoun, *è=*. One such example is the verb for 'be tired'

which is meaningful only when it occurs with the dummy subject and the patient object. The

subject, *e=* is non-referential.

(206) *ɛ́=tɔ̀*   mĩ̀
       3SG.PERF=tire   1SG.OBJ
       "I am tired."

Since A and S occur pre-verbally and P occurs post-verbally, this is taken as indication of the

similarity of A and S, and since they can both code agents and P cannot, they are deemed

subjects.

i) Pronominalization

When singular A and S arguments are pronominalized, they take the same form (indicated in

the second column of table 11), while singular pronominal P forms are different (third column).

In very formal registers of Gã, the form of the first singular subject pronoun is the same as the

object but in conversational Gã they are different, as indicated in the table. The second singular

object could also be identical in form with its subject counterpart, *o,* but this use is very rare.

bò is the more commonly-used objective form.

Table 11: Singular pronominal forms

	Subject (A & S)	Object (P)
1st person	*ĩ=/mĩ=*	*mĩ*
2nd person	*o=*	*bo/o*
3rd person	*e=*	*lɛ/Ø*

The following examples illustrate this difference. In the intransitive clause (207a) and the

transitive clause (207b), the argument in S and A function respectively is the second singular

pronoun, *o*=. However, in the transitive clause in (207c), the second singular pronoun occurs

in P function, and is realized as *bo*.

(207a) bɛ́   *ò*=bàá-mɛ̀

       QP   2SG=FUT-wait

       "You will wait, won't you?"   [YM:200]

(207b) *ò*=bàá-!yá-hé   dầầ   tɔ̀   kòmé

       2SG=FUT-ITIV-buy   alcohol   bottle   one

       "You will go and buy one bottle of alcohol."   [YM:89]

(207c) ê   è=yóó   ***bò***   ê

       IJ   3SG=recognize   2SG.OBJ   IJ

       Wow, she recognized you!   [DF:139]

Similarly, with the third person singular pronoun, S and A arguments are realized by *e*=

(208a), (208b), while P arguments are realized by *lɛ* if they are animate, and zero if they are

inanimate.

(208a) *é*=!hɛ́ɛ̃́ɛ̃́ɛ̃́

       3SG=be.good.NEG

       "It didn't get better"   [CH:43]

(208b) *è*=yà-gbèé   fàà   mĩ̀ŋ

       3SG=ITIV-fall   river   inside

       "He went and fell into a river."   [SAM:95]

(208c) *Janet*   yà-kwɛ́-ɔ̀   ***lɛ̀***   fíòfí!ó

       Janet   ITIV-look-HAB   3SG.OBJ   small.RED

       "Janet goes and cares for her every now and then."   [DT:9;28]

There is also a third plural impersonal pronoun for A and S arguments, *a=*, but it has no P

argument counterpart. The use of this pronoun is a means of downgrading the importance of

the argument in A or S function, leading to a reading not unlike a passive in languages with

passive constructions. There is no equivalent pronoun whose function it is to downgrade the

importance of an argument in P function. In (209a), *á=* is in S function and in (209b) it is in A

function.

(209a) *á=*sɔ̀lè
      3PL.IMPERS.PERF=pray
      "Prayers have been said."   [CH:64]

(209b) mẽ̀nɩ̃́   *à=*tsɛ́-!ɔ́   jɛ̃́!mɛ̃́
      what   3PL.IMPERS=call-HAB   there
      "What is that place called?"   [FH:51]

Within the singular pronominal system therefore, A and S have the same form while P is

different. Plural forms are isomorphic between A, S and P and so do not serve to distinguish

subject from object.

ii) Raising

S and A arguments in a grammatical event nominalization in complement function (a.ka.

complement clause) are capable of being raised from their A or S function in the

nominalization to P function in the main clause. In other words, the subject of the grammatical

event nominalization (a.k.a the lower clause) is raised to become the object of the higher

clause. This happens when the event nominalization is a complement of a perception verb such

as *nã̀* 'see'. P arguments cannot undergo this type of raising. In (210a), Aku is the S argument

in the nominalization but is raised to become the P argument in the main clause in (210b).

Further evidence that it is in P function is given in (210c), where it is pronominalized with *lɛ*,

the third person object pronoun.

(210a) òkó nã̀ nɪ́ **ákú** ŋ̀-fó
      Oko saw NMLZ Aku PROG-cry
      "Oko saw that Aku was crying."

(210b) òkó nã̀ **ákú** nɪ́ èè＝fó
      Oko saw Aku NMLZ PROG＝cry
      "Oko saw Aku crying."

(210c) òkó nã̀ **lɛ̀** nɪ́ èè＝fó
      Oko saw Aku NMLZ PROG＝cry
      "Oko saw her crying."

Example (211a) contains an event nominalization which has both an A argument (Ama) and a

P argument (*tsó!ɛ́* 'the tree'). Although the A argument can be raised (211b), the P argument

cannot (211c).

(211a) wɔ̀＝nã̀ nɪ́ **á!mã́** ŋ̀-kɔ̀ tsó＝!ɛ́
      1PL＝see NMLZ Ama PROG-climb tree＝DEF
      "We saw Ama climbing the tree."

(211b) wɔ̀＝nã̀ **á!mã́** nɪ́ èè＝kɔ̀ tsó＝!ɛ́
      1PL＝see Ama NMLZ 3SG.PROG＝climb tree＝DEF
      "We saw Ama climbing the tree."

(211c) *wɔ̀=nã̀   *tsó=!ɛ́*   nɛ́   á!mã́ ŋ̀-kɔ̀
     1PL=see   tree=DEF   NMLZ   Ama   PROG-climb

The syntactic phenomenon of subject raising therefore treats A and S alike in permitting them to be raised and treats P differently in barring it from being raised.

iii) Indispensability of A and S

Each and every predicate in Gã must have a subject i.e. an A or S argument. A clause without a subject is ungrammatical. However, a clause without an object argument is permissible, even when the verb is capable of having an object. For example (208a) and (208b) above, repeated below as (212a) and (213a) without their S and A arguments respectively will result in the ungrammatical sentences in (212b) and (213b) below.

(212a) *é=!hĩ́ĩ̀ĩ̀*
     3SG=be.good.NEG
     "It didn't get better"   [CH:43]

(212b) *hĩ́ĩ̀ĩ̀
     be.good.NEG
     "It didn't get better"

(213a) *è=yà-gbèé*   fàà   mĩ̀ĩ̀ŋ
     3SG=ITIV-fall   river   inside
     "He went and fell into a river."   [SAM:95]

(213b) *yà-gbèé   fàà   mĩ̀ĩ̀ŋ
     ITIV-fall   river   inside
     "He went and fell into the river."

However, the following well-formed sentences have no object.

(214) yè-í=ɛ̀   ŋ̀-lá
       woman-PL=DEF   PROG-sing
       "The women are singing."

(215) ã̀mɛ̃̀=bé-ɔ̀   tsɔ́
       3PL=quarrel-HAB   too.much
       "They quarrel too much"

The syntactic phenomena discussed above shows that Gã treats A and S arguments the same and O arguments differently. This is equivalent to what pertains in languages like English that have established subject and object grammatical relations. Therefore, one can posit that the arguments that occur in A and S function in Gã are subjects, while those that occur in P function are objects.

3.3.2 Ditransitive clauses

In the preceding sections, we have seen examples of clauses which have no object (intransitive clauses) and those which have one object (monotransitive clauses). Certain verbs are capable of occurring with two objects, resulting in ditransitive clauses/constructions. Examples of such verbs are *hã́* 'give', *kè* 'gift (v.)', *wò* 'wear, apply', *mã̀* 'lend', *fã̀* 'borrow', *ŋmã̀* 'write (a letter)'. Some example sentences are given below, with the two objects in bold:

(216) òkó   kè   ***mî̀***   ***kùè-nî́!í́***
       Oko   gift   1SG.OBJ   neck-thing
       "Oko gifted me a necklace."

(217) kèkɛ́=!ɛ́   á=wò   *nyɛ̀*   *àtàlé*   *fine*
      then=TOP   3PL.IMPERS.PERF=wear   2PL   dress
      "…then you will be dressed in fine clothes."   [OYO:165]

(218) kónɛ́   kɛ́   ò=tèè   shɛ́!ɛ́=!ɛ́   kónɛ́   ó=yá-hɛ́   *lὲ*
      NMLZ when 2SG=go.PST home=DEF   NMLZ 2SG=ITIV-give   him

      tsòfɛ̀̃-jǐ=!ɛ́
      medicine-PL=DEF
      "So that when you go home you will go and give him the medicines."   [CH:54]

Many ditransitive clauses are a means of expressing acts of transfer of some entity (usually

inanimate or non-human) to another entity (usually animate). The transfer need not be physical,

as in the case of the verbs *tsɔ̀ɔ̂* 'teach/show', *kὲê* 'tell', *tɛ̃́* 'narrate.a.folktale' and *gbà* 'narrate',

where the thing being passed on is abstract or at the very least, intangible. The verb *bí* 'ask' is

atypical in that although it takes two objects, there is no transfer involved. In terms of semantic

roles, the argument in A function is the agent, the argument that is transferred is the theme (T)

and the argument to which the transfer is made is the recipient/benefactive (R). The recipient

occurs in the immediate post-verbal position, followed by the theme. Since arguments in Gã are

morphologically unmarked, the ditransitive construction shows neutral alignment in terms of

encoding across constructions i.e. the P of a monotranstive construction does not have similar

coding to either the R or T of a ditransitive construction; no argument has any coding. This

type of ditransitive construction is known as a double object construction.

3.3.2.1 Identifying the direct and indirect object in a ditransitive clause

A decades-old problem in syntax is that of ascertaining which object in a ditransitive

construction is the direct object i.e. which object exhibits the same syntactic behavior as the

single object in a transitive clause. The other object, by virtue of not exhibiting these

characteristics nor characteristics of the subject, is then ascribed the status of indirect object. In

order to answer this question with respect to Gã, one must recognize that various objects will

display various syntactic properties depending on the verb they occur with. Therefore, not all

direct objects in ditransitive clauses are the same. Some exhibit more typical direct object

features than others.

The syntactic tests that will be used to determine which of the two objects aligns more

with the direct object of a monotransitive construction are word order, pronominalization, equi-

NP reference in complementation and to some extent, focalization. The first two phenomena

are considered coding patterns while the rest are behavioural patterns (Malchukov et. al

2010:10).

i) Word order

Since in a monotransitive clause the argument in immediate post-verbal position is the direct

object, we may posit then that in a ditransitive clause the argument in this position is also the

direct object. This by itself is not conclusive evidence as there are other languages like English

where the reverse obtains i.e. the argument immediately following the verb is the indirect

object and the one furthest from the verb is the direct object. Therefore, more supporting

evidence is needed.

ii) Pronominalization

When this test is applied, we see that only the post-verbal object most proximal to the verb, the

R, is capable of being pronominalized. This argument takes the pronominal form that a direct

object in a monotransitive clause would take. For example, in (219b), the immediate post-

verbal object (R) - *Oko* - is pronominalized with *lὲ*. The second object (T) in the ditransitive

clause, *shìká* 'money', by contrast, cannot be pronominalized (219c).

(219a) ákú   !hɑ́   ***òkó***   shìká
       Aku   give   Oko   money
       "Aku gave Oko money"

Pronominalization of recipient

(219b) ákú   !hɑ́   ***lὲ***   shìká
       Aku   give   3SG.OBJ   money
       "Aku gave him money"

Pronominalization of theme

(219c) *ákú   !hɑ́   òkó   ***Ø***
       Aku   give   Oko   3SG.OBJ.INAN
       "Aku gave it to Oko"

Even if the T were a third person that was high on the animacy hierarchy and therefore capable

of being pronominalized overtly, as in the animate theme *gbèé* 'dog' in (220a) , it still would

not be possible (220b):

(220a) ákú   kè   òkó   *gbèé*
        Aku   gift   Oko   dog
        "Aku gifted Oko a dog."

(220b) *ákú   kè   òkó   *lὲ*
        Aku   gift   Oko   3SG.OBJ
        "Aku gifted him to Oko"

iii) Equi-NP reference in purpose complementation

This is the strongest evidence that the argument immediately posterior to the verb is the direct

object. An event nominalization may function as an NP expressing purpose (221a). When the

main verb is a modal verb such as *tá!ó* 'want', the object of the verb in the purpose

nominalization may be raised to become the object of the main verb (221b).

(221a) òkó   ŋ̀-tá!ó   nĩ́   é=kpé   *lòò*
        Oko   PROG-want   NMLZ   3SG.SBJV=chew   meat
        "Oko wants to chew meat."

(221b) òkó   ŋ̀-tá!ó   *lòò*ᵢ   nĩ́   é=kpé   *Ø*ᵢ
        Oko   PROG-want   meat   NMLZ   3SG.SBJV=chew   3SG.OBJ
        "Oko wants meat to chew."

If the verb in the purpose nominalization has two objects, as in (221c), only the object closest

to the verb i.e. the recipient, can be raised to become the object of the main verb (221d). The

theme cannot (221e). This shows that it is the recipient that is the direct object.

(221c) òkó   ŋ̀-tá!ó   nɨ́   é=!ké   *ákú*   *kùè-nɨ́!ɨ́*
       Oko   PROG-want   NMLZ   3SG.SBJV=gift   aku   neck-thing
       "Oko wants to gift Aku a necklace."

(221d) òkó   ŋ̀-tá!ó   *ákú*ᵢ   nɨ́   é=!ké   *lὲ*ᵢ
       Oko   PROG-want   Aku   NMLZ   3SG=gift   3SG.OBJ
       kùè-nɨ́!ɨ́
       neck-thing
       "Oko is looking for Aku to gift her a necklace/Oko wants Aku in order to gift her a
       necklace."

(221e) *òkó   ŋ̀-tá!ó   *kùè-nɨ́!ɨ́*ᵢ   nɨ́   é=!ké   ákú
       Oko   PROG-want   neck-thing   NMLZ   3SG.SBJV=gift   Aku
       *Ø*ᵢ
       3SG.OBJ
       "Oko is looking for a necklace to gift to Aku/Oko wants a necklace to gift to Aku."

iv) Focalization and constituent questioning

These two are discussed together because they essentially comprise the same syntactic strategy.

An argument is focused by placing it in sentence-initial position followed by the focus marker,

nɨ̀. The focus marker may be omitted, although its tone remains and docks on the preceding

syllable (See chapter 7 for a fuller discussion). A content question is obtained by placing the

question word in initial position followed by the focus marker, n̋ǐ. Here also, the focus marker

may be deleted.

In (222), the patient/object in a monotransitive clause is focused and in (223) it is questioned.

(222) gbé!kɛ̋=!ɛ̋   n̋ǐ   òkó   yì   (lὲ)
       child=DEF   NMLZ Oko   beat   (3SG.OBJ)
       "It is the child that Oko beat."

(223) n̋ǎmɔ̀̃ n̋ǐ   òkó   yì   (lὲ)
       who   NMLZ Oko   beat   (3SG.OBJ)
       "Who did Oko beat?"

The focalization and question-formation tests yield some mixed results. Since a direct object in

a monotransitive clause is capable of being focused and questioned, one would expect that a

direct object in a ditransitive clause will also be amenable to these processes. For most

speakers, both the theme and recipient arguments of all ditransitive verbs do qualify in this

regard. The example in (224a) contains the verb, mɛ̀̃jé 'send.from.abroad'.

(224a) yòó=ὲ   mɛ̀̃jé   ***mǐ***   ***àtàlé***
       woman=DEF   send.from.abroad   1SG.OBJ   dress
       "The woman sent me a dress from abroad."

Theme - focus

(224b) ***àtàlé***   n̋ǐ   yòó=ὲ   mɛ̀̃jé   !mí̋
       dress   FOC   woman=DEF send.from.abroad   1SG.OBJ
       "It was a dress that the woman sent me."

Recipient - focus

(224c) mǐ   nǐ   yòó=ɛ̀   mǎ̀jé   (mǐ)   àtàlé
      1SG   FOC   woman=DEF send.from.abroad   1SG.OBJ   dress
      "It was to me that the woman sent a dress from abroad."

Theme - constituent question

(225a) mɛ̀nǐ   nǐ   yòó=ɛ̀   mǎ̀jé   !mí
      what   FOC   woman=DEF send.from.abroad   1SG.OBJ
      "What did the woman send me from abroad?"

Recipient - constituent question

(225b) nã̋mɔ̌   nǐ   yòó=ɛ̀   mǎ̀jé   lɛ̀   àtàlé
      who   FOC   woman=DEF send.from.abroad   3SG.OBJ   dress
      "Who did the woman send a dress to from abroad?"

However, for the verb hã́ 'give', there is a lack of consensus over whether the theme can be

focused (226a) or questioned (226b).

(226a) ?gbèé   nǐ   òkó   !hã́   ákú
      dog   FOC   Oko   give   Aku
      "It was a dog that Oko gave to Aku."

(226b) ?mɛ́nǐ   nǐ   òkó   !hã́   ákú
      what   FOC   Oko   give   Aku
      "What did Oko give to Aku?"

No such controversy exists for the recipient (227a), (227b).

(227a) ákú   nǐ   òkó   !hã́   lɛ̀   gbèé
      Aku   FOC   Oko   give   3SG.OBJ   dog
      It is Aku that Oko gave a dog to."

(227b) **nɑ́mɔ̀** nĩ̀ òkó !hɑ́ lɛ̀ gbèé
who FOC Oko give 3SG.OBJ dog
"Who did Oko give a dog to?"

One cannot conclude a great deal from this patterning, except to note that since the

recipient object enjoys universal acceptance in focus position, it is more direct-object-like than

the theme, which in focus position with the verb, *hɑ́* 'give' is considered ungrammatical by

some speakers.

Other diagnostic tests such as the ability to be modified by a verb-based grammatical

argument nominalization (relativizability) are not useful for distinguishing the arguments in

monotransitive and ditransitive constructions because all arguments 'pass' the tests. This is

exemplified below. (228)-(230) show that all arguments can be modified by a verb-based

argument nominalization.

Patient NP - modification by verb-based argument nominalization

(228a) gbé!kɛ́=!ɛ́ nĩ́ òkó yí=ɛ̀ ŋ̀-fó
child=DEF NMLZ Oko beat=DEF PROG-cry
"The child whom Oko beat is crying."

(228b) gbé!kɛ́=!ɛ́ nĩ́ òkó yì lɛ́=!ɛ́ ŋ̀-fó
child=DEF NMLZ Oko beat 3SG.OBJ=DEF PROG-cry
"The child whom Oko beat is crying."

Theme NP - modification by verb-based argument nominalization

(229) àdèsá̰=!á̰   nḭ́   ò-tá̰   gbé!kḛ́=ɛ̰̀   ŋɔ̀ɔ̂
      story=DEF   NMLZ   2SG-narrate   child=DEF   be.sweet
      "The story that you told the child was good."

Recipient NP - modification by verb-based argument nominalization

(230) gbé!kḛ́=!ɛ̀   nḭ́   ò-tá̰   lɛ̰̀   àdésá̰=!á   é-wɔ̀
      child=DEF   NMLZ   2SG-narrate   3SG.OBJ   story=DEF   PERF-sleep
      "The child whom you narrated the story to is asleep."

Taken together, the above syntactic tests show that for Gã ditransitive constructions, it

is the argument in the recipient role or the argument in the immediate post-verbal position that

is the direct object.

3.3.2.2 Definiteness, topicality and direct objecthood

It has been observed for Gã (e.g. Dakubu 2004a) and related languages such as Akan (e.g.

Osam 1994) that a definite theme NP cannot occur in a ditransitive construction. It must be

indefinite. This is exemplified in the following sentences, where (231a) with an indefinite T is

grammatical but (231b) with the definite T is not.

(231a) òkó   há̰   mḭ̀   *shìká*
       Oko   give   1SG.OBJ   money
       "Oto gave me money."

(231b) *òkó   há̰   mḭ̀   *shìká=!á*
        Oko   give   1SG.OBJ   money=DEF
        "Oto gave me the money."

In order to express the intended meaning in (231b), a serial verb construction must be used. In this construction, the first verb is *kɛ* 'take' and its object is the definite theme NP, while the second verb is *hɑ̃́* 'give' and its object is the recipient. This is seen in (232) below.

(232) òkó kɛ̀ ***shìká=à*** hɑ̃́ ***!mí***
       Oko take money=DEF give 1SG.OBJ
       "Oko gave me the money."

It is clear then that speakers view definite NPs as ill-fitted for the indirect object slot. The preference for the definite theme NP in a transfer event to be expressed as the direct object of *kɛ* in an SVC, rather than as an indirect object in a ditransitive construction, suggests that there are properties or communicative functions served by definite NPs that make them unsuitable to appear as indirect objects. Indefinite NPs lack these properties and so are capable of occurring as indirect objects. I contend that this property is the increase in topicality that results from definiteness. Cross-linguistically, the T in a ditransitive construction tends to be inanimate and indefinite and therefore less topical than the R, which is usually animate (even human) and definite (Malchukov et al 2007:12). In Gã, the indirect object slot is reserved for low-topicality arguments. The definite T therefore merits a position in the clause that reflects its higher topicality. The assignment of the definite NP to direct object position in an SVC therefore reflects its higher topicality and gives it more discourse prominence than it would have as the indirect object in a ditransitive clause.

In example (218), repeated here as (233) however, we see a clear violation of this

syntactic requirement; a definite NP, *tsòfã̀jǐ-!ɛ́* 'the medicines' is able to occur as the theme in a

ditransitive construction.

(233) kónɪ́   kɛ́   ò=tèè   shɪ́!ã́=!ã́   kónɪ́   ó=yá-hã́
       NMLZ when 2SG=go.PST home=DEF   NMLZ 2SG.SBJV=ITIV-give

       lè   tsòfã̀-jǐ=!ɛ́
       2SG.OBJ   medicine-PL=DEF
       "So that when you go home you will go and give him the medicines."   [CH:54]

As a native speaker, I must say that I find nothing wrong with this sentence. The expected

construction for a three-place predicate such as *hã́* 'give' with a definite theme is the *kɛ*-SVC

below:

(234) kónɪ́   kɛ́   ò=tèè   shɪ́!ã́=!ã́   kónɪ́   ó=kè   *tsòfã̀-jǐ=!ɛ́*
       NMLZ when 2SG=go.PST home=DEF   NMLZ 2SG=take   medicine-PL=DEF

       á-yá-hã́   lè
       SBJV-ITIV-give   3SG.OBJ
       "So that when you go home you give the medicines to him."

The reason why (233) is acceptable lies in the semantics of *hã́* 'give' when it appears in the two

construction types. The ditransitive construction *hã́ lè tsòfã̀jǐ!ɛ́* 'give him the medicine'

connotes that the agent is administering the medicine, as a parent would to a child, by directly

putting it in their mouth or other orifice. In the *kɛ*-serialization in (234) on the other hand, the

implication is that the agent simply handed the medicines to the patient but did not directly

administer them. Since the patient being referred to in (233) was a sick child to whom the

medicine had to be directly administered, the ditransitive construction provides the best

syntactic means of coding this semantic information. Consequently, it should be borne in mind

that although the *kɛ*-serialization provides an alternative means of coding 3-place predicates

involving transfer, and is additionally the preferred construction when the theme is definite,

nuances of meaning may differ (depending on the verb) between this SVC and the ditransitive

construction. It is for this same reason that other ditransitive verbs such as *tsɔ̀ɔ̂* 'teach, show'

and *gbà* 'narrate' allow definite themes in sentences like (235a) and (236a) respectively.

(235a) kòfí   tsɔ̀ɔ̂   *mì̀*   *shí!ǎ=ǎ́*
       Kofi   show   1SG.OBJ   house=DEF
       "Kofi showed me the house."

(236a) è=gbà   *lè*   *sǎnɛ́=!ɛ́*   fɛ́ɛ́
       3SG=narrate 3SG.OBJ   matter=DEF all
       "He narrated the whole story to her."

If these verbs and their arguments were to occur in a *kɛ*-serialization, their meanings would be

quite different. (235b) could mean that Kofi literally picked up the house and showed it to me.

(236b) is not even plausible because an abstract entity such as a matter or story cannot be

handled physically. Although, as would be seen in the next chapter, *kɛ* is a defective verb with

little semantic content, examples like these show some vestiges of its former lexical verb-hood

(meaning 'take') and provides further justification for its gloss.

(235b) kòfí   kɛ̀   *shĩ̂ã̀=ã̀*   tsɔ̀ɔ́   *!mí*

       Kofi   take   house=DEF   show   1SG.OBJ

       "Kofi showed me the house." Could mean: He picked it up and showed it to me

(236b) *è=kɛ̀   *sằné=!ɛ́*   fɛ́ɛ́   gbà   *lè*

       3SG=take   matter=DEF   all   narrate   3SG.OBJ

       "He narrated the whole matter to her." Could mean: He took the matter and narrated it

       to her.

The restriction on indefinite themes in ditransitive clauses is therefore not a blanket one. It

depends largely on whether the speaker's message will be preserved in an equivalent *kɛ*-

serialization. If it will, then the *kɛ*-serialization is preferred in order to index topicality of the

definite theme. If not, then the definite theme may occur in the ditransitive clause. The choice

of ditransitive construction or *kɛ*-serialization for the expression of a definite theme NP is

determined by topicality as well as the accuracy of the communicative message.

      There are also ditransitive clauses in which the immediate post-verbal position is taken

up by a patient argument and is then followed by an instrument. In the following three

examples, *kpìŋ!ɛ́* 'deer', *mĩ̀* '1SG.OBJ' and *lè* '3SG.OBJ' are patients while *tṹ* 'gun', *àbũ̀ĩ́*

'needle' and *kàklá* 'knife' are instruments.

(237)   gbɔ̀bìlɔ́=ɔ̀   tswà   *kpìŋ=!ɛ́*   *tṹ*

       hunter=DEF   hit   deer=DEF   gun

       "The hunter shot the deer"

(238) à＝gbù   *mì̃*   *àbũ̌í*
       3PL.IMPERS＝pierce   1SG.OBJ   needle
       "I was given an injection."

(239) òkó   tsù   *lɛ̀*   *kàkĺá*
       Oko   pierce 3SG.OBJ   knife
       "Oko stabbed him."

3.3.3 Transitivity classes of verbs

As is obvious from the above discussion, Gã has intransitive, monotransitive and ditransitive

verbs. The vast majority of verbs in the language are transitive. There are a good number of

strictly intransitive verbs; strictly ditransitive verbs are fewer. Dixon (2010:142) notes that

strictly intransitive verbs are rare cross-linguistically.

3.3.3.4 Intransitive verbs

Many verbs are capable of occurring with or without an object. Even verbs that in many

languages are strictly intransitive such as 'laugh', 'cry' and 'sneeze', may have objects in Gã.

For *ŋmɔ̃̀* 'laugh', the object is the person being laughed at, for *fó* 'cry' it is the person one is

longing for and for *tsí̃!né* 'sneeze', it is the person one happens to sneeze on. In (240) for

instance, *fó* 'cry' is transitive in the first sentence but intransitive in the second sentence.

(240) *èè＝fó*   *è＝mã̀mí̃*   lóó   *èè＝fó*   *è＝pàpá*
       3SG.PROG＝cry   3SG＝mother   or   3SG＝cry   3SG＝father
       "Is he crying for his mother or is he crying for his father?"

é=yà-dàmɔ̃		shĩ̀	bɛ̀	*é-!fó*	ààhṹṹ
3SG.PERF=ITIV-stand		down	then	3SG.PERF=cry	continuously

"He has gone and stood there, then he has cried continuously."   [DT 1;26]

In (241a), *tsĩ́!né* is intransitive and in (241b) it is transitive.

(241a) ĩ̀=tsĩ́!né

    1SG=sneeze

    "I sneezed."

(241b) kàá-tsĩ̀nè   mĩ̀

    NEG.IMP-sneeze   1SG.OBJ

    "Don't sneeze on me."   [Dakubu 2008:212]

Strictly intransitive verbs fall into five main semantic types:

i) **bodily functions** - *gɔ́!í* 'burp', *shã́* 'fart', *kɛ̀* 'push (as in childbirth)', *há!kú* 'yawn'

ii) **motion** - *dɔ̃́ŋ!kɔ́* 'walk with swagger', *díŋdã́ŋ* 'walk unsteadily (as if drunk)', *flí!kí* 'fly',

shã̃́!né 'slip', *tsú!tsɔ́* 'limp', *wá!mɔ̃́* 'crawl'

iii) **inherently reciprocal verbs** - *bé* 'quarrel', *nɔ̃̀* 'fight'

iv) **property verbs** - *kɛ̀* 'be tall', *wà* 'be hard', *kwɔ̀* 'be deep', *hĩ̀* 'be good', *dà* 'be big', *lɛ̀ɛ̂* 'be

broad', *dĩ́* 'be black', *yɛ́* 'be white', *tsù* 'be red, ripen'

v) **weather verbs** - *nɛ̃̀* 'rain', *tsò* 'shine (of the sun)', *shí* 'thunder (v.)'

3.3.3.5 Transitive verbs

There are some strictly transitive verbs in Gã. These verbs encode actions which require a

patient in order for its successful completion. This patient needs to be spelt out overtly for the

sentence to be grammatical. Examples of such verbs are *báń!sɛ́* 'hold on to', *ká!nyá*

'encourage', *káḿ!fó* 'praise', *kpɛ̀* 'carry baby at back', *já* 'worship'.

3.3.3.6 Ambitransitive verbs

Also known as labile verbs, these are verbs which may be used with or without an object.

There are two types, those in which the S of the intransitive is a patient and those in which the

S of the intransitive is an agent. They are further explicated below.

a) Ambitransitive of type S = P - Examples of such verbs are *fíté* 'spoil', *jwà* 'break', *bó!dá*

'mangle', *mɔ̃́!nyɔ̃́* 'bend out of shape', *pìlá* 'hurt'. In the following examples the (a) sentences

are intransitive and the (b) sentences are transitive.

(242a) gbèé = ɛ̀   pìlá   gbé!kɛ̃́ = !ɛ̃́
     dog = DEF   hurt   child = DEF
     "The dog hurt the child."

(242b) gbé!kɛ̃́ = !ɛ̃́   pìlá
     child = DEF   hurt
     "The child got hurt."

(243a) ò = jwà   glà!sé = !ɛ́
     2SG = break   glass = DEF
     "You broke the glass."

(243b) glà!sé = ɛ̀   jwà
     glass = DEF   break
     "The glass broke."

b) Ambitransitive of type S = A - Examples of such verbs are *shwέ* 'play', *fó* 'cry', *ŋmɔ̃̀*

'laugh', *wìê* 'speak', *nũ̀* 'hear', *bí* 'ask', *bò* 'shout'.

(244b) ã̀mɛ̃̀ = ŋ̀-shwέ
     3PL = PROG-play
     "They are playing."

(244b) ã̀mɛ̃̀ = ŋ̀-shwέ   àwàlè
     3PL = PROG-play   awale
     "They are playing *awale.*"

(245a) ã̀mɛ̃̀ = wìê
     3PL = speak
     "They spoke."

(245a) ã̀mɛ̃̀ = wìé   ó = !he
     3PL = speak   2SG = body
     "They spoke about you."

3.3.3.7 Ditransitive verbs

There are as yet no strictly ditransitive verbs known to me in Gã. The usual transfer verbs that

prototypically take two objects, Theme and Recipient, are all capable of occurring with only the

theme. Such constructions are used when the identity of the recipient is considered irrelevant.

Examples are given in (246) and (247).

(246) è = *hɛ̃́*   *shìká*
     3SG = give   money
     "He gave money."

(247) à = *kè*   *níbíì*   pìì
      3PL.IMPERS = gift   things   many
      "Lots of gifts were given/There were lots of freebies"

Prototypically ditransitive verbs also occur with just one object, the recipient, in SVCs. The

theme is the object of *kè* 'take'. In the following example, the theme is a null pronominal.

(248) nǐ   à = *kè-Ø-*bàá-*hã́*   *ã̀mɛ̃̀*   nǐ   ã̀mɛ̃̀ = bàá-!yé
      and   3PL.IMPERS = take-3SG.OBJ-FUT-give   them   and   3PL = FUT-eat
      "And it will be given to them and they will eat."   [YM:178]

The verb, *bò* 'shout' is one verb that can occur in an intransitive clause (249a), a transitive

clause (249b) and a ditransitive clause (249c).

(249a) ákú   bò
       Aku   shout
       "Aku shouted."

(249b) ákú   bò   mǐ
       Aku   shout   1SG.OBJ
       "Aku shouted for me."

(249c) à = bàá-bò   bò   jùlɔ̀
       3PL.IMPERS = FUT-shout   2SG.OBJ   thief
       "They will alert everyone that you are a thief, by shouting "Thief! Thief!""

3.4 Inherent complement verbs
In Gã, Akan, Ewe, Igbo and several other Kwa and Benue-Kwa languages, there are certain

predications, certain actions and processes that cannot be encoded by verbs alone. Instead,

these actions must be coded by a verb and an obligatory noun or postpositional complement,

hence their name, inherent complement verbs (ICV). In Gã, Akan and Ewe, for instance, the

verb precedes the complement e.g. *hã́ gbɛ̀* [give way] 'go on break from school'. One of the

first to recognize and analyse this phenomenon, Nwachukwu (1987:40) wrote regarding the

ICV that "the root and its nominal complement form a semantic unit, and any dictionary entry

without the complement lacks meaning because the complement is the meaning-specifying

unit." It will be shown later that this statement is not applicable to all ICVs, but it does capture

the unique essence of most ICVs: that without their inherent complement, their semantic

interpretation is difficult to arrive at. Essegbey (1999) refers to them as obligatory complement

verbs (OCV). They are also found in Mandarin, where Badan (2013) terms them verb object

constructions (VOCs). Korsah (2014) likens them to English so-called light verbs such as 'take

a rest' and 'make a decision'.

In Gã, the complement in the ICV, known as the inherent complement (IC) is always a

noun. There are two main types of nouns that the verb may occur with: a non-relational noun

or a locative, relational noun. Examples of ICVs with non-relational nominal complements are:

(250) *jò fòì*   [dance race]   'run'

     bí gbɛ̀   [ask way]   'ask permission'

     kpá fãí   [remove hat]   'beg'

     yè ŋkpá!í   [eat prayer]   'pour libation, pray (traditionally)'

     yè béŋ   [eat innocence]   'be innocent'

     yè fɔ̃   [eat guilt]   'be guilty'

yè àwèrèhóó	[eat misery]	'be miserable'
wò hɔ́	[put pregnancy]	'make pregnant'
wò gbéyèì	[put fear]	'scare'
wò bàà	[put leaf]	'make herbal preparation'
wò jàlà	[put wares]	'put wares up for sale'
jè kpò	[exit compound]	'exit'
jè ŋmā́	[exit good.smell]	'smell good'
jè fὶ̃	[exit bad.smell]	'smell bad'
jè dὲ̀ŋ	[exit hand]	'die/get out of control (of a child)'
jè gbὲ	[exit way]	'do intentionally'
shé gbéyèì	[ICV fear]	'be afraid'
hὶ̃ ŋmầà̃	[hate millet]	'fast (v.)'
shí là	[hit fire]	'tease'
shí m̀pɔ́	[hit gait]	'walk confidently'
shí ŋkɔ̃́rɔ̃́	[hit snore]	'snore'
bò tòí	[shout ear]	'listen'
nã̀ mɔbɔ̀	[see misery]	'pity (v.), have mercy on'

The ICV may have an additional argument, which always occurs between the verb and the

inherent complement. In (251), the ICV is *kpá fἆí* [remove hat] 'beg, plead with'. The

additional argument, *lὲ* '3SG' occurs post-verb and pre-complement.

(251) á = *!kpá*   *lὲ*   *fἆí*
       3PL.IMPERS.PERF = remove   3SG.OBJ   hat
       "People have pleaded with her."   [FH:176]

A subset of ICVs with non-relational nominal complements includes those ICVs which take the

generic noun complements *nɨ́!ɨ́* 'thing' and *mɔ̀* 'person'. In the last example in (252) *hɛ́* 'give'

has two inherent complements, *mɔ̀* person' and *nɔ́* 'thing'.

(252) *yè nɨ́!ɨ́*   [eat thing]   'eat'

      tsɨ́ nɨ́!ɨ́   [work thing]   'work'

      tsɔ̀ɔ́ nɨ́!ɨ́   [teach thing]   'teach'

      lè nɨ́!ɨ́   [know thing]   'be clever'

      hòó nɨ́!ɨ́   [cook thing]   'cook'

      nã̀ nɨ́!ɨ́   [see thing]   'see'

      nũ̀ nɨ́!ɨ́   [hear thing]   'hear'

      bù mɔ̀   [respect person]   'be respectful'

      hɛ́ mɔ̀ nɔ́   [give person thing] 'be generous'

Examples of ICVs with locative, relational noun complements are listed in (253).

(253) *dã̀mɔ̀ shɨ̀*   [stand down]   'stand'

      tá !shɨ́   [sit down]   'sit'

      tè shɨ̀   [rise down]   'get up'

      yí !shɨ́   [pass down]   'descend'

      gbèé !shɨ́   [fall down]   'fall'

      hɨ̀ shɨ̀   [live down]   'live'

      jù shɨ̀   [steal down]   'do sth surreptitiously'

      dà shɨ̀   [ICV down]   'thank'

      wò shɨ̀   [put down]   'promise'

      kũ̀ sèè   [break back]   'return'

      nyɨ̀ɛ̃́ sèè   [walk back]   'follow'

      sìá sèè   [visit back]   'prepare in anticipation of someone's visit'

      kwɛ́ hɨ̃̂ɛ̃   [look (sb.) face]   'expect'

wìé hĩ̀ẽ̂	[talk face]	'scold'
jà mĩ̀ŋ	[share inside]	'divide'
jè mĩ̀ŋ	[exit inside]	'die'
gbálà mĩ̀ŋ	[split inside]	'explain'
tsá !nɔ̃́	[join top]	'continue'
yè nɔ̃̀	[eat top]	'obey'
tɔ̃́ !nɔ̃́	[err top]	'offend'
gbá nà̀ã̂	[split mouth]	'bother'
gbè nà̀ã̂	[kill mouth]	'be finished, be done (doing sth)'
mũ̀ nà̀ã̂	[seal mouth]	'hem (e.g. a dress), conclude'
mũ̀ tòí	[seal ear]	'be deaf'
jìé yì	[remove head]	'praise'
wɔ́ yì	[ICV head]	'jeer'

These ICVs also allow an additional argument which occurs in between the two components.

For example, in (254) the ICV is *wò shĩ̀* [put down] 'make a promise' and *wɔ̀* '1PL', the

recipient - the people that the promises are made to - occurs between the verb and its inherent

complement.

(254)   nyɔ̃̀ŋmɔ̃̀   ***é-wò***   ***wɔ̀***   ***shĩ̀***   pìì
        God   PERF-put   1PL   down   many
        "God has made us many promises."   [CH:179]

Some ICVs with a relational noun complement require the complement to be composed of a

possessive NP where the relational noun is the possessum. This is seen in (255) below, where

in the ICV *tɔ́ !nɔ́* [err top] 'offend', the inherent complement, *nɔ̀* top is the possessum in a

possessive NP, where *ɔ́ =* '2SG' is the possessor.

(255) kɛ́   ó = nyɛ̀mí   shì̃   kpàwò gbì   kòmé   è = bà   nì̃
      if   2SG = sibling instance   seven   day   one   3SG = come   and

    è = tɔ́   *ó = !nɔ́*
    3SG = err   2SG = top
    "If your sibling offends you seven times in one day…."   [CH:300]

The reader may notice straightaway that some ICVs have their verbs glossed as 'ICV' and

wonder why. The reason for resorting to this essentially meaningless gloss is that these words

simply do not mean anything to the native speaker. While all other verbs in an ICV are capable

of occurring outside of the ICV with multiple different arguments, these verbs: *shé*, *dà* and *wɔ́*

cannot. So there is no way of knowing what they mean outside of the ICV, and although a

diachronic analysis may be illuminating, lack of historical records leaves the question largely

unanswered.

    The meanings of the verbs contained in ICVs is one point of contention among analysts

of languages that have ICVs. Nwachukwu (1987) contends that the verbs in an ICV are

semantically vapid and that the complement provides the bulk of the meaning of the verb.

Essegbey (1999) and Korsah (2011), on the other hand believe that the verbs themselves have

specific semantics. The semantics of ICVs will be looked at in §3.4.4 . The other major point

of contention concerns whether the inherent complement is an argument of the verb (its object),

making the ICV naturally monotransitive, or whether it forms a part of the lexical verb word,

making the ICV intransitive . This will be examined in §3.4.2. In the following section, the

morphology and syntax of ICVs will be examined more closely.

3.4.1 Morphology and syntax of ICVs

The verb in an ICV may be inflected for most of the verbal categories associated with non-ICV

verbs. It may be marked for tense, aspect, mood and polarity. The noun complement, on the

other hand cannot be inflected. This is evidence that the function of the ICV is a strictly verbal

one, i.e. it predicates. In (256), for example, the verb in the ICV, *wɔ́ yì* [ICV head] 'jeer' takes

the future morpheme *bàá-*.

(256) è＝nɔ̀   jè-tsérè-mɔ̀   hɔ́ɔ́＝!ɔ́   *à＝bàá-wɔ́*
       3SG＝top   world-rise-NOM   Saturday＝TOP   3PL.IMPERS＝FUT-jeer

       hɔ̀mɔ̃̀ yì
       hunger head
       "The following day, Saturday, we will jeer at hunger."   [YM:40]

In (257), the verb is marked for progressive in the ICV, *yè àwèrèhóó* [eat sorrow] 'be

sorrowful'

(257) ágbènɛ̃́＝!ɛ̃́   kɛ́   ò＝tá   gbékɛ̃́＝ɛ̃̀   hé＝!ɛ́   bè
       now＝TOP   when   2SG＝sit   child＝DEF   body＝DEF   then

òò=yé	*àwèrèhóó*
2SG.PROG=eat	sadness

"Now when you sit with the child you are filled with sorrow."   [CH:79]

An ICV may also occur in imperative mood (258).

(258) kɛ́   àà=yá=!á   *nyǐɛ́-mɔ́*   *sèè*

         when   3PL.IMPERS.PROG=go=DEF   walk-IMP   back

         "When they are going, follow them."   [YM:206]

And in (259), the ICV *gbá nǎ̀à̀* [split mouth] 'bother' has negative polarity.

(259) énɛ̃́   *gbááá*   *è=nǎ̀à̀*   kwráá

         this   split.NEG   3SG=mouth   at.all

         "This didn't bother him at all."   [PAT:95]

However, not all verbs in an ICV can be marked by the iterative suffixes *-la/-ra, -lɛ/-rɛ* and -

mɔ̀. So while (260) and (261) with the iterative suffixes are fine, (262) with the equivalent

suffix is not.

(260) skùl-bíì=ɛ̀   *tá-rà*   *shǐ̀*

         school-people=DEF   sit-ITER   down

         "The school children sat down"

(261) *ã̀mɛ̃̀=yà-kɛ́-mɔ̀̃*   *shǐ̀*   nǐ̀   ã̀mɛ̃̀=wɔ̀

         3PL=ITIV-lie-ITER down   and   3PL=sleep

         "They went and lay down and slept."

(262) *skùl-bíì=ɛ̀   kũ̀-mɔ̀̃   ã̀mɛ̃̀=sèè*

         school-people=DEF break-ITER   3PL=back

         "The school children returned."

It appears that posture ICVs, e.g. *tá !shî* [sit down] 'sit', can take the distributive suffixes while other ICVs cannot. This may be because posture ICVs are more literal and less metaphorical than other ICVs and hence more akin to canonical verbs. This allows them to take all canonical verb morphology. More metaphorical ICVs such as *kǔ sèè* [break back] 'return' are viewed idiomatically, hence the inability to express all verbal categories.

The reduplication strategy for distributive expression is also largely prohibited in ICVs. So for example, *shí* 'hit' in *shí là* [hit fire] 'tease' cannot be reduplicated (263).

(263) *òkó *shíshìî*   *ằmề* *là*
       Oko   hit.DISTRIB   3PL   fire
       "Oko teased them."

The nominal complements cannot be inflected for number. For instance, *gbè* 'way' in *fằ gbè* [uproot way] 'travel' cannot be pluralized (to indicate that the agent travels to multiple places, for example), as (264) shows.

(264) *òkó *fằ*   *gbè-ì*   pìì
       Oko   uproot   way-PL   many
       "Oko travelled to many places."

However, the pertensive morpheme, *a-,* which is found on the possessum in a possessive noun phrase, can be marked on the relational noun complement in an ICV, provided the complement occurs in a possessive NP. For example, in (265), *sằjíễ àmìǹ* 'the inside of the issues' forms a

possessive NP, and since the possessor is plural, the plurality is marked on the possessum with

the pertensive prefix *a-*.

(265) *è=gbálà*   *sà̰-jǐ=ɛ̰̀*   *à-mḭ̀ŋ*   è=tsɔ̰̀ɔ́   !mí
       3SG=split   matter-PL=DEF   PERT-inside   3SG=show   1SG.OBJ
       "He explained the issues to me."

Here, there is only one postverbal argument - the possessive phrase, *sà̰jǐɛ̰̀ àmḭ̀ŋ* 'the inside of

the issues'.

    In (266a), the ICV *nṵ̀ shǐshǐ* [hear under] 'understand' has two separate post-verbal

arguments, *nṵ̀ṹ!ɛ́* 'the man' and *shǐshǐ* 'under'. *nṵ̀ṹ!ɛ́ shǐshǐ* does not constitute a possessive

phrase, and this is evidenced by the fact that *nṵ̀ṹ!ɛ́* 'the man' can be pronominalized with the

object pronoun *lɛ̰̀* (266b). If it were a possessor it would have been pronominalized by the

subject pronoun *è=*, but (266c) shows that this is ungrammatical.

(266a) í=nṹṹ́ṹ   nṵ̀ṹ=ɛ̰̀   shǐshǐ
        1SG=hear.NEG   man=DEF   under
        "I don't understand the man."

(266b) í=nṹṹ́ṹ   lɛ̰̀   shǐshǐ
        1SG=hear   3SG.OBJ   under
        "I don't understand the man."

(266c) *í=nṹṹ́ṹ   è=shǐshǐ
        1SG=hear   3SG=under
        "I don't understand the man."

Further proof that the complement and its preceding argument do not form a possessive NP is

seen in (267), where when the first argument is plural the complement cannot take the

pertensive prefix.

(267a) *è=núúú   *hǐí=è*   *à-shì̀shì̌*
       3SG=hear.NEG   men=DEF   PERT-under
       "He doesn't understand the men."

(267b) è=núúú   *hǐí=è*   *shì̀shì̌*
       3SG=hear.NEG   men=DEF   under
       "He doesn't understand the men."

The same phenomenon is seen with *dà shì̌*[ICV down] 'thank'. The immediate post-verbal

argument and the complement do not constitute a possessive NP; the argument is

pronominalized with the object second singular pronoun *bò* and not the pronoun used for

possessors - *ó=*.

(268a) òkó   dà   bò   shì̌
       Oko   ICV   2SG   under
       "Oko thanked you."

(268b) *òkó   dà   ó=!shí́
       Oko   ICV   2SG=under
       "Oko thanked you."

In addition, if the immediate post-verbal argument is plural the two arguments are not treated

as one possessive NP and the inherent complement cannot take the pertensive prefix (269a).

(269a) *òkó dà pòlísì-fóì=ɛ̀ à-shĩ̀
Oko ICV police-PL=DEF PERT-down
"Oko thanked the policemen."

(269b) òkó dà pòlísì-fóì=ɛ̀ shĩ̀
Oko ICV police-PL=DEF down
"Oko thanked the policemen."

3.4.2 The ICV and transitivity

One of the main areas of focus in studies of ICVs is whether the complement of the verb is its

direct object or whether it forms part of the predicate itself. In other words, is a clause such as

(270) monotransitive, with verb *jò* 'dance' and direct object *fòì* 'race' or is it intransitive, with

verbal predicate *jò fòì?*

(270) nĩ̀ ***è=jò*** **fòi** è=kɔ̀ tsò nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́
and 3SG=dance race 3SG=climb tree this
"And he ran and climbed this tree." [FLO:74]

While Nwachukwu (1987) maintains that the complement is not an object of the verb, Essegbey

(1999) and Korsah (2011, 2014) contend that it is. The evidence for Gã situates it in the latter

camp i.e. the complement *is* a direct object of the verb. Korsah (2011) gives a detailed account

of the syntactic tests that prove this position. The tests prove that the complement of the

inherent complement verb undergoes many of the syntactic processes that direct objects

typically undergo. The tests will be reproduced here for further elaboration. They are

nominalization, focalization and modification by a grammatical argument nominalization

(relativization).

i) Nominalization

A verb and its direct object may be nominalized by fronting the object and following it

immediately with a nominalized version of the verb. (271b) shows the nominalization of the

verb and object in (271a).

(271a) òkó   shɛ́lé-ɔ̀   tàwá
      Oko   smoke-HAB   tobacco
      "Oko smokes tobacco."

(271b) tàwá   shɛ́lé-!mɔ́   é-híĩ́ĩ̃
      tobacco   smoke-NOM   PERF-be.good.NEG
      "Tobacco smoking is not good."

In an ICV too, the verb and complement may be nominalized in the same manner, as is done in

(272b) for the ICV, *gbèé !shí*[fall down] 'fall':

(272a) shĩ̀   kòmè tóó   gbèé=ɛ̀   kɛ̀   tɔ́=!ɔ́   fɛ́ɛ́   *bà-gbèé*
      instance   one   only   dog=DEF   and   bottle=DEF   all   VENT-fall

      !shí
      down
      "Out of nowhere, the dog, together with the bottle came and fell down." [PAT:47]

(272b) shí   hèníãnàá=!á   àsòmòá!ŋ́   *shí-gbèé-!mɔ́=ɔ̀*   mòŋ́
      but   luckily=TOP   unbeknownst   down-fall-NOM=DEF   rather

hǐ	hɑ́	gbèé=ɛ̀
be.good	give	dog=DEF

"But luckily, and unbeknownst (to us) falling down rather was good for him."

[PAT:52]

In the following sentence the ICV *shé gbéyèì* [ICV fear] 'be afraid' is the first verb in the

sentence. It is later nominalized and occurs as subject of *bòtèɔ̀* 'enters'.

(273)	…é!jáá!ké	***òò=shé***	***gbéyèì***	ó=hî̃ɛ̂	kpá-!á
	because	2SG.PROG=ICV	fear	2SG=face	remove-HAB

ó=nyɔ̀ŋmɔ́	lɛ̀	nɔ̀	nĩ̀	***gbéyèì-shé-mɔ̀***	bótè-ɔ̀	ó=mlĩ̀
2SG=god	DEF	top	and	fear-ICV-NOM	enter-HAB	2SG=inside

"…because you are afraid. You forget about your God and fear enters you."

[CH:232]

ii) Focalization

The complement in the ICV can be focused just like a direct object can. There is one major

difference, however. As noted by Aboh and Essegbey (2010:59), when the complement in an

ICV is focused, the semantic interpretation is one of event focus, not argument focus as

expected. Compare the meaning of (274a) where the complement in an ICV (*fã̀ gbè* 'travel') is

focused, to (274b) where the object of an ordinary verb (*shélé* 'smoke') is focused.

(274a)	gbè	nĩ̀	ĩ̀=fã̀	nĩ̀	ĩ̀=kè-yà-táò	shìká
	way	FOC	1SG=uproot	and	1SG=take-ITIV-look	money

"It was travelling that I did (as opposed to, say, illegal drugs) in order to make money."

*"It was the way/road that I uprooted in order to make money."

(274b) tàwá   nĩ̀   òkó   shélé-ɔ̀
      tobacco   FOC   Oko   smoke-HAB
      "It is tobacco that Oko smokes (not marijuana)."
      *"It is smoking that Oko smokes."

It is also not possible to focus the verb in the ICV. Verb-focusing is done by first nominalizing

the verb and then fronting it.

(275) *fã̀-ã̀   nĩ̀   ĩ̀=fã̀   gbɛ̀   nĩ̀   ĩ̀=kɛ̀-yà-táò   shìká
       uproot-NOM FOC   1SG=uproot way   and   1SG=take-ITIV-look.for   money
       "It was travelling that I did in order to make money."

The fact that the second translation in (274a) is not possible speaks to the semantic unity of the

verb and its inherent complement. As one semantic unit, its meaning is not restricted to the

meaning of just one of its parts. It predicates an event and thus, like any verb, it is the event

that is being emphasized and contrasted even when only the nominal part of the ICV is in focus

position.

iii) Modification by a verb-based grammatical argument nominalization

Like a canonical direct object, the complement in an ICV can be modified by a verb-based

grammatical argument nominalization. In (276), the ICV is *fò shĩ̀* [cut down] 'wander' .

(276) shĩ̀   nĩ́   ĩ̀=yà-fó=!ɛ́   hèwɔ̀ è=mĩ̀ŋ   é-!fṹ=!ɛ́
      down NMLZ 1SG=ITIV-cut=DEF   sake   3SG=inside PERF-swell=DEF
      "The wandering (about town) that I did is what has angered her."

Again, a literal reading is not possible in such constructions. In (302), even though

syntactically, it is *shí* 'down' that is being modified, semantically it is the entire predication

coded by the ICV, *fò shì* [cut down] 'wander about town' that is being qualified. Aboh (2005)

calls constructions such as (276) factive constructions and suggests that a less literal but better

translation is "The fact that I wandered (about town) is what has angered her." The crucial

point is that the complement functions like an object in allowing modification by a verb-based

grammatical argument nominalization.

Most ICVs are therefore monotransitive because they consist of a verb with one

inherent complement which is also its direct object. A few ICVs are ditransitive, in that they

have two inherent complements. Examples are given in (277) and an example sentence is given

in (278)

(277) *wò hĩ̂ɛ̃ nyɑ̃́ɲ* [put face glory] 'glorify'
       wò mĩ̀ɲ là [put inside fire] 'annoy'

(278) nyɔ̃̀ŋmɔ̃̀ *é-wò* *è=hĩ̂ɛ̃* *nyɑ̃́ɲ*
       God PERF-put 3SG=face glory
       "God has glorified him." [CH:254]

3.4.3 Verbal syntax not exhibited by ICVs

Korsah (2011) observes that complements in ICVs cannot be questioned, unlike canonical

direct objects. The following examples are taken from Korsah (2011:139-140)[15]. (279b)

exemplifies non-ICV direct object questioning in situ. (280b) shows that this is not possible

with the complement in an ICV.

(279a) dèdé   yè-ɔ̀   òmɔ́
       Dede   eat-HAB   rice
       "Dede eats rice."

(279b) dèdé   yè-ɔ̀   mɛ́nı̃̀
       Dede   eat-HAB   what
       "Dede eats what?"

(280a) dèdé   jò-ɔ̀   fòì
       Dede   dance-HAB   race
       "Dede runs"

(280b) *dèdé jò-ɔ̀   mɛ́nı̃̀
       Dede   dance-HAB   what
       "Dede dances what?"

Also, pronominalization of an ICV complement is not possible. Since all ICV complements are

inanimate, they would hypothetically be pronominalized with the null pronoun. However, this

results in ungrammaticality (281b).

---

[15] Tone marking has been modified. Also, I have glossed the verb *jò* in the ICV as 'dance', whereas Korsah (2011:140) glosses it as 'ICV'

(281a) à＝bàá-yè   ŋ̀kpá!í
       3PL＝FUT-eat   prayer
       "Prayers will be said."

(281b) à＝bàá-yè   Ø
       3PL＝FUT-eat   3SG.OBJ
       "It will be said."

ICVs are syntactically unique. They contain an obligatory complement which functions

as the direct object to the verb. The complement exhibits a number of syntactic properties that

are typical of objects, but at the same it lacks certain canonical features of direct objecthood

such as pronominalization. The inability to display these features largely stems from the unique

semantics of ICVs, where both components must be overtly present in order for the ICV to

carry out its predicating function. The whole cannot function without a part and that is why

sentences like (280b) sound awkward. In the following section, the semantics of ICVs will be

discussed in greater detail.

3.4.4 Semantics of ICVs

In an ICV, the verb alone cannot code the state, event or activity that is coded by the ICV as a

whole. In (282a) *bí gbè* [ask way] codes the act of asking permission for something, in this

case, permission to leave.

(282a) *Auntie Sally*   wɔ̀=bàá-***bí***   ***gbè***   mɔ́
       Auntie Sally   1PL=FUT-ask   road   then
       "Auntie Sally, we will ask permission (to leave) then."[16]   [FH:150]

Omitting the complement, as in (282b) or replacing it with different arguments in (282c) results

in different meanings, none of them involving permission. Since *bí* 'ask' is a transitive verb,

when it occurs without an overt object, one may assume that its object is the null third singular

inanimate pronoun. So, in (282b) what is being asked is presumably known from previous

discourse. The point of relevance here is that, it does not code the act of asking permission.

(282b) Auntie Sally   wɔ̀=bàá-***bî***   mɔ́
       Auntie Sally   1PL=FUT-ask   then
       "Auntie Sally, we will ask, then."

(282c) Auntie Sally   wɔ̀=bàá-***bí***   ***ákû***   mɔ́
       Auntie Sally   1PL=FUT-ask   Aku   then
       "Auntie Sally, we will ask Aku, then."

We see that it is only when *bí* 'ask' is used with the complement *gbè* 'way' that it predicates

the act of seeking permission. This obligatoriness of a specific complement in order to yield a

specific meaning is what makes ICVs unique. The same phenomenon is illustrated in (283), this

time with an ICV that has a relational noun complement - *kṹ sὲὲ* [break back] 'return'. Its

proper use is shown in (283a). In (283b) it is ungrammatical because it is missing its

---

[16] *"wɔ̀=bàá-bí gbè"* is usually said at the end of a visit to indicate that the visit has ended and one is about to
leave.

complement and because *kừ* 'break' is an ambitransitive verb, the (animate) subject is

interpreted as the patient of *kừ* 'break', a situation that is absurd. Finally, in (283c), the

meaning of the predicate changes because the complement of *kừ* 'break' changes.

(283a) ãmɛ̃̀=ŋ̀-*kừ*   *ã̀mɛ̃̀=sɛ̀ɛ̀*
  3PL=PROG-break 3PL=back
  "They are returning." [DEB:174]

(283b) *ãmɛ̃̀=ŋ̀-*kừ*
  3PL=PROG-break
  "They are breaking."

(283c) *ã̀mɛ̃̀=ŋ̀-*kừ* *tsɛ̀-í=!ɛ́*
  3PL=PROG-break stick-PL=DEF
  "They are breaking the sticks."

  ICVs with generic noun complements differ from other ICVs semantically, in that the

meaning of the entire ICV is concentrated in the verb; the complements *nî̋!î̋* 'thing' and *mɔ̃̀*

'person' give little information about any participants or actors in the event, nor do they convey

any metaphorical meaning. Such ICVs are thus used when the object of the verb has low

salience and it is the event itself that is of importance. These ICVs show that Nwachukwu's

comment about the complement being the meaning-specifying unit in ICVs is not wholly

accurate. Examples are:

(284) ĩ̀=kɛ̀   lɛ̀   *tsɔ̃̀ɔ̃́* *nĩ̂* yɛ̀   *Ebenezer*
  1SG=take 3SG.OBJ teach thing be.located *Ebenezer*
  "I taught with her at Ebenezer (Secondary School)." [DF:49]

(285)　wɔ́　　　　　bɛ̀　　　n�í̄　　　　　　ò＝bàá-!bá＝!á　　　　　wɔ̀＝jwélé　!nɔ̄́
　　　　tomorrow　　time　　NMLZ　　　　2SG＝FUT-come＝DEF　　1PL＝lie　　top

　　　　ní̄　　　　　wɔ̀＝ŋ̀-*hòó*　　　　*ní̄!í̄*
　　　　NMLZ　　　　1PL＝PROG-cook　　thing
　　　　"By the time you come tomorrow, we'll be busily cooking."　　　[YM:292]

(286)　ɛ̀ɛ́!ɛ̃́　jɛ́̃ŋ　è＝*tsǔ*　　　*nîî̃*　　yɛ̀
　　　　yes　　there　3SG＝work　thing　be.located
　　　　"Yes, it was there that he worked."　　　　[DF:9]

(287)　é＝*!búúú*　　　　　*mɔ̀̃*
　　　　3SG.PERF＝respect.NEG　　person
　　　　"She is disrespectful."

Note that all the sentences in (284)-(287) would be unacceptable (for the translations provided)

without the generic noun complements of the verb.

(288)　*ɛ̀ɛ́!ɛ̃́　jɛ́̃ŋ　è＝*tsǔ*　　yɛ̀
　　　　yes　　there　3SG＝work　be.located
　　　　"Yes, it was there that he worked."

(289)　*wɔ́　　　　　bé　　ní̄　　ò＝bàá-!bá＝!á　　　　　wɔ̀＝jwélé　!nɔ̄　ní̄
　　　　tomorrow　　time　NMLZ　2SG＝FUT-come＝DEF　　1PL＝lie　　top　　NMLZ

　　　　wɔ̀＝ŋ̀-*hòó*
　　　　1PL＝PROG-cook
　　　　"By the time you come tomorrow, we'll be busily cooking."

(290)　*é＝*!búúú*
　　　　3SG＝respect.NEG
　　　　"She is disrespectful."

3.4.4.1 ICV meaning clusters

Certain verbs recur in a number of different ICVs with different complements. Uchechukwu

(2004) mentioned in Korsah (2011) refers to these as ICV clusters. More specifically, they are

ICV meaning clusters, and I would like to extend the term to groups of ICVs with the same

complements. It is to be expected that in all these ICVs that share a common verb or inherent

complement, there would be some element of meaning that is common to them. We therefore

find groups of verbs related by polysemy and metaphor. Some ICVs are semantically

transparent, in that one can arrive at or at least make sense of its meaning by examining the

meanings of its components. Others do not lend themselves to such simple analysis. A couple

of such meaning clusters will be examined in detail to show that ICVs are not just arbitrary

combinations of verbs and noun complements.

i)   *jè* cluster (MOVE IN RELATION TO X, where X is a GROUND object)

        Synonyms: exit from, end up at, arrive at, emerge from, emit

(291)   *jè kpò*   [exit compound]   'exit'

        jè ŋmá̋   [exit sweet.scent]   'smell good'

        jè fṳ̀   [exit bad.smell]   'smell bad'

        jè dɛ̀ŋ   [exit hand]   'die/get out of control (of a child)'

        jè gbè   [exit way]   'do intentionally'

        jè tsɛ̀̃ŋ   [exit beard]   'grow a beard'

        jè fùfɔ́   [exit breast]   'develop breasts'

        jè ŋwá̋nè   [exit argument]   'argue'

        jè nɔ̀̃   [exit top]   'grow up, develop'

jè mìĩ̀ĵ   [exit inside]   'die'

I propose that the primitive conceptual semantic content of ICVs containing *jè* is motion in relation to a ground object. I use 'ground' in the sense of Talmy (1985, 2000) to denote a stationary landmark or point which serves as a reference point to which the motion of the figure (the thing that is moving) can be described. To determine how this conclusion was reached for *jè*, it is instructive to first look at its semantics outside ICVs. The following are typical uses of *jè* with non-inherent complements.

(292) nĩ̀   tɔ́=ɔ̀   *jè*   *è=kʋ̀è*
       and   bottle=DEF   exit   3SG=neck
       "And the bottle came off from his neck."   [PAT:58]

(293) nĩ̀   ã̀mɛ̃̀=kɔ̀   tsó=!ɛ́   nĩ̀   *ã̀mɛ̃̀=kɛ̀-jè*   *fã̀á=à*   *mìĩ̀ĵ*
       and   3PL=climb   tree=DEF   and   3PL=take-exit   river=DEF   inside
       "And they climbed the tree and in so-doing got out of the river.   [SAM:104]

(294) nĩ̀   ã̀mɛ̃̀=kwɔ̀   tsó=!ɛ́   nĩ̀   è=kɛ̀   gbèé=!ɛ́
       and   3PL=climb   tree=DEF   and   3SG=and   dog=DEF

       ã̀mɛ̃̀=yà-jè   *tsó=è*   *sèè*
       3PL=ITIV-exit   tree=DEF   back
       "And they climbed the log, and he and the dog, they ended up behind the log"
       [BOR:61]

(295) ní   ǎmɛ̃̀=nyĩ̀ɛ́   *kè-yà-jè*   *nũ̀-ŋmɔ̃̀tɔ́=ɔ̀*   *mĩ̀ŋ=!ɛ̃́*
      NMLZ   3PL=walk   take-ITIV-end.up   water-mud=DEF   inside=DEF
      "When they walked and ended up in the muddy water..." [BOR:70]

As the gloss, 'exit' intimates, *jè* encodes motion away from or out of the referent of its object,
as in (292) and (293) where *tɔ́!ɔ́* 'the bottle' and *ǎmɛ̃̀* 'they' are involved in motion away from
the objects, *èkùè* 'his neck' and *fãáà mĩ̀ŋ* 'in the river' respectively. The object referents must
be some kind of location, receptacle, or container, capable of holding the agent or theme. A
second related sense of *jè* appears contradictory to the first in that in this sense, it is the object
of *jè* that is the goal of the motion. *jè* here is usually accompanied by the deictic auxiliaries *ba-*
or *ya-*. This sense of *jè* may be translated as 'end up', 'emerge', 'appear', 'exit'. It is this sense
that is seen in (294) and (295). The two senses are perfectly compatible and serve as an
example of lexical economy in the language. The difference between them lies in which ground
the speaker chooses to focus on in the motion event. In the first sense of *jè*, it is the source, the
location or entity from which the agent moves. In the second sense, it is the goal - the location
or entity the figure arrives at after movement from or through some other point.

      The meanings of most ICVs with *jè* can be traced to its first sense. In *jè kpò* [exit
compound] 'exit', *kpò* 'compound' is the source - the location that the subject reference moves
away from. This ICV literally reflects the experience of exiting one's room onto a compound

(shared by others) and then having to exit that compound to get out of the house or living

quarters.[17] This experience has become lexicalized in an ICV which by itself simply means 'to

go out'. Example *òkó é-jè kpò* [Oko PERF-exit compound] "Oko has gone out", meaning he

has gone to town and not necessarily just out of the compound of his home. This meaning has

been extended to situations where an entity simply exits from a particular location; the source

of the motion is often given as the complement of *yɛ̀* 'be located', as in (296) where the source

is *tsó!ɛ́* 'the tree'.

(296) wòbîi = ɛ̀   ***jè***   ***kpò***   yɛ̀   tsó = ɛ̀   nɔ̃̀   kɛ̀-bɔ̀lè
      bee-PL = DEF   exit   compound   be.located   tree = DEF   top   take-encircle

      ã̀mɛ̃̀ = fɛ̃́ɛ̃́
      3PL = all
      "The bees came out of the tree and surrounded them."   [PAT:63]

In *jè ŋmã́* [exit sweet.scent] 'smell good' and *jè fṹ* [exit bad.smell] 'smell bad', the

complement is the thing that is moving i.e. the scent. The receptacle from which it is exiting is

the subject referent. Therefore, *jè* in this sense could be glossed as 'emit'.

(297) nĩ̀yèní!í = ɛ̃̀   ŋ̀-*jè*   ***ŋmã́***
      food = DEF   PROG-exit   scent
      "The food smells good" (Lit: "The food is emitting a good scent.")

---

[17] In the traditional Ga living arrangement, a number of families live in separate rooms or houses which share one compound. Coming out of one's room means coming onto the compound, which may or may not be enclosed.

An extension of this sense is found in the ICVs, *jè fùfɔ́* 'develop breasts' and *jè tsɛ̀ŋ* 'grow a beard'. The body parts, *fùfɔ́* 'breasts' and *tsɛ̀ŋ* 'beard' can be conceptualized as exiting or coming out of the subject referent's bodies, or their bodies could be 'emitting' these new parts (298).

(298) í=bí   !lɛ́=!ɛ́   é-*jè*   ***fùfɔ́/tsɛ̀ŋ***
      1SG=child   DEF=DEF   PERF-exit   breasts/beard
      "My child has developed breasts/grown a beard."

jè dɛ̀ŋ [exit hand] 'get out of control (of a child)': This metaphor is self-explanatory: if there is something in your hands, you have more control over it than when it is not in your hands.

jè mĩ̀ŋ [exit inside] 'die': Here, the covert possessor of *mĩ̀ŋ* 'inside' is the null pronoun co-referential with *wàlà* 'life'. Life is conceptualized as a container, and when you come out of it you enter death.

jè gbὲ [exit way] 'do intentionally': This example is a bit more metaphorical. If one is on a path, no thought or planning is required to keep going on the same path. However, to exit that path and take a different path requires extra thought, planning and effort. It is this conscious action of exiting one path for another that is evoked metaphorically to express deliberate, premeditated actions.

jè ŋwɛ́nè [exit argument] 'argue': Example *òkó kὲ mĩ̀ jè ŋwɛ́nè* [Oko take me exit argument] "Oko argued with me". This ICV is very opaque, especially so because the word *ŋwɛ́nè* does

not exist outside this ICV. Dakubu (2008:164) glosses it as 'argument' or 'doubt'. It is very difficult to see how *jè* contributes to its final semantics, except in the 'develop' sense seen in *jè tsɛ̃̀ɲ* 'grow a beard'. A person could be said to develop doubt about a position which could lead to an argument.

jè nɔ̃̀ [exit top] 'grow up, mature (of a person): This is another example of an ICV whose meaning cannot easily be gleaned from the meanings of its component words. It is difficult to conceive of what the possessor of *nɔ̃̀* 'top' would be. One concept that comes to mind is *gbé!kɛ́bîi àshì̃* 'childhood' but any proposal will be nothing but an educated guess and so this example will be left to future analyses.

ii) *shì̃* cluster

Many ICVs have the complement *shì̃,* a locative relational noun referring to the ground/earth or any region beneath the reference object. It is therefore no surprise that it is found in ICVs that code posture as well as motion. Examples are *dã̀mɔ̃̀ shì̃* [stand down] 'stand', *tá !shî̃* [sit down] 'sit', *tè shì̃* [rise down] 'get up', *yí !shì̃* [pass down] 'descend', *gbèé !shî̃* [fall down] 'fall', *kɑ̃́ !shî̃* [lie down] 'lie down', *hì̃ shì̃* [live down] 'live'. Most of these verbs involve a change of position from a higher elevation to a lower elevation (e.g. *tá !shî̃* 'sit down', *kɑ̃́ !shî̃* 'lie down' and *gbèé !shî̃* 'fall down') and so the use of the complement *shì̃* 'ground' seems logical.

However, a few verbs predicate a change in position from a lower point to a higher point e.g. *tè shǐ̀* 'stand up, rise up, wake up' and *dằmǒ̀ shǐ̀* 'stand up'. It appears then, that *shǐ̀* in posture and motion ICVs serves simply to indicate a change in bodily position with respect to the ground, be it motion that results in greater or lesser proximity of the subject referent to the ground.

The ICV, *jù shǐ̀* [steal down] 'do sth surreptitiously' via the combination of the verb *jù* 'steal' and the noun, *shǐ̀* 'down' is able to connote the quiet stealth and secrecy associated with the movement of thieves, especially the stereotypical image of thieves stooped over (moving their bodies closer to the ground, hence *shí̋*) while walking so as not to be detected. An example sentence is (299).

(299) | *è=jù* | *shǐ̀* | nǐ̀ | è=yà-hǎ́ | !lέ | níyènǐ̋!í̋ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3SG=steal | down | and | 3SG=ITIV-give | 3SG.OBJ | food |

yè   hèlà-tsá-!mɔ̋́-hé=!έ
be.located   sickness-heal-NOM-place=DEF
"She went and gave him food surreptitiously at the hospital (perhaps, because the hospital did not allow outside food.)"

dà shǐ̀ [ICV down] 'thank' is one of those ICVs whose verb only occurs within the one ICV. There is a property verb *dà* 'be big' but its semantics is too distinct from that of *dà shǐ̀* 'thank' to postulate any relation. Dakubu (2008:56) suggests that it may be a borrowing from Akan which uses a similar ICV, *dà àsè* [lie under] 'thank'.

iii) *wò* cluster

The following ICVs contain the verb, *wò*, which in non-ICVs means 'wear', or 'put in'.

(300)   *wò hɔ́*   [put pregnancy]   'make pregnant'

      wò gbéyèì   [put fear]   'scare'

      wò bàà   [put leaf]   'make herbal preparation'

      wò jàlà   [put wares]   'put wares up for sale'

      wò mì̀ŋ là   [put inside fire]   'annoy'

(301) and (302) show its use in non-ICV contexts.

(301)   nĩ̀   kpékpl̀é=!ɛ́   nò   hṹ   **wɔ̀=bàá-wò**   **mì̀ŋ**   **mùtsùlù**
      and   kpekple=DEF   that   too   1PL=FUT-put   inside palm.oil
      "And the kpekple, that one too, we will put palm oil inside it."   [OYO:49]

(302)   **è=wò**   **àtàlé**   **yɛ̃́!ŋ́**
      3SG=wear   dress   white
      "She's wearing a white dress."

The following are some sentences with *wò* ICVs.

(303)   bèní   à=yàá-!tswá   mã̀ŋkɛ̃̀ tã̀mɔ̃̀   *five o'clock=ɛ́=!ɛ́*
      when   3PL.IMPERS=FUT.ITIV-strike   night   like   DEF=DEF

      à=kɛ́-wò   **jàlà**   àà=hɔ̀ɔ̂
      3PL.IMPERS=take.PERF-put   market   3PL.IMPERS.PROG=sell
      "By five o'clock in the middle of the night, they've displayed (them); they're selling
      (them)

(304) è=wò-ɔ̀   gbé!kɛ́-bíì=ɛ̀   à-hè   gbéyèì
       3SG=put-HAB   child-PL=DEF   PERT-body   fear
       "He scares the children."

The primitive conceptual element in the verb *wò* is CAUSE X TO ATTACH TO Y, where X is the inherent complement (e.g. *gbéyèì* 'fear' in (304)) and Y is the second object (*gbé!kɛ́-bíìè à-hè* 'children'). When there is no other object apart from the complement (as in 303) then *wò* simply means CAUSE X TO COME INTO BEING. In both senses, an entity or location which previously did not have X now has it. This is an extension of the 'put' sense of *wò* that is found in non-ICVs; when you put on a dress, you cause the dress to move from some other location and become attached to your body. So in (304) *gbèyèì* 'fear' is caused to move to *gbé!kɛ́-bíì à-hè* (children's bodies) and the cause of this or the entity responsible for this action is the subject referent. In (303), the goods are put up or displayed when previously they were not. This illustrates the "cause to come into being" sense of *wò*.

A detailed analysis of the semantics of all or most verbs and their inherent complements will constitute a huge undertaking. This modest analysis of a few ICV meaning clusters is meant to demonstrate that in Gã, these lexical items are not random combinations of verbs and nouns. For the most part, they have figurative and metaphorical extensions that can be traced to their meanings in non-ICV contexts. ICVs with the same components will therefore tend to

have some primitive conceptual concept in common, forming a systematic pattern of meaning

expression within an ICV meaning cluster. Some are quite literal (*yè nǐ!í* [eat thing] 'eat', *wò

jàlà* [put wares] 'display wares for sale') while others are more metaphorical (e.g. *jè gbɛ̀* [exit

way] 'do sth. intentionally', *tsí yìsɛ̀ɛ̀* [push back of head] 'rush someone to do something'.

Either way, they form a very tight semantic unit. Like all metaphor, the meanings of ICVs are

rooted in human experience, which is culturally determined, and this should be at the forefront

of any endeavor to unpack the semantics of these distinctive verbs.

3.5 Non-prototypical clause types

This sections looks at clause types that do not obey the prototypical SVO word order, as well

as clauses which have non-prototypical predicates.

3.5.1 Copula clauses and verbless clauses

In addition to transitive and intransitive clauses, Gã also has copula clauses and verbless

clauses. Copula clauses are clauses containing a verb, the copula, which lacks rich semantic

content and only serves to relate two NP arguments: the subject and the complement. Dixon

(2010:159) identifies five types of relations that may be predicated by the copula: identity,

attribution, possession, benefaction and location.

3.5.1.1 Copula *jí*

Gã has one copula verb, *jí,* which is used to express the relation of identity between the subject

and the complement. Such clauses are also called equative clauses or clauses of proper

inclusion (Payne 1998:114). Examples of copula clauses are:

(305) è＝nyɛ̀mî̀   jí   bò
       3SG＝sibling COP   you
        He is your sibling.   [MM:106]

(306) *Elma*＝!á   lɛ̀   jí   àmɔ̀ɔ́!kɔ́
       Elma＝TOP   3SG.OBJ   COP   Amorkor
       Elma, she is (the same person as) Amorkor.   [DF:118]

(307) jɛ́mɛ̀   jí   hé   nĩ́   ó＝hé-mɔ̀-kɛ̀-yé-lí
       there   COP   place NMLZ   2SG＝buy-NOM-and-eat.NOM

       yɔ́ɔ̀
       be.located.HAB
       "There is where your faith lies."   [CH:123]

(308) nɔ́   nĩ́   è＝jí   kɛ̀kɛ̀ jí   á!kɛ́
       NM   NMLZ   3SG＝COP   just   COP   NMLZ

       ó＝!nã́-kò   shì̀   á＝kɛ̀ɛ́   bò
       2SG.PERF＝see-NEG   but   3PL.IMPERS.PERF＝tell   you
       "What it (＝faith) is simply is that you have not seen (it) but you have been told."
       [CH:160]

(309) hèwɔ́＝!ɔ́   énɛ́ɛ̀-mɛ̀ĩ́＝!ɛ́   mòŋ   jí   òtí＝!ɛ́
       sake＝TOP   this-PL＝DEF   rather COP   salient.point＝DEF
       "So these rather are the important points."   [OYO:287]

The types of arguments that can occur as subject and complement of a copula are varied. They

may be full NPs (305), (306); pronouns (305), (306); demonstratives (307), (309) or larger

nominal units such as grammatical nominalizations (307), (308). In (308), the subject is the

grammatical nominalization, *nɔ́ nɪ́ èjí kèkɛ̀* 'what it simply is' and the complement is *á!kɛ́*

ó!nã̌kò shɪ̀ ákèɛ́ bò 'that you haven't seen it but you have been told".

The copula cannot be inflected for tense, aspect or mood. It can, however, be negated.

A negative copula predication is expressed by placing the negative particle *jééé* in clause-initial

position.

(310) jééé   è=nyɛ̌mɪ̂   jí   bò
       NEG   3SG=sibling COP   you
       He is not your sibling.

(311) jééé   jɛ̃́mɛ̌   jí   hé   nɪ́   ó=hé-mɔ̌-kɛ̀-yé-lí
       NEG   there COP place NMLZ   2SG=buy-NOM-and-eat.NOM
       yɔ́ɔ̀
       be.located.HAB
       "There is not where your faith lies."

Since the copula equates two NPs that have the same identity, the subject and

complement are often reversible, as this excerpt from a conversation shows (312). The first and

third lines contain very similar copula clauses, a major difference being that the subject and

complement are reversed.

(312) KK: hὲwɔ́=!ɔ́   énɛ̃́ɛ̀-mɛ̃̀í=!ɛ̃́   mòŋ   jí   òtí=!ɛ́

             sake=TOP   this-PL=DEF   rather COP   salient.point=DEF

             "So these rather are the important points."

     Oyo: òtí=!ɛ́   ɛ̀hɛ̃́ɛ̀

             salient.point=DEF   IJ

             "The important points. Exactly!"

             òtí=!ɛ́   jí   énɛ̃́

             salient.point=DEF   COP   this

             "The important points are this."

It is not always possible to reverse the arguments in a copula clause. Example (313a), in which

the proper name is the copula subject and the pronoun is the complement, is ungrammatical.

(313b) where the subject is a common noun is fine.

(313a) *àmɔ̀ɔ́!kɔ̂   jí   lὲ

       Amorkor   COP   3SG.OBJ

       "She is (the same person as) Amorkor."

(313b) àmálé-lɔ̀   jí   lὲ

       lie-NOM   COP   3SG.OBJ

       "She is a liar."

What this means is that in Gã equational clauses involving a pronoun and a proper name, the

proper name must be the complement and the pronoun must be the subject, as in (306). This

structural restriction does not apply to clauses with a pronoun and a common noun argument.

     In the next pair of examples, the two arguments of the copula are interchanged. Both

sentences are grammatical but they serve different pragmatic functions. While (314a) is a

straightforward assertion which predicates Oko's inclusion in the set of entities denoted by *jùlɔ̀*

'thief'; (314b) places Oko in contrastive focus. The entity it is being contrasted with will be

retrievable from the discourse context.

(314a) jùlɔ̀   jí   òkó
     thief   COP   Oko
     "Oko is a thief."

(314b) òkô   jí   jùlɔ̀
     Oko   COP   thief
     "It is Oko who is a thief (and not Atteh)."

The contrastive focus interpretation of (314b) hints at a diachronic relationship between focus

constructions and copula constructions, given the evidence that focus markers are historically

related to copulas (Heine and Reh 1984:181-182). Indeed, there is one interesting morpho-

phonological commonality between copula clauses and focus constructions and this relates to

tone. In focus constructions, the focused argument occurs in clause initial position and is

followed by the focus particle, *nì*, as in (315a), where the focused NP is *fɛ́ɛ́* 'all'. The focus

marker may be omitted, but its low tone remains. If the last syllable of the focused NP is high-

toned the low tone of the focus marker combines with it, resulting in a falling tone, as in

(315b).

(315a) ãhã́ã̀   *fɛ́ɛ́*   *nì*   à=kɛ̀-fé-ɔ̀
     IJ   all   FOC   3PL.IMPERS=take-do-HAB
     "Precisely. All of it is what is used to do it."   [OYO:262]

(315b) jééé *f̋ɛ̋ɛ̂*   wɔ̀=bàá-nyɛ́   wɔ́=tsɔ̋ɔ̋   bò
       NEG all.FOC   1PL=FUT-able   1PL.SBJV=show   2SG.OBJ
       gbèí=!ɛ́
       name=DEF
       "It is not all of them that we can tell you their names."   [OYO:162]

When the focused particle is omitted and the tone on the last syllable of the focused element is low, there is no change in tone in the focused NP.

In copula clauses as well, a copula subject that ends in a high tone in citation form winds up with a falling tone when it is followed by the copula *jí.* This is seen in (314b). This phenomenon has led Dakubu (2002:22) to propose a floating low tone as part of the morpho-phonological make-up of the copula. Therefore, the full form of the copula is `*jí.* But bearing in mind the focus semantics of some copula clauses as well as the cross-linguistically attested relationship between focus and copula syntax, I propose that the floating low tone is the low tone of the focus marker, *nì̃.* Further evidence for this view comes from the fact that both the copula subject and the focused NP can be pronominalized with the independent pronoun/object pronoun (316), (317). Subjects in ordinary transitive and intransitive clauses, however, must be pronominalized with subject pronouns (318).

(316) mɔ̃̀   nĩ́   è=jwɛ̃̀ŋ   á!kɛ́   *lè/*e*   jí   ãmɛ̃̀=kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né   nã̀ãnyò
       person NMLZ 3SG=think NMLZ 3SG.OBJ   COP 3PL=frog   friend

pòtɛ̀ɛ̃   nĩ́   làájé = !ɛ́

exactly   NMLZ   go.missing = DEF

"The one whom he thought that he was the particular frog friend who went missing."
[DEB:167]

(317) *lè/*e*   nĩ̀   ĩ́ = sùmɔ̃̀

       3SG.OBJ   FOC   1SG = love

       "It is he that I love."

(318) *è/*lè* = jè   kpò   yɛ̀   tɔ́ = ɔ̀   mĩ̀ĩ̀ŋ

       3SG = exit   compound be.located   bottle = DEF inside

       "He came out of the bottle."   [PAT:16]

3.5.2 Verbless clauses: predicative particles nĩ, nẽ and nã́ã̀

The particles, *nĩ́, nẽ́* and *nã́ã̀* function as predicates in clauses that lack verbs. As particles, they

cannot be inflected. Some have a deictic component. They will be examined in turn below:

nĩ:- This particle has an identificational function and serves to point out that its subject referent

is identical to another referent previously mentioned in the discourse, one that can be picked

out in the discourse context. It therefore has anaphoric discourse deixis. It is not a copula

particle because it does not have a complement, only a subject.

(319) ònṹfṹ   *!nĩ́*

       snake   PRED.PRT

       "It is a snake."

(320) mĩ̀   mĩ́ = nɔ̃́   *!nĩ́*   nĩ̀   nyɛ̃́ = bà-mɔ̃́

       1SG   1SG = NM   PRED.PRT   and   2PL.PERF = VENT-catch

!lɛ́=!ɛ́
3SG.OBJ=DEF
"It is mine, and you've come to catch him."[DEB:171]

(321) hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   té!shɛ́ *house*=ɛ́=!ɛ́   ɛ́ŋmɛ̀   *nɪ̀*
       so=TOP   Teshie   =DEF=DEF where PRED.PRT
       "So Teshie House, where is it?"   [FH:66]

A clause containing the predicative particle, *nĩ*, may be negated in the same manner as a

copular clause, by fronting the negative particle *jɛ́ɛ́ɛ́*.

(322a) gbèé   *!nɪ́*
        dog   PRED.PRT
        "It is a dog"

(323b) *jɛ́ɛ́ɛ́*   gbèé   *!nɪ́*
        NEG   dog   PRED.PRT
        "It is not a dog"

nɛ́ɛ̃:- This is a predicative particle much like *nĩ*, except that it has deictic semantics and

restrictions on its usage imposed by information structure. It is used to call attention to an

entity that is spatially proximal to the interlocutors and which is already known to the

interlocutors.

(324) jɛ́ɛ́ɛ́   ã̀mɛ̃̀=kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né=!ɛ́ nɪ́   é-làájé=!ɛ́--
        NEG   3PL=frog=DEF   NMLZ   PERF-be.missing=DEF
        "Isn't it their frog who has gone missing?"

       jɛ́ɛ́ɛ́   nò   *nɛ̃̂*
       NEG   that   this
       "Isn't this that (frog)?"

(325) ê   mɛ̀nĩ̀   **nɛ́**
       IJ   what   this
       "Oh, what is this?!"   [PAT:187]

It is also used cataphorically in discourse to signal the introduction of a salient point that will

be expounded upon later, and anaphorically, to refer to a chunk of prior discourse. It's

cataphoric use is exemplified in (326), where the speaker first refers to something she

witnessed growing up using *nɛ́* and then goes on to state what exactly that is. In the anaphoric

use exemplified by (327), *nɛ́* refers to the preceding section of the story, the part that presented

the conclusion.

(326) nɔ́   nĩ́   wɔ̀=bà-nĩ́nã̀   **nɛ́**   á!kɛ́
       NM   NMLZ   1PL=VENT-meet   this   NMLZ

       mɔ̀-fĩ́ã́-mɔ̀   nĩ́   à=bàá-fɔ́   lɛ̀
       person-all-person   NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS=FUT-give.birth   3SG.OBJ

       hã̀ã̂jĩ̌=!ɛ́   kùsṹŋ   kò   yɛ̀   á!kɛ́   sà   nĩ́
       twins=DEF   custom   INDEF   exist   NMLZ fit NMLZ

       á=yá-táò   bò
       3PL.IMPERS=ITIV-search   2SG
       "What we came and met is this: that everybody who is born a twin, there is a certain
       custom, that they have to go and search for you…" [OYO:5]

(327) àdèsã́=ã̀   nã̀ã̀gbèè   **nɛ́**
       story=DEF   end   this
       "This is the end of the story."   [NAR:85]

A clause containing *nɛ́́* is also negated with the negator, *jééé* in clause-initial position, as seen

in (328) below.

(328) *jééé*   àdèsɑ́́=ɑ̀̃   nɑ̀̃ɑ̀gbèè   *nɛ́́*
      NEG   story=DEF   end   this
      "This is not the end of the story."

When *nɛ́́* is modified by the definite article, *lɛ*, it also functions as a proximal demonstrative

determiner and is used for noun modification (§2.3.1.3.1). It is by convention written as one

word, *nɛ́́!ɛ́́* 'this'.

(329) nɑ̀̃nɑ̀̃ɑ́́=!á   lɛ́   è=yè   *[mɑ̀̃ŋ   nɛ́́ɛ̀́]*   mĩ̀ŋ
      Nanaa=DEF   TOP   3SG=be.located   country   this   inside
      "As for Nanaa, she is in this country."   [DF:149]

nɛ́́ɑ̀̃:- This is a presentative predicative particle (PRSTV.PRED.PRT) with a spatial deictic

component; it is used to call attention to an entity that is spatially proximal to the interlocutors.

This entity however, need not be known to interlocutors as is the case with *nɛ́́.* Unlike *nɪ́́* and

nɛ́́, this predicative particle occurs before the nominal.

(330) *nɛ́́ɑ̀̃*   kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né   wèkú !kó
      PRSTV.PRED.PRT   frog   family INDEF
      "Here is a certain family of frogs." [PAT:188]

(331) nò   hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   nɪ́́   è=bà   *next time=ɛ́=!ɛ́*
      that   sake=TOP   NMLZ   3SG=come   =DEF=DEF

è=kɛ̀ɛ́	*nã̌!ã́*	*documents*
3SG=say	PRSTV.PRED.PRT	

"So when he came the next time, he said, "Here are documents." [MM:74]

3.5.3 Location, existence and possession

These three semantic categories all make use of the form *yè. yè,* depending on its syntactic

position may either be a verb or a preposition. It is one of only a handful of prepositions in Gã,

the other ones being *á!kɛ́* 'as' and *jà* 'unless' (§6.6.2). When it occurs immediately after the

subject NP, it is a verb which predicates the location of the subject. This location is denoted by

the object which follows *yè.* For example, in (332), *yè* predicates the location of the subject,

ékòmé hṹ 'one of them (i.e. shoes)'. Its location is coded by the object, *bí!ɛ́* 'here'. In (333),

the subject is the third singular pronoun, and its location, the object of *yè,* is *park kò mã̀sɛ̀í*

'near a park'.

(332)	nì̃	shú!ú=!ɛ́	ékòmé	hṹ	*yè*	bí!ɛ́
	and	shoe=DEF	one	too	be.located	here

"And the shoes, one of them too is here." [FLO:27]

(333)	è=*yè*	*park*	kò	mã̀sɛ̀í	ó=nã̀
	3SG=be.located		INDEF	side	2SG=see

"It is located near a park, right?" [FH:6]

The locative verb *yè* cannot be inflected, except when it occurs in a grammatical argument

nominalization (a.k.a. relative clause) (334), or in a focus clause (335). In these syntactic

environs, it takes a habitual marker *-ɔ,* although the temporal semantic import is that of present

time. The two vowels in *yé-ɔ̀* 'be.located-HAB' coalesce and are rendered in speech as *yɔ́ɔ̀*. It

is not apparent to me what it is about these two constructions that engenders such marking.

However, it is not surprising that these constructions should behave in an identically

idiosyncratic fashion; in §6.8 I argue that the focus construction historically started out as an

equational construction equating the focused noun with an argument nominalization referring to

the focused noun. Therefore the argument nominalization in modification function (relative

clause) and the focus construction are diachronically related.

(334) hèwɔ̀ nɔ́   nǐ   ***yɔ́ɔ̀***   bò-díɛ̀ŋtsɛ̀   ó = tsùí
       sake   NM   NMLZ   be.located.HAB   2SG.OBJ-INTENS   2SG = heart

       mǐ̃ŋ = !ɛ̃́   nǐ   ò = bàá-bà   nǐ̃   ò = kɛ̀-bàá-!bá-hɛ̃́   ɑ̃mɛ̃̀
       inside = DEF FOC 2SG = FUT-come   and 2SG = take-FUT-VENT-give 3PL
       "So whatever your heart desires is what you will come and give them."
       (Lit: "So whatever is in your heart…)   [OYO:118]

(335) nò   hèwɔ́ = !ɔ́   wɔ̀ = bíɛ̀   nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́   hɑ̃̀ɑ̃̀jĩ̀ĩ̀ sɔ́ŋ̀ŋ̀   ***yɔ́!ɔ́***
       that sake = TOP 1PL = here this twins only.FOC be.located.HAB
       bí!ɛ́
       here
       "So here at ours, it is only twins that are here."   [OYO:385]

Verb *yè* is negated with the suppletive verb, *bɛ́.*

(336) kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né = !ɛ́   ***bɛ́***   è = tɔ́ = ɔ̀   mǐ̃ŋ
       frog = DEF   be.located.NEG   3SG = bottle = DEF inside
       "The frog was not in his bottle."   [DEB:7]

When *yè* functions as a preposition, it is found after the verbal predicate or the object, if there is one. Its complement indicates the location where the action predicated by the verb was carried out. In (337), *ótsèmɛ̀ĩ̀ àwè* 'your father's family house' is where the 'doing' takes place. In (338), there are two tokens of preposition, *yɛ*. The complement of the first token codes the location where the subject is lying on his friend, as *sàà nɔ̀* 'the bed', while the second token codes the location of 'what is going on', which is *shĩ̀kpɔ́!ŋ́* 'ground'.

(337) ò=fé-ɔ̀   *yè*   ó=tsɛ̀-mɛ̀ĩ̀   à-wè
       2SG=do-HAB   be.located   2SG=father-PL   PERT-family.house
       "You do it in your father's family house."   [OYO:338]

(338) è=kã́   è=nɔ̀   *yè*   sàà   nɔ̀   nĩ̀   ãmɛ̀ĩ̀=ŋ̀-kwɛ́
       3SG=lie   3SG=top   be.located   bed   top   and   3PL=PROG-watch

       nɔ́   nĩ́   yà-à   nɔ̀   *yè*   shĩ̀kpɔ́!ŋ́
       NM   NMLZ   go-HAB   top   be.located   ground
       "He is lying on top of him on the bed and they are watching what is going on on the floor."   [FLO:24]

Since this use of *yè* is prepositional, it cannot be negated (339). It is the verb that can be negated (340).

(339) *ò=fé-ɔ̀   *bè*   ó=tsɛ̀-mɛ̀ĩ̀   à-wè
       2SG=do-HAB   be.located.NEG   2SG=father-PL   PERT-family.house
       "You do not do it in your father's family house."

(340) ó=!fééé   *yè*   ó=tsɛ̀-mɛ̀ĩ̀   à-wè
       2SG=do.NEG   be.located   2SG=father-PL   PERT-family.house
       "You do not do it in your father's family house."

The verb *yè* can also be used to indicate that its subject referent exists. This is the existential use of *yè*. The locative use can be viewed as a semantic extension of the existential use. Examples are found in (341) to (344).

(341) mî́ĩ=kéɛ́   !lɛ́   á!kɛ́   mî́ĩ=*hope*   á!kɛ́   ò=*yè*
    1SG.PROG=tell   her   that   1SG.PROG=   NMLZ   2SG=exist
    "I was telling her that I hope you are in."   [FH:107]

(342) è=mã̀mî́   *yè*
    3SG=mother exist
    "His mother is alive."   [FH:163]

(343) wɔ̀-mè̃ȇ̃   pìì   *yè*   nî́   wɔ̀   mòŋ̀   wɔ̀=tò-ɔ̀   bè
    1PL-PL   many   exist   NMLZ 1PL   rather 1PL=arrange-HAB   time

    wɔ̀=hã́-ã̀   wɔ̀=he
    1PL=give-HAB   1PL=body
    "There are many of us who rather set our own deadlines."   [CH:389]

(344) hékò   *yè*   nî́   !jí--   à=tsɛ́-!ɔ́   jɛ́!ŋ́
    somewhere   exist   NMLZ COP   3PL.IMPERS=call-HAB   there

    kpó=ɛ̀   nɔ̀
    compound=DEF   top
    "There is a place which is-- they call there *kpoɛ nɔ*."   [OYO:29]

Existential *yè* also takes no inflection, with the exception of the habitual suffix in grammatical nominalizations and focus constructions:

(346) shítɔ́   nî́   *yɔ́=!ɔ́*   é-fîté
    pepper.sauce   NMLZ   exist.HAB=DEF   PERF-spoil
    "The pepper sauce that's there, it has gone bad."

(347) òmɔ́   bê   yèlè   nĩ̀   yɔ̀ɔ̀
       rice   exist.NEG   yam   FOC   exist.HAB

       "There is no rice, it is yam that is available."

Like the locative, the existential is also negated with the suppletive, *bɛ́,* as in (347) above and

(348) below.

(348) mɔ̃̀=kò   mɔ̃̀=kò   *bɛ́*   nĩ́
       person=INDEF   person=INDEF   exist.NEG   NMLZ

       ó=!fɔ́   hã̂âjĩ̀ĩ nĩ́   ò=nyɛ́ɛ́ɛ́   ó=!féé
       2SG.PERF=give.birth   twins   NMLZ 2SG=able.NEG   2SG.SBJV=do
       énɛ́
       this
       "There is nobody who has given birth to twins who cannot do this."   [OYO:292]

       The final use of *yè* is as a verb which predicates the possession of an entity (the object

of *yè*) by the subject of *yè.*

(349) ĩ̃̀=*yè*   shĩ̀kpɔ̃́ŋ   kò   yè   hĩ́!ɛ̃́=!ɛ̃́
       1SG=have   land   INDEF   be.located   face=DEF
       "I have some land in front (of the hospital)."   [MM:224]

Like the locative and existential, this sense of *yè* also can only be inflected in grammatical

nominalizations, by marking it with the habitual suffix (347). And like the locative, *yè* is

negated by suppletion with *bɛ́* (348).

(347) mĩ́=lé   nã̃̀ã̀gbá   nĩ́   ò=*yɔ̀ɔ̀*
       1SG=know.NEG   trouble   NMLZ   2SG=have.HAB
       "I do not know the troubles that you have." [CH:430]

(348) ò = *bέ*   bí   *yὲ*   hé = !kó   dɔ́ŋ́ŋ́
       2SG = have.NEG   child be.located place = INDEF   anymore
       "You don't have a child anywhere else."   [CH:77]

The possessive construction can also be used for attribution, where the complement of

yὲ is a property that is being attributed to the subject. This was discussed in detail in §2.4.3.4.

§2.4.3.8 delved into detail on the topic of the relationship between possession and property

denotation. An example of the possessive construction being used for property denotation is

(349) below.

(349) è = *yὲ*   dɪ́ŋ́ŋ́
       3SG = have   quiet
       "S/he is quiet."

3.6 Question formation

The three main sentence types found in language are declarative, imperative and interrogative

sentences. Sometimes, these are referred to as moods. Declarative mood is expressed by

declarative sentences or statements. They are the default sentence type in most languages and

are utilized for presenting propositions. Imperative mood is utilized for the speech act of

making commands. In Gã, imperatives are expressed morpho-phonologically by affixes and

tone. Imperatives were examined in §3.2.3.2 as part of the discussion on verb morphology. This

section, therefore, deals solely with interrogative sentences, which are the main vehicle for

asking questions and making requests.

There are two types of questions: polar questions and content questions. Polar questions require the addressee to confirm or dispute the information contained in the question. Content questions contain incomplete information, and their purpose is to seek the missing or unknown information from the addressee. Polar questions will be discussed first, followed by content questions.

3.6.1 Polar questions

Polar questions may be formed in several ways. Gã has both sentence-initial and sentence-final question particles which signal polar questions. Either one may occur without the other in a question, or they may both occur in the same question. The sentence-initial question particle is *ằnǐ* and the sentence-final one is *ló.* (350) is a polar question containing both particles; (351), (352) and (353) have only the final particle, while (354) and (355) have only the initial particle.

(350) *ằnǐ* ò=bàá-nyɛ̃́ ó=!kɛ́ɛ́ nằkằǐ *ló*
QP 2SG=FUT-able 2SG.SBJV=say that QP
"Can you say that?" [CH:106]

(351) Harry kɛ̀ɛ̂ *ló*
Harry say QP
"Was it Harry who said it?" [MM:26]

(352) àfíɛ̌nà *ló*
Afiena QP
"Is it Afiena?" [FH:53]

(353)   ò=bàá-shî   *ló*
        2SG=FUT-pound   QP
        "Will you pound (it)?"

(354)   *ằnî̀*   ò=bàá-shî
        QP   2SG=FUT-pound
        "Will you pound (it)?"

(355)   *ằnî̀*   mɔ̀̃=kò   é-!bí   bò   sằn↑è
        QP   person=INDEF   PERF-ask   2SG.OBJ   matter
        "Has anybody asked you a question?"

In addition to the question particles, there may be pitch changes to the final syllable (not counting the final question particle) of the word in a polar question. If a word normally ends in a high-toned syllable, when it occurs in a polar question, the tone on the final syllable changes to a falling tone i.e. the pitch on the final syllable rises and then falls. Therefore, the verb *shí* 'pound', which in non-interrogatives has high tone, ends up with a falling tone when it occurs as the final syllable in a polar question (353), (354).

When a polar question contains a final question particle, and the syllable preceding the final particle ends in a low tone, there is no change in pitch - the low tone remains, as in (350) and (352). However, if there is no final question particle, the final low tone is raised slightly (355), though not to the level of a high tone. This slight rise is indicated by the superscript (↑) before the affected syllable, and may be described as an upstep.

A sentence that ends in a downstepped high tone, as in (356), must have the pitch of its final syllable lowered to a low tone to indicate a polar question. In (356), *shí!á* 'house/home' which normally ends in a downstepped high tone, ends in a low tone in the polar question.

(356) é=tèè   shí̃ã̀   *ló*
      3SG.PERF=go.PST home QP
      "Has he gone home?"

Polar questions may also be signalled by these tone changes alone, without the presence of any question particles. For example, in (357) and (358), the means for indicating the interrogative nature of the sentences is the slight rise in pitch or upstep of the final low tone.

(357) ã̀mɛ̃̀=jɛ́ŋ́=!ɛ́   àfíɛ̆ᵗnà
      3PL=there=DEF   Afiena
      "Their place, is it in Afiena?"   [FH:80]

(358) kɛ́   ì̃=kɛ̀ɛ́   tsòfã̀-tsɛ̀   wé=!ɛ́   bɛ́
      when 1SG=say   medicine-master   house=DEF QP

      nyɛ̃̀=nũ̀-ɔ̃̀   shĩ̀ᵗshĩ̀
      2PL=understand-HAB   under
      "When I say "medicine man's house", you understand it, don't you?"   [CH:92]

In (359), the interrogative is indicated by the falling tone on the final syllable, which in non-interrogatives has high tone.

(359) ô   á=!fééé   *operation*=ɛ́=!ɛ́   nĩ̀   è=gbô
      IJ   3PL.IMPERS=do.NEG   =DEF=DEF   and   3SG=die
      "Oh, the operation wasn't done before he died?"   [FH:134]

The statement in (360) ends in a downstepped high tone. But when it occurs as a polar question, the pitch on the final syllable is lowered to give a low tone. The particle, *bέ,* functions similarly to the tag in an English question tag. It marks an expectation on the part of the speaker that the addressee will agree with or confirm the supposition contained in the question. Unlike tags in English and other languages, however, *bέ* does not have a separate intonational contour, and is itself followed by a question, not a statement.

(360a) ò=bàá-!mɛ̃́
      2SG=FUT-wait
      "You will wait."

(360b) bɛ́   ò=bàá-mɛ̃̀
      QP   2SG=FUT-wait
      "You will wait, won't you?"   [YM:200]

(361) is another example of a polar question employing the particle, *bέ*

(361)   bɛ́   ò=fĩ́tà   ꜛhè
       QP   2SG=add   body
       "You are one of them, aren't you?"   [MM:150]

Another question particle which functions in similar manner as *bέ* is *ántó* or *tó.* The particle also occurs in initial position and seeks confirmation of the supposition which follows the particle. The difference is that what follows *(áń)tó* is a statement not a question (362).

(362)   lɛ́=!ɛ́   tó   è=hɛ̃́-ɑ̃́   mɔ̃̀   nɔ̃́
       3SG.OBJ=TOP   QP   3SG=give-HAB   person thing
       "As for her, she's generous, isn't she."   [DT:9;50]

A particular constituent in a polar question may be focused by fronting it and following

it with the focus particle, *nǐ.* The English construction that best reflects the semantics of this

construction would be a cleft construction, as in (363), where the subject, *Oko* is the referent

whose identity is being questioned.

(363) òkó   nǐ   bà-kɛ̀ɛ́   ꜛbò
Oko   FOC   VENT-tell   2SG.OBJ
"Was it Oko who told you?"

In (364), it is the object, *bò,* that is in focus.

(364) bò   nǐ   òkó   bà-kɛ̀ɛ̂
2SG.OBJ   FOC   Oko   VENT-tell
"Was it you that Oko came and told?"

The verb or action may also be focused in a polar question, but this results in a rhetorical

question expressing disbelief that the subject referent is partaking in the action (365). In order

for the verb to be focused it must be nominalized.

(365) fó-mɔ̌   nǐ   ò=fó-ɔ̀=ɔ̂
cry-NOM   FOC   2SG-cry-HAB=DEF
"Are you really crying?" (Lit: "Is it crying that you are crying?")

The answer to a polar question may be minimally, *hɛ̀ɛ́!ɛ̂/ɛ̀ɛ́!ɛ̂* 'yes', *dààbí* 'no' or an

answer that communicates ignorance. Agreement may also be indicated by a vocative which

involves simply vibrating the vocal cords to the tonal pattern of *hɛ̀ɛ́!ɛ̂* 'yes', a sound I

transcribe as *m̀ḿ!ḿ.* Disagreement may also be expressed by a vocative, one whose tone

pattern is *not* identical to *dààbí* 'no'. It is best transcribed as *ḿm̀hḿm̀*. An alternative to this is *-ɛ́ɛ̀hɛ̀ɛ́-* which has the same tone pattern but involves oral articulation rather than just voicing with the vocal cords.

3.6.2 Content questions

The means of formation of content questions is similar to the focused polar questions just discussed. A content question is basically a focus construction which has a question word in focus. Watters (2000:215) notes that in many African languages question words are always focused constituents. The focus particle, *nĩ̀* may optionally occur after the question word. In all the examples in my data, the focus particle was absent. The question words found in Gã are *nã́mɔ̃̀* 'who', *mɛ́nĩ̀* 'what', *nɛ́gbè/nĩ́ŋmɛ̃̀* 'where', *méèbà/mã́ã̀bà, mɛ́nĩ̀ hèwɔ̀* [what sake] 'why', *mɛ́ɛ̃̀bè* 'when', *té…tɛ́ɲ̀* 'how', *é!nyĩ́ɛ̃́* 'how many, how much', *mɛ́!ɛ́ NP* 'which NP'. One example featuring each question word is given below. A focus particle is included in brackets in examples where its presence is feasible. The norm, it seems, is to leave it out. There are no special pitch changes associated with content questions, in the manner that was seen with polar questions.

(366) ãmɛ̃̀=pàpá=!á   **mɛ́nĩ̀** wɔ̀=tsé-ɔ̀   lɛ́=!ɛ́
      3PL=father=DEF   what   1PL=call-HAB   3SG.OBJ=DEF
      "Their father, what do we call him?"   [DF:163]

(367) hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   ***nӑmɔ̌***   (nĩ̀)   à=kɛ́-bà
      sake=TOP   who   FOC   3PL.IMPERS=take.PERF-come
      "So who has been brought."   [MM:145]

(368) ***nɛ́gbὲ***   (nĩ̀)   ó=hé-mɔ̌-kὲ-yé-lí   yɔ̌ɔ̀
      where   FOC   2SG=buy-NOM-and-eat-NOM   be.located.HAB
      "Where lies your faith?"   [CH:265]

(369) ***té***   ò=fèé   ***tɛ́ŋŋ***   nĩ̀   ò=gbélé
      how   2SG=do   how   and   2SG=open
      "How did you open it?"

(370) hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   ófáìnɛ̄   ***mɛ̃́nĩ̌***   ***hèwɔ̀***   (nĩ̀)   à=yè-ɔ̀
      sake=TOP   please   what   sake   FOC   3PL.IMPERS=eat-HAB
      hɔ̌mɔ̌wɔ́=!ɔ́
      Homowo=DEF
      "So please, why is *Homowo* celebrated?"   [OYO:64]

(371) ĩ̀=kὲɛ́   ***mɛ̃́ɛ̀bà***   (nĩ̀)   gã̀-mɛ̌ĩ=!ɛ́   nyɛ́=!lú   nɛ̀kɛ́
      1SG=say   why   FOC   Ga-people=DEF   2PL=be.foolish   like.this
      I said, "Why is that Gas, you are so foolish?"   [MM:155]

(372) áfí-!í   ***é!nyĩ́ɛ̃̌***   (nĩ̀)   ã̀mɛ̃̀=yè-ɔ̀   dɑ̃́nĩ̀   nyɛ̃̀=bɔ̃̌ĩ-ɔ̀
      year-PL   how.many   FOC   3PL=eat-HAB   before   2PL=start-HAB

      kùsúŋ̀   nɛ̃́!ɛ̃̀   fèé-!mɔ̃́
      custom   this   do-NOM
      "How many years old are they before you start this custom?"   [OYO:408]

mɛ̃́ɛ̃̌ 'what, which' always occurs with an NP head:

(373) ***mɛ̃́ɛ̃̌***   shúù   (nĩ̀)   ò=sùmɔ̌
      which   shoe   FOC   2SG=like
      "Which shoe do you like?"

The NP containing *mɛ́ɛ̀* 'which' may also be used rhetorically to express contempt or dislike for an idea or suggestion. An example is given in (374), where Kai employs the interrogative to express derision at the paltry amount of 50 cedis.

(374) Kai: í=yá-kɔ́   hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   mɑ̃́=tá!ó   *hundred*
         1SG=ITIV-take   sake=TOP   1SG.FUT=find
         kò   mɑ̃́=kè   lɛ̀
         INDEF   1SG.FUT-gift   3SG.OBJ
         "I'm going to take it so I'll find some one hundred (cedis) to give to her."

    MM: ô   ɛ̀ɛ́!ɛ́   ɛ̀ɛ́!ɛ́   hɑ̃́   !lɛ́   *fifty*
         IJ   yes   yes   give   3SG.OBJ
         "Oh yes yes, give her fifty (cedis)."

    Kai: ô   *mɛ́!ɛ́*   *fifty*   hɯ̃́
         IJ   what   too
         "Oh, what fifty cedis?"   [MM:129]

Another interrogative word, *té* 'which' only occurs with grammatical nominalizations in NP use (See Chapter 7).

(375a) *té*   mɔ̃̀   nɛ̃́   !jí
       which   NM   NMLZ   COP
       "Which one is it?" (referring to a person)   [DF:165]

(375b) *té*   nɔ̃́   nɛ̃́   !jí
       which   NM   NMLZ   COP
       "Which one is it?" (referring to a thing)

Question words may also occur in-situ, in the same syntactic position that the answer would be:

(376) ằmɛ̃̀=pàpá=!á   wɔ̀=tsɛ́-ɔ̀   lɛ̀   *mɛ́nĩ̀*
       3PL=father=DEF   1PL=call-HAB   3SG.OBJ   what
       "Their father, we call him what?"

(377) à=kɛ̀   *nɑ́mɔ̃̀* (nĩ̀)   é-bà
       3PL.IMPERS=take   who   FOC   PERF-come
       "They've brought who?"

(378) ó=hé-mɔ̃̀-kɛ̀-yé-lí   yɛ̀   *nɛ̃́gbɛ̀*
       2SG=buy-NOM-and-eat-NOM   be.located   where
       "Your faith lies where?"

There are certain recurring elements in a number of these interrogative words that merit some investigation. The ones that immediately stand out are *mɛ̃́-* and *mɛ̃́ɛ̃̀-* (in *mɛ́nĩ̀* 'what', *mɛ̃́ɛ̃̀bà* 'why', *mɛ̃́ɛ̃̀bɛ̀* 'when', *mɛ̃́ɛ̃̀* 'which, what') and *nɛ̃́-* (in *nɛ̃̀gbɛ̀* 'where', *nɑ̀mɔ̃̀* 'who'). *mɛ́* appears to be an archaic question word meaning 'what'. Its regular occurrence with the focus particle, *nĩ̀* led speakers to reanalyse the question word + particle as one question word, thus was born modern day, *mɛ̃́nĩ̀* 'what'. Zimmerman's (1858:195) dictionary lists *mɛ̃́* as a synonym of *mɛ̃́nĩ̀* 'what' and remarks that the former is used at the end of sentences while the latter is used at the beginning. This distribution in 19th century Gã matches up with the linguistic facts; if *nĩ̀* is the focus particle, and focused constituents in Gã occur in sentence-initial position only, it is not surprising that *mɛ̃́nĩ̀* was disallowed at final position. Present-day speakers, however, seem to have reanalysed *mɛ̃́nĩ̀* in its entirety as a question word and so allow it at both sentence

initial and final positions. In modern Gã, *mɛ́* has largely fallen out of use, except in very formal registers. For instance, it was used in the following example by a priest giving a sermon.

(379) kɛ́   ằhű   tswà   tằmɔ̀̃   ***mɛ́***   ò=nyɛ́-!ŋ́   nĩ́
       if   storm   hit   like   what   2SG=be.able=NEG.FUT   NMLZ

       ó=fằ   lè
       2SG.SBJV=uproot   3SG.OBJ
       "No matter how strong the storm blows, it cannot be uprooted." (Lit: "Even if a storm blows like what, you cannot uproot it.")   [CH:350]

mɛ́ɛ̀ in *mɛ́ɛ̀bà* 'why' and *mɛ́ɛ̀bè* 'when' is probably a variant of *mɛ́nì,* the result of loss of the segments of *nì̀* and compensatory lengthening of the final vowel of *mɛ́,* with the extra vowel hosting the erstwhile low tone of the focus particle. *bà* in *mɛ́ɛ̀bà* 'why' is likely 'come, happen'. Therefore, *mɛ́ɛ̀bà* (*mɛ́ nì̀ bà)* 'why' literally means 'what happened'. *bè* in *mɛ́ɛ̀bè* 'when' refers to 'time' so that the literal meaning of the question word is 'what time'.

     nɛ́ is listed and translated in Zimmerman (1858:218) as 'what'. *nɑ́̃mɔ̀̃* 'who' could be analysed as *nɛ́* 'what' + *mɔ̀̃* 'person' and *nɛ́gbè* 'where' as *nɛ́* 'what' + *gbè* 'road, way'. *nɛ́,* however, is never used alone in present-day Gã and only occurs in these two question words. Since the plural of *mɔ̀̃* 'person' is *mɛ̀ì* 'people', *nɑ́̃mɔ̀̃* 'who' can be pluralized to obtain *nɑ́̃mɛ̀ì* 'who (pl)'. No other question word can be pluralized.

3.7 Summary

In this chapter, the Gã verb, its associated morphology as well as the simple clause and its

argument structure were introduced. It was noted that there were three types of verbal

predicates in Gã: simple verbs, serial verbs and inherent complement verbs (ICVs) (§3.1).

Verbal categories expressed morphologically were examined. It was determined that Gã was

mainly an aspectual language. The future is the only category resembling tense in Gã, but it

also has modal functions (§3.2.1.2). Most unmarked verbs are given a default past time

interpretation, but depending on the semantics of the verb and the effect of time adverbials,

present time and habitual aspectual interpretations may also be given for bare verbs. In §3.2.2,

the prospective, habitual, progressive, perfect, iterative and distributive aspects were discussed.

An examination of mood revealed that Gã has two irrealis categories, the subjunctive and

imperative, which both signal hypothetical situations (§3.2.3). The various forms of negation

were the subject of §3.2.4. In §3.2.5, the pre-verbal deictic auxiliaries were examined and

shown to provide spatial, aspectual as well as temporal information about the event.

Transitivity and grammatical relations were looked at in §3.3. Gã has nominative-accusative

grammatical relations and evidence was provided in support of the notion of subject. Different

transitivity classes of verbs were identified (§3.3.3). In §3.4, inherent complement verbs (ICVs)

were investigated and it was proven that the complement in an ICV is also the direct object of

the verb in the ICV (§3.4). The semantics of ICVs were treated by examining a few meaning

clusters in detail (§3.4.3). Non-prototypical clause types were looked at in §3.5. Copula clauses

and verbless clauses were presented in §3.5.1 and §3.5.2, while the use of verb and preposition

yè for location, existential expression and possession was the subject of §3.5.3. Question-

formation was the topic of §3.6. Polar questions are formed by a combination of question

particles and pitch changes on the final syllable of the supposition. Content questions make use

of a focus structure in which the question word is focused. The question word may also be in

situ.

Chapter 4: Serial verb constructions

4.0 Introduction

Serial verb constructions (SVCs) are an important syntactic device in Gã, as they are in many

West African languages. They are constructions that consist of two or more verbs which

together act as a single clause and in most cases encode a single event. Some SVCs may

consist of two or more sub-events that together are expressed by a single clause. Cross-

linguistically, SVCs are characterised by certain core syntactic properties, which will be

discussed below. It is important to note, however, that there are language-specific properties of

SVCs that are dependent on the unique morpho-syntactic properties of the languages in which

they are found. The aim of this chapter, therefore, is to describe SVCs as they are uniquely

manifested in Gã. The chapter is divided into several sections. §4.1 deals with definitional

issues. §4.2 looks at the properties of mono-clausality and single event-hood and how they are

formally manifested in AMP marking and subject marking. §4.3 examines symmetrical and

asymmetrical SVCs as well as their functions. §4.4 takes a closer look at two semantic types of

SVCs: the integrated SVC and the chained SVC. §4.5 takes an in-depth look at one type of

SVC involving the defective verb *kɛ*. The issue of finiteness and how it relates to the verbs in

an SVC is discussed in §4.6. In §4.7, SVCs are compared with similar multi-verb constructions.

§4.8 presents the summary.

4.1 Defining SVCs

SVCs are infamously difficult to define cross-linguistically, and no study is complete without

an acknowledgement of the lack of consensus among linguists as to what exactly constitutes an

SVC. Below, a few definitions by various authors which I consider to be representative of the

generally accepted view of SVCs will be given, after which various critiques of these

definitions will be highlighted.

Aikhenvald's (2006:1) definition is widely regarded as a consensus view, and states:

> "A serial verb construction (SVC) is a sequence of verbs which act together as a single
> predicate, without any overt marker of coordination, subordination, or syntactic
> dependency of any other sort. Serial verb constructions describe what is conceptualized
> as a single event. They are monoclausal; their intonational properties are the same as
> those of a monoverbal clause, and they have just one tense, aspect, and polarity value.
> SVCs may also share core and other arguments. Each component of an SVC must be
> able to occur on its own."

Durie (1997:290) provides a semantic definition:

"The archetypal serial verb construction consists of a sequence of two or more verbs which in various
(rather strong senses) together act like a single verb."

He lends much weight to the issue of culture-specific event construal and notes that events which are most often serialized are those that "speakers habitually treat as complex unmarked events." (Durie 1997:328).

Stahlke (1965), in his study of serial verbs in Yoruba and Yatye enumerates the following as distinguishing properties of SVCs:

1) They cannot contain a conjunction, 2) they must agree as to tense, 3) they must agree as to auxiliaries, negation, interrogative and mood.

As more and more data from serializing languages has been gathered, these canonical properties of SVCs have been challenged. Shibatani (2009a) for instance, disputes the assumption that an SVC cannot contain an overt marker of coordination. He shows that some Formosan languages such as the Paiwan, Changpin Amis and the Mayrinax dialect of Atayal can contain a linker. Indeed, only in Changpin Amis is the linker optional. Shibatani (2009a:257) is also able to show that SVCs in these languages differ from coordinate and subordinate structures in several different ways. For instance, the second verb of the SVC in these languages cannot be negated or marked for mood, neither can they host a pronominal clitic. These restrictions, meanwhile, do not hold for other multi-verb constructions such as coordination and subordination. Hence, he considers languages such as Japanese, which have

converb constructions containing a linker as serializing languages, citing evidence of their

monoclausality.

There may be some exceptions to the no-coordinator requirement. Foley (2010:326)

reports that verb stems in Yimas SVCs require a linker that is also employed for verb

sequencing, although in SVCs, this linker is desemanticised.

The most basic property of SVCs – that they represent a single event – has also been

questioned recently by Baker and Harvey (2010:35). They claim that serial verb constructions,

even though they are mono-clausal, are like multi-clause structures in that they express multiple

events. The only difference between SVCs and such multi-clausal structures is that "serial

verbs are always constrained in terms of some argument coindexation requirement." Their

proposal is couched in Jackendoff's theory of Lexical Conceptual Structure (LCS), which

allows for a construction to have any number of events in its LCS (i.e. it may consist of single

or multiple predicates). These events may then be mapped onto any number of clauses in the

syntax. SVCs hence are multi-predicational but mono-clausal. A similar view is offered by

Foley (2010), backed up by evidence that shows differing syntactic treatment of the various

verbs in Watam SVCs.

Baker and Harvey do not attempt to disprove certain crosslinguistic and language

specific syntactic properties that show that the verbs in an SVC do indeed function as a single

predicate. For example, Hellwig (2006:93) shows that for Goemai, addressees backchannel

after clauses i.e. following each verb phrase in a multi-verb construction, but in SVCs,

backchanelling only occurs after the entire SVC. Also, the fact that in many SVCs as opposed

to multi-clausal structures, there is no intonational break between the verbs in the series is not

addressed by Baker and Harvey. It is also important to note that many linguists working on

SVCs acknowledge that SVCs consist of sub-events (See Aikhenvald 2006; Bruce 1988; Osam

2004) but these sub-events are together conceived of as a unitary event because culturally, they

form a "recognizable event type", to borrow an expression from Durie (1997).

The data for Gã bears out Baker and Harvey's reservations about the mono-

predicational nature of all SVCs to some degree. For Gã, it will be shown that there is one sub-

type of SVCs for which a mono-predicational characterization does not convincingly capture

the semantic facts of the construction. This type of SVC is known as the chained SVC (CSVC)

and it will be discussed in §4.4. I maintain that CSVCs are multi-predicational but mono-

clausal.

Another characteristic of SVCs – that each component be able to stand on its own – or

that each verb should be able to occur as the only verb in a simple clause, is also called into

question by Shibatani (2009a). He shows that in an SVC, only one of the verbs is fully

formally and functionally finite, while the other verbs are dependent on it. In order for these

non-finite verbs to occur independently they must be morphologically marked as such, and in

this instance they are different from their SVC forms. This means that constructions which

contain converbs can be considered SVCs. Converbs, common in Chinese, can only occur in

the company of another verb and this fact has led Matthews (2006) and others to disqualify

such converbal constructions as SVCs. This point is especially pertinent to Gã, where over a

third of all SVCs contain a converb-like element, *kɛ*.

Even within the same language, there may be no unity as to what features the

constructions putatively identified as SVCs possess. Foley (2010:107) says of the Watam SVC

that it is somewhat of a misnomer: "some are paraphrasable in CCCs [clause-chaining

constructions], some are not; some require the scope of negation to include all elements, some

do not; some allow subject pronoun insertion, some do not, etc." In Gã, we will see that one

type of SVC (CSVC) are paraphraseable as coordinate constructions without a change in

meaning, while another type (ISVCs) are not. "Minor" SVC features do not fare any better, in

terms of being cross-linguistically applicable. For example, Aikhenvald (2006:20) notes that in

many SVCs the different components may not be questioned or focused separately. But

exceptions are found in Ewe. What universal requirements there remain for SVC-hood turn out

to be quite mundane, in that they are also universal requirements for single verbs. One such

requirement is that SVCs cannot contain duplicate roles i.e. they cannot have more than one

agent, patient, instrument etc. (Durie 1997:341).

In spite of these inconsistencies, there is no doubt that constructions that have been

identified as SVCs share similar syntactic and semantic properties, regardless of their

idiosyncratic morphological and syntactic features. These properties are argument sharing,

"harmonious" TAMP values, no intonational pause between the various verb phrases, and the

intuition of native speakers that the verbs together describe a single event, even if there are

sub-events within that overarching event. These properties, together with the similar functions

played by SVCs cross-linguistically, satisfactorily designate SVCs as a unique syntactic

construction worthy of analysis. In what follows, such an analysis is carried out for Gã,

beginning with the notion of mono-clausality and its morphosyntactic correlates.

4.2 Mono-clausality, mono-predication and single-eventhood

The claim that SVCs are mono-clausal, mono-predicational and depict single events has been

tested in several languages. This is often done by comparing SVCs with other multi-verb

constructions in the language. In Goemai, Herwig (2006:93) notes that addressees backchannel

after the whole SVC and not individual verbs in the SVC, whereas with multi-verb

constructions they backchannel after each clause. Intonational breaks or pauses between clauses

is another way by which SVCs can be shown to differ from multi-verb sentences. There are

generally few pauses between verbs in an SVC, whereas notable pauses are found between

verbs in coordinate structures and of course between independent sentences. This was found by

Givón (1991) to be true for Kalam, Tairora and Tok Pisin. A similar conclusion was arrived at

by Morrison (2007) for Akan. In Gã too, there is no intonational break between the components

of an SVC, especially integrated SVCs. However, pauses (even long ones) were allowed

between components of chained SVCs. This, along with a few others, is one of the reasons why

chained SVCs are designated as non-prototypical SVCs which make several predications

(§4.4).

Further evidence of the single event-hood of SVCs is the fact that the sub-events occupy

the same temporal frame. As a result, they cannot be modified by multiple time adverbs or

incompatible time adverbs (1c). Only one time adverb is allowed and it may occur after any of

the VPs (1a) (1b).

(1a) *mã́=hέ*   wòló=!έ   ŋmé̃!né̃   *mã́=hã́*   !bó
      1SG.FUT=buy   book=DEF   today   1SG.FUT=give   2SG.OBJ
      "I'll buy the book for you today."

(1b) *mã́=hέ*   wòló=!έ   *mã́=hã́*   !bó   ŋmé̃!né̃
      1SG.FUT=buy   book=DEF   1SG.FUT=give   2SG.OBJ   today
      "I'll buy the book for you today."

(1c)　　*mɑ́=hɛ́　　　　　wòló=!ɛ́　　ŋmɛ́!nɛ́　　　mɑ́=hɑ́　　　　　　!bó

　　　　　1SG.FUT=buy　　　book=DEF　today　　　1SG.FUT=give　　　2SG.OBJ

　　　　　wɔ́

　　　　　tomorrow

　　　　　"I'll buy the book for you today give it to you tomorrow."

There is also evidence of mono-clausality in the syntactic manifestation of tense, aspect, mood

and polarity. These will be looked at below.

4.2.1 Tense, aspect, mood and polarity (TAMP) marking

For Gã, one major way by which we know the SVC is mono-clausal is by the realization of

tense, aspect, mood and polarity (TAMP) categories. The verbs in an SVC cannot contrast as to

these categories and in most cases, Gã makes this abundantly clear by requiring concordant

marking on each verb. Formally, the verbs may be marked for different TAMP values (as is the

case with the future and imperative) but semantically, these values should be compatible. Each

TAMP category will now be examined in turn.

4.2.1.1 Tense and aspect

The tense and aspectual value of all the verbs must be semantically compatible. Except for

future, whatever aspectual value is expressed in an SVC must be overtly marked on each verb.

(i) Habitual

(2)　　wɔ̀=tĩ̀-ɔ̃̀　　　　　　ékò　　wɔ̀=mã̀-ã̀　　　　shĩ̀　　wɔ̀=hɑ́-ã̀　　　ãmɛ̃̀

　　　　1PL=dish-HAB　　　some　1PL=put-HAB　　　down　1PL=give-HAB　　3PL

　　　　"We dish some (of the food) and put it down for them."　　[YM:299]

(ii) Progressive

(3)　　*èè=dɛ́kè*　　　　shĩ̀　*èè=kwɛ́*　　　　è=bí　　　!lɛ́--
　　　　3SG.PROG＝creep　down　3SG.PROG＝look　3SG＝child　DEF
　　　　è=nã̀ã̀nyó=!ɛ́
　　　　3SG＝friend＝DEF
　　　　"He's creeping and watching his child-- his friend."　　　[DEB:99]

(iii) Perfect

(4)　　gbèé=!ɛ́　　hṹ　　*é=kũ̀*　　　　　è=sèè　　*é=bà*
　　　　dog＝DEF　too　3SG.PERF＝break　3SG＝back　3SG.PERF＝come
　　　　"The dog too has returned."　　　[DEB:98]

(v) Future

This is the only aspectual category that is not concordantly marked on all verbs. It is marked

only on the first verb. Subsequent verbs are marked for the subjunctive. This does not violate

the stipulation that all verbs have the same aspectual value since both future and subjunctive

are irrealis categories, marking events that are yet to be realised.

(5)　　*à=bàá-!yá-tsí*　　　　shìká　kɛ̀　bàá=!á　　fɛ́ɛ̃́
　　　　3PL.IMPERS＝FUT-ITIV-push　money and　leaf＝DEF　all

　　　　á=!shwíê
　　　　3PL.IMPERS.SBJV＝pour
　　　　"The money and the leaves will all be thrown away."

4.2.1.2 Mood

Verbs in the SVC must agree as to mood. In an imperative SVC, the first verb is marked with

the appropriate imperative suffix while subsequent verbs are marked for subjunctive. As with

future SVCs, there is no violation of the requirement for shared TAMP values because the

imperative and subjunctive are both irrealis.

(6)   **tswà-á**   fɛ́ɛ́   é!kó   **ó=fɔ́**   ó=hɛ̃̀ɛ̃̀
        hit-IMP   all   some   2SG.SBJV=wash   2SG=face
        "Scoop (with your hands) any (of the herbal mixtures) and wash your face with it."
        [OYO:102]

In a negative imperative SVC (7), the negator (the negative subjunctive morpheme) occurs

clause-initially and all the verbs in the series remain unmarked. The negator has scope over all

the verbs in the series.

(7)   kà-á   **tṹ**   **ò=bó!té**   nṹ=ɛ̃̀   mĩ̀ŋ
        NEG.SBJV-SBJV   jump   2SG=enter   water=DEF   inside
        "Don't jump into the water."

In a subjunctive SVC all verbs in the series must take the subjunctive morpheme.

(8)   **wɔ́=hé**   è=nɔ̃̀   **wɔ́=!yé**   yɛ̀
        1PL.SBJV=buy   3SG=top   1PL.SBJV=eat   be.located

        nɔ́-fĩ́ã́-nɔ́   fèé-mɔ̃̀   mĩ̀ì
        thing-all-thing   do-NOM   inside
        "We should trust him in everything that we do."   [CH:424]

4.2.1.3 Polarity
The verbs in an SVC cannot have opposite polarities i.e. one cannot be negative, while the

other is affirmative. This is indicated by overt marking of negation on each verb in the SVC. In

(9a), the serial verb *hé yè* (lit: buy eat) 'believe, trust, have faith in' is negated by negating both

verbs.

(9a) *è=hééé*   s̃ané=ɛ̀   *è=yééê*
      3SG=buy.NEG   matter=DEF   3SG=eat.NEG
      "S/he did not believe the story."

In negating a serial verb containing bare verbs, however, some speakers do not negate the

second verb, but rather mark it as subjunctive, as in (9b). It is unclear the level of acceptability

that sentences such as (9b) enjoy. When asked explicitly, speakers say that negating both verbs

is the grammatical means of negation, rather than marking the second verb as subjunctive. All

the same, structures such as (9b) are heard from time to time in natural speech.

(9b) ?shī́   *ò=hééé*   wò-nű́ɲ̀!tsɔ́   yésù   kr̀ístò nɔ̃̀   *ɓ=!yé*
      but   2SG=buy.NEG   1PL=lord   Jesus Christ top   2SG.SBJV=eat
      "…but you don't trust in our lord Jesus Christ."   [CH:209]

The negative future (10) and negative perfect (11) must be concordantly marked on all verbs in

the series.

(10) *è=kwɛ́-ŋ̀*   nɔ̃̀   òjògbàŋ̀ŋ̀   *è=hɑ̃́-ŋ̀*
      3SG=look-NEG.FUT   top   well   3SG=give-NEG.FUT
      bò
      2SG.OBJ
      "S/he won't look after it well for you."

(11) *è=ɓó-!lɔ́-kò*   *è=wó-kò*   lɛ̀   dɑ̃́ŋ̀
      3SG=shout-ITER-NEG.PERF   3SG=put-NEG.PERF   3SG.OBJ   before
      "S/he has never shouted at her/him before."

In a negative subjunctive SVC, however, the negative morpheme *ka-* is marked just once on the

first verb. All other verbs are unmarked. However, the negative morpheme is understood to

have scope over all the verbs in the series.

(12) òkó   *á-ká-tǜ*   *è＝bó!té*   nǘ＝ɛ̀̃   mᷤìŋ
      Oko   SBJV-NEG.SBJV-jump   3SG＝enter   water＝DEF   inside
      "Oko shouldn't jump into the water."

As has been shown in this section, the verbs in a serial verb construction form a very tight

syntactic unit because they cannot be independently marked for contrasting grammatical

categories. Another unique feature of the verbs in SVCs in most languages (Gã being no

different) is that they have just one syntactic subject and in some cases, a shared object as well.

This is further proof that SVCs comprise just one clause. The following section will describe

argument-sharing, generally.

4.2.2 Argument-sharing

4.2.2.1 Subject

In all Gã SVCs the syntactic subject of the initial verb is the syntactic subject of subsequent

verbs. In some SVCs a pronominal copy of the subject appears on all non-initial verbs (13),

(14). Dakubu (2004:16) calls this resumptive serialization.

(13) nɔ́ɴ   ní   hè   hĩ̌á-ã̀   kὲkὲ   jí   *wɔ̀=bàá-féé* tòí-bò-ò
     NM   NMLZ body need-HAB   simply COP   1PL=FUT-do   ear-listen-NOM

wɔ́=hã́   lὲ
1PL.SBJV=give   3SG.OBJ
"All we need to do is simply be attentive to him." [CH:409]

(14) àkpɔ̀tr̀ɔ́   lὲ   *jò*   *fòì*   *è=tèè*
     toad   DEF   dance   race   3SG=go.PST
     "The toad ran away."   [MANF:5]

This is opposed to non-resumptive serialization, where there is no pronominal marking of

subject on non-initial verbs (15), or where the non-initial verbs are marked by the pre-verb *kɛ-*

(16), (17).

(15) Kòfí   *hòó*   níí   *yè*
     Kofi   IMPF cook   thing   IMPF eat
     "Kofi cooked and ate."   (Adjei 1999:143; emphasis mine)

(16) hὲwɔ́=!ɔ́   *è=mɔ́*   ékòmé   *kὲ-tèè*   shĩ́!ɑ́
     sake=TOP   3SG=catch   one   take-go.PST   house
     "So he caught one and took it home."   [MANF:57]

(17) *è=wɔ́*   è=gbèé=ὲ   *kὲ-ŋmὲ*   è=kùὲ   nɔ̃̀
     3SG=carry   3SG=dog=DEF   take-lay   3SG=neck   top
     "He carried his dog and put him on his neck."   [TIN:69]

It is normally the case that when the first verb has a pronominal subject clitic, all subsequent

verbs must have a pronominal clitic as well (18a). For most speakers, omitting a pronominal

clitic on a non-initial verb is not felicitous; others find it acceptable (18b).

(18a)　ké　　**wɔ̀=hé**　　è=nɔ̃̀　　　**wɔ̀=yè**
　　　　if　　1PL=buy　　3SG=top　　1PL=eat
　　　　"If we trust in him..."　　　　　　　　[CH:423]

(18b)　?ké　　**wɔ̀=hé**　　è=nɔ̃̀　　　**yè**
　　　　if　　1PL=buy　　3SG=top　　eat
　　　　"If we trust in him..."

Non-resumptive SVCs in which the non-initial verb is prefixed with *kè* differ from resumptive

SVCs in the extent of integration of the sub-events as well as the types of objects that they can

take. These will be discussed in 4.5.

　　In some Gã SVCs, although all the verbs have the same subject on the surface, logically

or semantically their subjects differ. In (19), although the subject of both verbs is the first

singular (future) pronoun, *má*, it is not the logical subject of *gbéé* 'fall'. Rather the logical

subject of *gbéé* 'fall' - the one who actually falls - is *bó* '2SG.OBJ'.

(19)　**mã́=tsí**　　　　　!bó　　　**mã́=!gbéé**　　　nṹ=ɛ̃̀　　　mĩ̀ŋ̀
　　　　1SG.FUT=push　　2SG.OBJ　　1SG.FUT=fall　　water=DEF　inside
　　　　"I will push you into the water."

In (20) as well, the third plural impersonal pronoun *à* is the syntactic subject of both *wɔ̀*

'prepare' and *mà* 'put down', but it is not the logical subject of the latter verb because it is the

herbs (*bàà*) that are put down.

(20) hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   kɛ́   **à=wò**   bàá=!á
      sake=TOP   when   3PL.IMPERS=prepare   leaf=DEF

      à=mà̰̀   shḭ́=!ɛ̰́
      3PL.IMPERS=put.down   down=DEF
      "So when the herbs are prepared and put down."   [YM:86]

Gã has no switch-function SVCs where the object of V1 is the subject of V2. Semantically, it is

possible, as (19) and (20) show. However, in the surface syntactic structure the verbs must all

have the same subject as V1.

4.2.2.2 Objects

Unlike subjects, objects in Gã SVCs are never shared. In SVCs where the verbs are transitive,

each verb has its own object. In (21) the object of *fò* 'fetch' is *lá!á* 'the blood' while the object

of *wò* 'put' is *nṹɛ̰̀ mĩ̀ŋ* 'inside the water'.

(21) kèkɛ́=!ɛ́   **á=fò**   lá=!á   **á=wò**
      then=TOP   3PL.IMPERS.PERF=fetch   blood=DEF   3PL.IMPERS.PERF=put
      nṹ=ɛ̰̀   mĩ̀ŋ
      water=DEF   inside
      "Then, blood will be fetched and put into the water."   [YM:123]

Argument structure in Gã SVCs is therefore fairly simple. Each SVC has just one

syntactic subject and each transitive verb has an object. Ditransitive verbs may also have two

objects in an SVC. In almost all SVCs, verbs display the same argument structure within an

SVC as they do in simple sentences. One notable exception is the verb *hã́* 'give' as a

benefactive marker in V2 position. Although in simple sentences and in SVCs *hã́* may be

ditransitive (22a), (22b) and (22c), this is never the case when it occurs in V2 position

functioning to introduce benefactive NPs (22d). This is evidence of the grammaticalization of

non-initial *hɑ́* in an SVC, in that it introduces benefactives and nothing else. When it expresses

its core semantic meaning of "physical transfer", it allows for double objects, but when it is

carrying out the grammatical function of marking benefactives it does not.

(22a) è = hɑ́   mĩ̀   shìká
       3SG = give   1SG   money
       "S/he gave me money."

(22b) í = màmí   ***hɑ́***   mĩ̀   shìká   ***kè-tèè***   skûl
       1SG = mother give   1SG.OBJ   money   take-go   school
       "My mother gave me money to take to school."

(22c) kòfí   ***kwà***   ***hɑ́***   ɑ́!mɑ́   wòlò
       Kofi   IMPERF.pretend   IMPERF.give   Ama   book
       "Kofi pretentiously gave Ama a book."   (Adjei 1999:142; glosses modified,
                                                    emphasis mine)

(22d) ****è = gbélé***   shĩ́nɑ̀ɑ́ = !ɑ́   ***è = hɑ́***   !mĩ́   bò
       3SG = open   door = DEF   3SG = give   1SG.OBJ   2SG.OBJ
       "S/he opened the door for me you."

4.3 Composition of SVCs

Based on Aikhenvald (2006:21), SVCs may be classified into two types: asymmetrical SVCs

and symmetrical SVCs. Asymmetrical SVCs contain one or more verbs from a semantically

and grammatically 'open', large or unrestricted class as well as one or more verbs from a

semantically and grammatically 'closed' or restricted class. The verb from the 'open' class

expresses the main activity or property predicated by the SVC, while the verb from the 'closed'

class adds a modificational meaning. Examples of restricted classes of verbs are verbs of

motion and direction, verbs that express aspectual meanings such as 'finish', and verbs that

serve to introduce peripheral participants. The verb from the restricted class is known as the

minor verb, while that from the unrestricted class is the major verb. This division corresponds

roughly to Sebba's (1987) 'fixed' and 'free' verbs respectively. His terms reflect the fact that

often the minor or fixed verb always occurs in the same verb slot, usually either the first or last

slot, while the major verb or free verb can occur in any position in the SVC.

Symmetrical SVCs, on the other hand, contain only verbs from 'open' or 'unrestricted'

classes. Both asymmetrical and symmetrical SVCs are found in Gã but asymmetrical SVCs far

outnumber symmetrical SVCs.

In terms of wordhood, Gã SVCs form separate grammatical and phonological words. In

a two-verb SVC, for instance, there may be several elements intervening between V1 and V2

such as the object of V1, the pronominal subject marker on V2 and any aspectual morphemes.

The verbs in the SVC may also be formally marked for different aspectual categories.

4.3.1 Asymmetrical SVCs

The data collected revealed that the majority (66%) of SVCs in Gã are asymmetrical. The total

number of SVCs in the frog stories was 391, representing 34% of all clauses.

In about half of asymmetrical SVCs, the major verb precedes the minor verb. In (23)

below, for instance, V1 is a major verb, *jù* 'bathe' while V2 and V3, *hã́* 'give' and *tã̀* 'finish'

are minor verbs, imparting benefactive and completive meanings respectively.

(23)   kɛ́   *à=yà-jù*   *à=hã́*   ã̀mɛ̃
       when   3PL.IMPERS=ITIV-bathe   3PL.IMPERS=give   3SG
       à=tã́-!ã́
       3PL.IMPERS=finish-TOP
       "When they've finished giving them a bath…"   [YM:189]

The other half of asymmetrical SVCs (about 54%) consists entirely of one type of SVC in

which V1 is the minor verb, *kɛ* 'take' and V2 is a major verb. *kɛ* 'take' is a highly defective

verb which cannot occur on its own in a clause and cannot be inflected. The glosses 'take' and

'move' are chosen for two reasons. Firstly, Zimmerman (1866:143) notes that it previously

meant 'take', although he does not cite any evidence. Secondly, its syntactic distribution and

function parallel similar verbs in related languages whose lexical meaning is indeed 'take'.

Therefore, its categorization as a verb is largely for syntactic reasons, an issue that will be

discussed in detail in §4.5. In the following example, V1 is *kɛ* while V2 is *wò* 'put'.

(24) gbèé=!ɛ́   hɯ́   ***kɛ̀***   è=yítsò   ***wɔ̀***   tɔ́=ɔ̀   mɪ̃̀ŋ
      dog=DEF   too   take   3SG=head   put   bottle=DEF   inside
      "The dog too put his head into the bottle."   [MA:22]

4.3.1.1 Functions of asymmetrical SVCs

Since Gã has no case system and a relatively poor aspectual system, asymmetrical SVCs are a

valuable way of indexing relations that in other languages are accomplished by case markers,

prepositions and tense-aspect markers. This is made possible by the grammaticalization of the

minor verb. Indeed, Aikhenvald (2006:30) notes that cross-linguistically, there is a tendency for

asymmetrical SVCs to grammaticalize while symmetrical SVCs lexicalize. Six main functional

types of asymmetrical SVCs can be recognised for Gã. This is based on the meaning imparted

by the minor verb to the situation described by the major verb. These functional types are

directional function, aspectual function, valency-increasing function, causation function,

manner-expression function and comparative function.

a) Directional function

The minor verb in this type of SVC is a deictic verb, *bà* 'come' or *yà* 'go'. The major verb can

be any verb at all. Here, the minor verb serves to provide a deictic specification of the action

encoded by the major verb i.e. whether the action described by the major verb was

accompanied or followed by a movement away from (*yà* 'go', example 25) or towards (*bà*

'come', example 26, 27) some deictic centre. In this type of SVC, the deictic verb is often

preceded by the verb *kɛ* 'take'.

(25) *è=télé*   lὲ   *kὲ-ŋ-yà*
      3SG=carry.on.head   3SG.OBJ   take-PROG-go
      "He's carrying him away on his head."   [DEB:119]

(26) é=!fééé   !mí̂   á!kɛ́   *á=gbàlà*   mɔ̃̀=kò
      3SG=do.NEG   1SG   NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS.PERF=pull   person=INDEF

      kɛ́-bà   bí!ɛ́
      take-come   here
      "I don't think anyone has been forced to come here."

(27) ònúkpá-ì   *yà-à*   *à=yà-tsé-ɔ̀*   *kὲ-bà-à*
      adult-PL   go-HAB   3PL.IMPERS=ITIV-tear-HAB   take-come-HAB
      "Adults go and tear (them=herbs) and bring (them)."   [OYO:230]

b) Aspectual function

A few aspectual meanings are conveyed by minor verbs in asymmetrical SVCs.

i) Completive aspect
In order to express completive aspect, the verb *tã̀* 'be finished, be used up' occurs in the verb-

final slot in an SVC (28), (29).

(28) hὲwɔ̀ kɛ́   *à=wɔ̀*   bàá=!á   *à=tã́-!ã́*
      sake   when   3PL.IMPERS=prepare   leaf=DEF   3PL.IMPERS=finish-TOP
      "So, after they have finished preparing the herbs…"   [YM:120]

(29) à=bàá-hóó   òmɔ́   kɛ̀kɛ́=!ɛ́   kɛ́   *à=fèé*
       3PL.IMPERS=FUT-cook   rice   then=TOP   when   3PL.IMPERS=do
       à=tɑ̃́=!ɑ́
       3PL.IMPERS=finish=DEF
       "Rice will be cooked. Then, when they finish doing that…"   [OYO:269]

ii) Gradual aspect

In a progressive SVC, the minor verb, *bà* 'come', preceded by *kɛ* 'take' is used to indicate that

the action described by the major verb is occurring at a gradual rate. The major verb occurs in

V1 slot while the minor verb occurs in V2 slot. In (30), the major verb is *gbó* 'die' and in (31)

it is *shwì* 'be fat'.

(30) ó=bí   !lɛ́=!ɛ   *ŋ̀-gbó*   *kɛ̀-ŋ̀-bà*
       2SG=child   DEF=DEF   PROG-die   take-PROG-come
       "Your child is gradually dying."   [CH:95]

(31) *òò=shwì*   *kɛ̀-ŋ̀-bà*
       2SG.PROG=be.fat   take-PROG-come
       "You are gradually becoming fat."

c) Valency-increasing and argument-specifying function

The most widespread function of asymmetrical SVCs in Gã is that it allows for the addition of

non-core participants and semantic roles such as source, goal, benefactive, instrument and

comitative.

i) Source

The verb *jὲ* 'come from' occurs in SVCs to introduce source NPs. It can occur in any verb slot.

But when it occurs non-initially it is preceded by *kɛ* 'take', as in (32a) below. In both examples

below, *jɛ* 'come from' specifies the window as the source or origin of the dog's falling journey.

(32a) *è=tǔ*   *kὲ-jὲ*   sámfὲlɛ́=ɛ̀   nǎã̀   *è=bà-gbὲé*
        3SG=jump   take-come.from   window=DEF   mouth 3SG=VENT-fall
        !shɪ́
        down
        "He jumped from the window and came and fell down."   [KOF:10]

(32b) gbὲé=ɛ̀   *jὲ*   sámfὲlɛ́=ɛ̀   mǐŋ̀ *è=bà-gbὲé*   !shɪ́
        dog=DEF   come.from   window=DEF   inside 3SG=VENT-fall   down
        "The dog fell down from the window."   [NAT:29]

ii) Goal

The verb *ya* ' go' in non-initial position in an SVC is used to introduce goal NPs. It may or

may not be preceded by *kɛ* 'take'. In (33) below, *tὲè* 'go.PST' introduces the goal, *Korle-bu*

(hospital).

(33)   *á=transfer*   bò   *ké-tὲè*   kɔɔlè-bú
        3PL.IMPERS.PERF=transfer   2SG.OBJ   take.PERF-go.PST   Korle-bu
        "You've been transferred to Korle-bu (hospital)."   [CH:44]

Goal NPs may also be introduced by the minor verb, *wò* 'put', in non-initial position. The object of *wò* is the place to which the object of V1 is transferred. In (34) it is *fàáà mĺ̀ĩ* 'inside the river'.

(34) nĩ̀   *è=tsí*   ã̀mɛ̃̀=yì   é!nyɔ̃=!ɔ́   fɛ́ɛ́   *è=wò*   fàá=à
      and   3SG=push   3PL=number two=DEF   all   3SG=put   river=DEF
      mĺ̀ĩ
      inside
      "And he pushed the two of them into the river."   [MAV:87]

The object of *wò* could also be the entity to whom the action carried out by V1 is directed.

(35) gbèé=!ɛ́   hũ̌   *ŋ̀-bó!lɔ́*   *kè-ŋ̀-wò*   wò-bí!í=!ɛ́
      dog=DEF   too   PROG-shout   take-PROG-put   honey-people=DEF
      "The dog too is barking at the bees."   [BOR:29]

(36) pàtú=!ɛ́   *bà-gbè*   è=fĩ̀-jĩ̀   à=mĩ̀ŋ   *è=wò*
      owl=DEF   VENT-spread   3SG=wing-PL   PERT=inside   3SG=put
      gbé!kɛ̃́=!ɛ̃́
      child=DEF
      "The owl spread out his wings at the child."   [PAT:108]

iii) Benefactive

The verb *hɛ̃́* 'give' in an SVC serves to introduce benefactive participants. It occurs in non-initial position. The use of 'give' verbs for this purpose is widespread among languages. Heine and Kuteva (2004:149-151) list over 20 languages in which the verb for 'give' has grammaticalized to a benefactive marker.

There are different degrees of grammaticalization of *hɛ́*. It may be grammaticalized to the point where the sense of physical transfer normally associated with it is lost. Instead, it is understood that the action of the major verb is simply carried out for the benefit of the object of *hɛ́* 'give'. Example (37a) could be interpreted such that the giver physically hands the slippers etc. to the beneficiary. Or it could be that he mails the items to her or sends someone to deliver them. So here, the giver and the beneficiary need not occupy the same spatio-temporal domain.

(37a) tòkòtá   nɔ́-fíã̌-nɔ́   *è=hé-ɔ̀*   *è=hɛ́-ɛ̌*   lὲ
       slippers   thing-all-thing 3SG=buy-HAB   3SG=give-HAB   3SG.OBJ
       "Slippers…everything…he buys (them) for her."   [FH:187]

When *hɛ́* 'give' is immediately preceded by one of the deictic auxiliaries (ventive *bà* or itive *yà*), it indicates that an actual physical transfer occurred in which giver and beneficiary shared a spatio-temporal domain. Therefore, in (37b) below, the presence of the ventive prefix, *bà* indicates that the slippers etc. were physically handed to the beneficiary by the giver.

(37b) tòkòtá   nɔ́-fíã̌-nɔ́   *è=hé-ɔ̀*   *è=bà-hɛ́-ɛ̌*
       slippers   thing-all-thing 3SG=buy-HAB   3SG=VENT-give-HAB
       lὲ
       3SG.OBJ
       "Slippers…everything…he buys them and comes to give them to her.

In some benefactive SVCs, there is neither a shared spatial and temporal space nor a transfer of items. Rather, it is the giver's actions that benefit the benefeciary. For example, in (38), the speaker doesn't actually purchase land with his own money for the beneficiary. Rather, he acts

as a middle-man and facilitates the process of finding the land and doing the necessary

paperwork as a favour to the beneficiary.

(38)　*ì̃=hé*　　　shìkpɔ́!ŋ　　kò　　　*ì̃=hã́*　　　lὲ
　　　1SG＝buy　　land　　　INDEF　　1SG＝give　　3SG.OBJ
　　　"I bought a piece of land for him."　[MM:15]

In (39) we see further grammaticalization, in that the beneficiary need not be animate. Here, a

priest is addressing a congregation and syntactically, *ótsí!í* 'week' is the beneficiary. Logically,

it is the activities of the members of the congregation in the coming week that are being

blessed.

(39)　kónĩ́　*mã́=bí*　　　jɔ̀ɔ́-!mɔ̃́　*mã́=hã́*　　　ótsí-!í　　　nĩ́
　　　NMLZ 1SG.FUT＝ask　　bless-NOM　1SG.FUT＝give　week-PL　　NMLZ

　　　!kã́　　wɔ̀＝hĩ́!ɛ̃́＝ɛ̃̀
　　　lie　　1SG＝face＝DEF
　　　"So that I will ask for blessings for the coming weeks."　　[CH:221]

In (40), even the sense of benefit is lost. Lord et. al (2002:237) describes this last function of

'give' as a stance or perspective marker, in that the object of 'give' is the person from whose

perspective the thing or situation is hard.

(40)　*E-wa*　　　*e-ha*　　　mi
　　　3SG-be.hard　3SG-give　me
　　　"It is hard/difficult for me."　　　　Lord et. al (2002:237; emphasis mine)

iv) Instrument

The semantic role of instrument may be introduced by the initial verb, *kɛ* 'take', in an SVC.

The NP introduced by *kɛ* may be a prototypical instrument (41a) or any 'tool' in a metaphorical

sense (41b) which is used to carry out the action in V2.

(41a) *è=kɛ̀*　　　tɛ́　　*tsɔ̀ɔ̀*　　ŋmɛ́
　　　　3SG=take　stone　cut　　palm-kernel
　　　　"S/he broke the palm-kernel with a stone."

(41b) í=lê　　　　　　　kɛ́!jí　　　　è=nyɛ̃́　　　è=kɔ̀　　　nĩ̀　　*è=kɛ̀*
　　　　1SG-know.NEG　　whether　　　3SG=be.able　3SG=climb　and　　3SG=take

　　　　è=yítsò　　*yà-tsí-ŋ̀*　　　　jí　　ò
　　　　3SG=head　ITIV-push-FOC　　be　　IJ
　　　　"I don't know whether he was able to climb (it), and he pushed (it) with his head or
　　　　what…"　　　　[DEB:63]

In (42), the object of *kɛ* is a null pronoun, the third person singular, whose antecedent is

"Kweikor Fire Service". Here, it is not immediately obvious that "Kweikor Fire Service" is an

instrument. However, it is in a metaphorical sense, in that it is the use of that name that enables

her to be recognized by all.

(42) mɛ̃̀ĩ̀　pìì　tsɛ́-ɔ̀　　　mĩ̀　　　　kwèíkɔ́ *Fire Service.* nò　　jí
　　　people　many　call-HAB　　1SG.OBJ　Kweikor Fire Service　that　　COP

　　　nɔ̃̀　　nĩ́　　　kɛ́　　ò=kɛ̀-Ø-tsɛ́　　　　mĩ́=!ɛ́
　　　NM　　NMLZ　　if　　2SG=take-3SG.OBJ-call　1SG=DEF

à = bàá-!nɑ́

3PL.IMPERS = FUT-see

"Many people call me Kweikor Fire Service. That's what if you call me by, everyone will know (that you're referring to me)." [YM:19]

v) Patient

The initial verb *kɛ* in an SVC may also introduce a patient. In (43) and (44), *kɛ* introduces the patients, *èyítsò* ' his head' and *é!ŋmɔ́mɪ́* 'okro'.

(43) **è = kɛ̀**   è = yítsò   **yà-hɔ̀**   tɔ́ = !ɔ́   nɪ́   kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né = ɛ̀

      3SG = take   3SG = head   ITIV-insert   bottle = DEF   NMLZ frog = DEF

      yɔ́ɔ̀   mɪ̃̀ɪ́ŋ = ɛ̃̀   mɪ̃̀ɪ̀ŋ

      be.located.HAB   inside = DEF   inside

      "He put his head into the bottle where the frog was located."   [PA:36]

(44) **à = kɛ̀**   é!ŋmɔ́mɪ́   **bàá-wɔ̀**   mɪ̃̀ɪ̀ŋ

      3PL.IMPERS = take   okro   FUT-put   inside

      "Okro will be put in (it)."   [YM:157]

vi) Comitative

Initial verb, *kɛ,* in an asymmetrical SVC may also introduce comitative NPs. Here, the subject and object of *kɛ* are co-participants in some activity i.e. they partake in the activity together.

(45) **ɑ̃̀mɛ̃̀ = kɛ̀**   lɛ̀   **ŋ̀-shwɛ́**

      3PL = take   3SG.OBJ   PROG-play

      They are playing with him.   [DEB:3]

(46) nǐ̃   è=wó   gbèé=ɛ̀   è=tá   è=kɔ́ɔ́ŋ   nɔ̃̀   nǐ̃
     and   3SG=carry   dog=DEF   3SG=sit   3SG=shoulder   top   and

    è=kɛ̀   lɛ̀   *sèlè*   yɛ̀   nṹ=ɛ̃̀   mĩ̀ŋ
    3SG=take   3SG.OBJ   swim   be.located   water=DEF   inside
    "And he carried the dog on his shoulders and swam with him in the water." [MA:87]

d) Causation function

Some lexical causatives can only occur in asymmetrical SVCs, where they occur as V2 with *kɛ*

as V1. Examples are *kpá!sá* 'lean against' and *ká̃* 'lay'.

(47) ákú   *kɛ̀*   tsó=ɛ̀   *kpásà* shǐ̃
     Aku   take   stick=DEF   lean   down
     "Aku leaned the stick (against something)."

There is the possibility of ambiguity between a comitative and a causative reading in such

SVCs. This happens only when the patient is animate. The agent is always animate, never

inanimate. When the major verb has causative semantics and the patient is animate, the degree

of control or dominance that the agent has over the patient determines whether the semantic

relationship between them is that of accompaniment (comitative) or causation. Ambiguity

results when the agent dominates or is capable of wielding control over the patient. The less

dominant entity could be an animal, a child or an adult who is incapacitated in some way; for

instance, they are ill or drunk. So in (48), the agent, '3SG' could have carried his dog and laid

him on the bed (causative interpretation A); or he and his dog could both have gone and laid on

the bed of their own volition (comitative interpretation B).

(48) **è̀=kè̀**   è=gbèé=ɛ̀   **ká̰**   sàtsò   nɔ̃̀
     3SG=take   3SG=dog=DEF   lie   bed   top
     A: "He lay his dog on the bed."
     B: "He's lying on the bed with his dog." or "He and his dog are lying on the bed."

In (47), the inanimacy of the patient precludes a comitative reading. If the patient were

animate, as in (49) below, then ambiguity between a comitative and a causative meaning will

result.

(49) ákú   **kè̀**   nṵ̀ṹmó=ɛ̀   **kpásà**   !shḭ́   yè   jé!mɛ̃́
     Ákú   take   old.man=DEF   lean.against   down   be.located   there
     A: "Aku leaned the old man (against something) over there."
     B: "Aku and the old man leaned (against something) over there."

Lord (1993:56) has suggested that it is this ambiguity that allowed for *kɛ* to be reanalysed as a

coordinator.

e) Manner-expression function

This function is closely related to the instrumental function. The object of initial verb-*kɛ* may

be an NP denoting some aspect of the manner in which the action in V2 is carried out. In (50),

kɛ introduces an NP which denotes the emotion accompanying the execution of the action in

V2.

(50) nĩ̀   òblánũ̀ű=ɛ̃̀   **kɛ̀**   mũ̀sũ̀ŋshã̀ã̀   **jè**   **kpò**   yɛ̀
     and   gentleman=DEF   take   anxiety   exit   compound   be.located

tsű=ɛ̃̀   mĩ̀ŋ
room=DEF   inside
"And the gentleman exited the room anxiously."   [NAR:31]

f) Comparative

The verb *fe* 'exceed, surpass' occurs in V2 position to index comparative meaning. The quality

that is being compared with a standard is coded by the initial verb. In (51), the quality is *dà*

'be.big'; the standard is *nɔ̃́ nĩ́ yɔ́ɔ̀ jé lɛ́ɛ̀ mĩ̀̃* 'what is in the world' and the thing that is being

compared is the subject, *nɔ̃́ nĩ́ yɔ́ɔ̀ èmĩ̀̃ !lɛ́* 'what is in him'

(51) é!jáá!kɛ́   è=lè   á!kɛ́   nɔ̃́   nĩ́   yɔ́!ɔ́
     because   3SG=know   NMLZ NM   NMLZ   be.located.HAB

è=mĩ̀́=ɛ̃̀   **dà**   **fè**   nɔ̃́   nĩ́   yɔ́!ɔ́
3SG=inside=DEF   be.big   exceed NM   NMLZ   be.located.HAB

jé   !lɛ́=ɛ̀   mĩ̀̃
world   DEF=DEF   inside
"Because he knows that what is in him is greater than what is in the world."
[CH:260]

g) Secondary concepts

There are certain minor verbs which occur in combination with a major verb to provide a

semantic modification of the major verb. Dixon (1991:88) calls verbs such as these secondary

concepts. In Gã they are *ká̯* 'lie down' and *há̯* 'give' and they are used to express the concepts,

'still doing something' and 'showing how something is done'. These are better illustrated in the

following sentences.

(52) è=nà̯à̯nyó=!ɛ́   ***ŋ̀-ká̯***   hè   ŋ̀-bó-!ló   ***kè-ŋ̀-tsɛ́***
      3SG=friend=DEF   PROG-lie   body   PROG-shout-ITER   take-PROG-call

      ɛ̀ɛ̯̀   kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né=!ɛ́   ní̯   é=làájé=!ɛ́
      IJ   frog=DEF   NMLZ   3SG=be.missing=DEF
      "His friend is still shouting out, calling for…errm…the frog that is missing."[DEB:100]

(53) nì̯   è=kwɛ́-ɔ̀   bè   ní̯ [sic][18]   kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né=ɛ̀   ***shwɛ́-ɔ̀***
      and   3SG=look-HAB   time   NMLZ   frog=DEF   play-HAB
      è=há̯-à̯
      3SG=give-HAB
      "And he watches how the frog plays."   [NAR:6]

4.3.2 Symmetrical SVCs

As mentioned earlier, symmetrical SVCs are far outnumbered by asymmetrical SVCs. Only a

third (34%) of the SVCs in the corpus were symmetrical.

---

[18] This word should be *bɔ̀ní̯* 'how'. I suspect this was just a slip of tongue.

4.3.2.1 Functions of symmetrical SVCs

a) Sequence of actions

Symmetrical SVCs may consist of verbs which describe a series of actions in temporally iconic

order i.e. the initial verb encodes the first action in the series, the second verb encodes the

second action etc. Examples are (54), (55) and (56).

(54)　nò　　hèwɔ́=!ɔ́　　nǐ̃　　*è=tè*　　*shǐ̃*　*è=yà-kwɛ́*　　*hall=ɛ́=!ɛ́*
　　　　that　sake=TOP　and　3SG=rise　down　3SG=ITIV-look　　=DEF=DEF
　　　　"So he got up and went to look in the hall.　[CH:248]

(55)　nǐ̃　　*ì̃=lòó*　　níbíí=ɛ̀　　*ì̃=shwìé*　　shǐ̃kpɔ́!ŋ́
　　　　and　1SG=gather　things=DEF　1SG=pour　ground
　　　　"And I gathered up the things and put them on the ground."　　[MM:98]

(56)　*mɑ́̃=tá!ó*　　　　hundred　　kò　*mɑ́̃-kè*
　　　　1SG.FUT=look.for　　　　　　INDEF　1SG.FUT=give.as.gift
　　　　lɛ̀
　　　　3SG.OBJ
　　　　"I'll give her a hundred (cedis) as a gift." [Lit: I'll look for a hundred (cedis) to give
　　　　her as a gift]

b) Simultaneous actions and manner

Symmetrical SVCs may describe two co-temporaneous actions i.e. two separate actions which

are carried out together. In one type, V1 is a posture verb such as *dɑ̀̃mɔ̃̀* 'stand' or *tá* sit', while

V2 is a verb which encodes the action performed while in that posture (57), (58).

(57)   *è=dằmɔ̀*   sámfɛ̀lɛ́=ɛ̀   nằằ   *èè=bó!lɔ́*   kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né=!ɛ́
       3SG=stand   window=DEF   mouth   3SG.PROG=shout   frog=DEF
       "He's standing at the window shouting for the frog."   [DEB:19]

(58)   *é=yà-sɔ̋*   tsó=!ɛ́   hékò   nɔ̃̀   *èè=kwɛ́*
       3SG.PERF=ITIV-perch   tree=DEF   somewhere   top   3SG.PROG=watch
       lɛ̀
       3SG.OBJ
       "He has gone and perched on some part of the tree and is watching him."[DEB:93]

In another type, V1 is a motion verb such as *jò fòì* 'run' or *dèkè shĩ̀* 'creep' while V2 is a verb

denoting the accompanying action. Such SVCs may also be described as manner SVCs since

V1 describes the manner of motion which accompanies the action in V2.

(59)   *èè=dɛ́kè*   shĩ̀   *èè=kwɛ́*   è=bí   !lɛ́
       3SG.PROG=creep   down   3SG.PROG=watch   3SG=child   DEF
       "He's creeping along as he's watching his child."

(60)   *è=ffíkì*   *kè-nyĩ̌ɛ̃*   ằmɛ̃̀=sɛ̀ɛ̀
       3SG=fly   take-walk   3PL=back
       "He flew after them."
       "He followed them, flying."   [TIN:29]

In some symmetrical SVCs that express simultaneous actions, V2 is preceded by *kɛ* 'take'

instead of the subject pronominal prefix. It will later be argued (§4.5.3), following Dakubu

(2004b) that the use of *kɛ* 'take' in such SVCs serves to indicate that the actions described are

more tightly integrated than constructions in which the pre-verb *kɛ* does not occur.

(61) gbèé = !ɛ́   lɛ̀   hṹ   *!wá*   *kɛ̀-táò*   kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né = !ɛ́
      dog = DEF   3SG.OBJ   too   help   take-look.for   frog = DEF
      "The dog also helped look for the frog."   [PAT:34]

(62) è = gbèè = ɛ̀   *bà-bɔ̃́!í́*   bó-lɔ̀-mɔ̃̀   *kɛ̀-nyî̃ɛ̃́*   tsèí = ɛ̀
      3SG = dog = DEF   VENT-start   shout-ITER-NOM   take-walk   tree = DEF

      à-shî̃shî̃
      PERT-under
      "His dog started barking as he walked under the trees."   [NART:47]

(63) tɔ́ = !ɔ́   *bú*   gbèé = !ɛ́   yí!tsó   *kɛ̀-dɑ̃̀mɔ̃̀*   sáḿfèlɛ́ = è   nɑ̃̀ɑ̃̀
      bottle = DEF   cover   dog = DEF   head   take-stand   window = DEF   mouth
      "The bottle is over the dog's head as he's standing at the window."
      "The dog is standing at the window with the bottle over his head."   [PAT:45]

c) Cause and effect

In this type of symmetrical SVC, the final verb encodes the effect or result of the action

encoded by the initial verb(s). This ordering is strict; the positions of the verbs may not be

interchanged. In (64), the final verb, *gbèé* 'fall' is the result of the animal's pushing.

(64) kòòlòó = !ɛ̀   *kɛ̀*   è = yí!tsó   *é = bà-tsí*   !lɛ́
      animal = DEF   take   3SG = head   3SG.PERF = VENT-push   3SG.OBJ

      é = yà-gbèé   è = yítsò   nɔ̃̀
      3SG.PERF = ITIV-fall   3SG = head   top
      "The animal has pushed him with his head and he's fallen onto his (animal's) head."
      [DEB:104]

Example (65) below could be viewed as cause-effect serialization, where Kofi's beating of

Ama results in her death. Or it could be viewed as simultaneous/manner serialization, where

the manner of the killing was by beating. A similarly ambiguous situation is described by

Kilian-Hatz (2006:113) for Khwe.

(65) Kòfí yì Ámā gbè lὲ
      Kofi beat Ama kill 3SG.OBJ
      "Kofi beat Ama to death." (Adjei 1999:142)

d) Lexicon-expanding function

So far, we have only seen examples of symmetrical SVCs in which the meaning of the SVC

can be deduced from the meanings of the component verbs. These SVCs describe an event by

making its sub-events explicit. There are a number of symmetrical serial verbs whose meaning

is not entirely transparent from the meanings of the component verbs. These SVCs are

idiomatized or lexicalized and are often translated into English and other non-serialising

languages by single words. Although they contain two verbs they express just one concept and

this often cannot be inferred from the literal meanings of the component verbs. Sometimes

though, there are obvious or subtle metaphorical links between the component verbs and the

meaning of the SVC. The word-like characteristic of these SVCs is evident in the fact that they

can be listed and glossed, much like other single words in Gã. This kind of serial verb is not

very common in the language. The table below gives some examples and their meanings, as

well as the literal meanings of the component verbs. Example sentences are given in (66) and

(67).

Table 12: Idiomatized SVCs

SVC	Component meanings	Serial verb meaning
hé yè	buy eat	believe, trust
tsí tò	push hide	postpone
wìé tsɔ̀ɔ̃	speak show	advice
tsɛ́ fɔ̃̀	call throw	throw away
yè bú!á[19]	eat help	help
shá gbɔ̀	snatch grow.old	grow old quickly

(66)   kɛ́   *nyɛ̃̀=yè*   *nyɛ̃̀=búà*   mĩ́=!ɛ̃́   wɔ́-sèè
      if   2PL=eat   2PL=help.AK   1SG=DEF   tomorrow-back

      áfĩ=!ɛ́   mã́=!bá   mã́=!bá-kè   nyɛ̃̀   nɔ̃́=!kó
      year=DEF   1SG.FUT=come   1SG.FUT=VENT-gift   2PL   thing=INDEF
      "If you help me, next year I will come and give you something (a gift)." [YM:115]

(67)   nyɛ̃́=hã́-!ã́   *wɔ́=hé-à*   è=nɔ̃̀
      2PL.SBJV=give-IMP.PL   1PL.SBJV=buy-IMP.PL   3SG=top
      wɔ́=yè-à
      1PL.SBJV=eat-IMP.PL
      Let us trust in him.   [CH:433]

---

[19] The verb *bú!á* in the serial verb *yè bú!á* is borrowed from Akan, where it means 'help'. However, in Gã it only occurs in combination with *yè* in this serial verb, never on its own.

A distinction must be drawn between these SVCs, which are lexicalized as well as idiomatized, and those SVCs that are also lexicalized but not idiomatized. This second class is not as semantically opaque as the first class described above. What also sets the SVCs in this class apart is that although they describe a single action, their component verbs describe "micro sub-components" of that unitary event, in that the temporal distance between the two sub-events is very short or even negligible. Osam (1994:204-205) describes the first type seen above as full lexicalization and the second as partial lexicalization. The partial lexicalization type is similar to what Pawley (2009:130) terms compact verbs in Kalam. Examples are given in table 13 and (68) and (69)

Table 13: Lexicalized SVCs

SVC	Literal meaning	Actual meaning
tsí shwìê	push pour	pour
gbè shwɑ̃́	spread sprinkle	disperse/disseminate widely
tsí bɛ̃́ŋ!kɛ̃́	push get.closer	get closer

(68) kɛ́   jè   tsɛ́!lé = !ɛ́   kɛ̀   á = !wó
       when   world   rise = DEF   then   3PL.IMPERS.PERF = carry

á = yà-tsí   *á = shwìê*
3PL.IMPERS.PERF = ITIV = push   3PL.IMPERS.PERF = pour
"When morning comes it is carried and poured away."   [YM:304]

(69) nĩ̀   wò-bí!í=!ɛ́   pó   ékò-mèĩ̀   pó   *é-gbè*   *é-shwɛ́*
     and   honey-people=DEF   even   some-PL   even   PERF-spread PERF-sprinkle
     "And even the bees…some of them have even dispersed."   [FLO:56]

Some lexicalized serial verbs are capable of being nominalized in the same way as simple

lexical items. Significantly, all lexicalized serial verbs that are capable of being nominalized

belong to the first type, corresponding to Osam's fully lexicalized serial verbs. The

nominalization is done by nominalizing each component verb with the appropriate suffix and

linking the two verbs with the coordinator *kè* 'and', as exemplified below.

(i)   hé yè   'believe'   →   hé-mɔ̃̀-kè-yé-lí
                                             buy-NOM-and-eat-NOM
                                             'belief, trust, faith'

(ii)   yè bú!á   'help (v.)'   →   yé-lí-kè-búà-mɔ̃̀
                                             eat-NOM-and-help.AK-NOM
                                             'help (n.)'

(iii) wìé tsɔ̀ɔ̃̀   'advise'   →   wìé-mɔ̃̀-kè-tsɔ̀ɔ́-!mɔ̃́
                                             talk-NOM-and-show-NOM
                                           'advice'

4.4 Degree of semantic and syntactic integration: Integrated serial verb constructions (ISVC) and chained serial verb constructions (CSVC)

Another way by which SVCs in Gã may be classified is by the level of semantic cohesion of

the sub-events which comprise the SVC. This has led Osam (1994, 2004) to recognize two

kinds of SVCs: integrated serial verb constructions (ISVC) and clause chaining serialization. In

clause chaining serialization the entire construction is made up of "potentially independent events" which can be separated out by means of coordination. This type is therefore less tightly-bound or less integrated. The ISVC represents events that are more tightly integrated and for which we cannot speak of separable constituent events. Rather than comprise individual actions, it is often the case that one verb serves to modify the action expressed by the other verb. I prefer the modified term, chained serial verb construction (CSVC) in lieu of clause chaining serialization in order to avoid potential confusion with the term "clause chain" as used by Longacre (2007) and others to describe a syntactically and semantically distinct construction[20].

The sentences in (70) are integrated SVCs while those in (71) are chained SVCs.

(70a)   kɛ́   è=shɛ̀   jɛ́!ŋ́=!ɛ́   *fèé-mɔ́*   òtɔ́   *ó=hɛ̃́*
       when 3SG=reach there=DEF do-IMP   food.type 2SG.SBJV=give
       wɔ̀
       1PL
       "When the time comes make *otɔ* for us."   [OYO:376]

(70b) *é=!shá*   *é=gbɔ̀*
       3SG.PERF=snatch 3SG=grow.old
       "S/he has grown old too quickly."

---

[20] In a clause chain it is usually the case that only one verb (final or initial) is fully finite, while the other verbs are non-finite, semi-finite or defective in some way (Longacre 2007:417). The defective verbs may also be marked to show whether the subject of the following clause is the same as or different from the subject of its clause. So they do not necessarily share arguments. They are not mono-clausal and they do not encode a single event.

(71a) *è=bà-nǎá̋*   ó=nằnè   nɔ̌   *è=kpá*   hè   fàí
3SG=VENT-step   2SG=foot   top   3SG=remove body   hat
"He stepped on your foot and apologized."

(71b) nǐ   *è=bà-jè*   kpò   *è=nyǐɛ̀*   gbé!kɛ̋-nǔɛ̋=ɛ̃̀   sὲὲ
and   3SG=VENT-exit   compound   3SG=walk   child-male=DEF   back
"And he exited and followed the boy."   [PAT:129]

This distinction is reminiscent of Enfield's (2002:240) multi-component events and multi-facet events. According to Enfield, multi-component events express unitary conceptual events but are composed of easily discernible and separable sub-events which are temporally ordered. The meanings of these constructions do not change when a linker is inserted between the component events. Multi-facet events also describe a unitary event and also comprise different events but these sub-events cannot be separated from each other. Instead they are intertwined with one another so that no event exhibits temporal precedence over the other. An example of a multi-facet event is one which describes an entity's posture while performing an action e.g. *Jane sat eating a sandwich*. Osam's chaining SVCs are an example of multi-component events. A vast majority of Gã integrated SVCs are multi-facet events. An exception must be made for idiomatized SVCs of the *hé yè* 'believe' and *wìé tsɔ̀ɔ̌* 'advise' variety, which cannot be said to comprise individual events in the literal sense meant by Enfield.

Asymmetrical SVCs tend to be integrated while symmetrical SVCs tend to be chained, although exceptions can be found. All lexicalized SVCs are also integrated SVCs. Symmetrical SVCs which express simultaneous events tend to lie somewhere in-between integrated and chained SVCs. While there is complete temporal overlap between the component events as is the case with ISVCs, they can still be easily separated into constituent events. This is exemplified by (57), repeated here as (72).

(72)   *è=dầmɔ̀*   sámfèlέ=ὲ   nầầ   *èè=bó!lɔ́*   kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né=!ɛ́
      3SG=stand   window=DEF   mouth   3SG.PROG=shout   frog=DEF
      "He's standing at the window shouting for the frog."   [DEB:19]

Chained SVCs describe one umbrella event consisting of two or more sub-events in chronological order. There is no temporal overlap between the sub-events. This semantic characteristic means that the various components of a chained SVC may be joined by the sentential coordinator *nĩ̀* 'and' without a change in meaning. So for instance, the verb phrases in (73a) and (73b) may be separated by the coordinator and the meanings will remain unchanged.

(73a)   è=bà-nầấ   ó=nầnè   nɔ̀   *nĩ̀*   è=kpá   hè   fầí
        3SG=VENT-step   2SG=foot   top   and   3SG=remove body   hat
        "He stepped on your foot and apologized."

(73b)   nĩ̀   è=bà-jè   kpò   *nĩ̀*   è=nyĩ̀ἕ   gbé!kἕ-nừứ=ὲ̃
        and   3SG=VENT-exit   compound   and   3SG=walk   child-male=DEF

sὲὲ
back
"And he exited and followed the boy."

Many integrated SVCs cannot have their component verb phrases be separated by the

coordinator, as in (74a) and (74b).

(74a) *kέ   è=shὲ   jέ̃!ŋ=!έ̃   fèé-mɔ̃́   òtɔ́   ***nɛ́***
       when   3SG=reach   there=DEF   do-IMP   food.type   and

       ó=hɛ̃́   wɔ̀
       2SG.SBJV=give   1PL
       "When the time comes make *otɔ* for us."

(74b) *é=!shá   ***nɛ̃̀***   é=gbɔ̀
       3SG.PERF=snatch   and   3SG=grow.old
       "S/he has grown old too quickly."

The cause-effect type SVC exemplified in (65) above (repeated here as (75a)) cannot have a

coordinator (75b). However, if the second verb is marked with the third singular pronominal

clitic *e-* (75c), then a coordinator can be inserted (75d).

(75a) kòfí   ***yì***   ámā   ***gbè***   lὲ
       Kofi   beat   Ama   kill   3SG.OBJ
       "Kofi beat Ama to death."   (Adjei 1999:142; emphasis mine)

(75b) *kòfí   yì   ɛ̃́!mɛ̃́   ***nɛ̃̀***   gbè   lὲ
       Kofi   beat   Ama   and   kill   3SG.OBJ
       "Kofi beat Ama to death."

(75c) kòfí *yì* ā́!mā́ *è=gbè* lὲ
       Kofi beat Ama 3SG=kill 3SG.OBJ
       "Kofi beat Ama to death."
       "Kofi beat Ama and killed her."

(75d) Kòfí yì ā́!mā́ *nì̃* è-gbè lὲ
       Kofi beat Ama and 3SG-kill 3SG.OBJ
       "Kofi beat Ama and killed her."

(75c) could mean that Kofi beat Ama but the beating did not result in her death. Rather Kofi

killed her by another method. It is this interpretation in which there are two disparate actions at

different times that allows the coordinator to conjoin the two verb phrases. Also, because every

clause in Gã must have an overt subject, (75b) which is missing a subject in the second clause

is ungrammatical.

It seems the willingness of a serial construction to allow coordination among its verb

phrases is an indication that it is relatively "loose", semantically. As one might expect, there

are gradations to this semantic cohesiveness that is found among the verb phrases in an SVC.

As mentioned above, symmetrical SVCs which code simultaneous events are neither fully

integrated nor chained. Although there is temporal overlap between its sub-events, these events

can be separated by the coordinator (76).

(76) è=dã̀mɔ̃̀ sā́ḿfὲlέ=ὲ nã̀ã̀ *nì̃* èè=bó!lɔ́ kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né=!έ
      3SG=stand window=DEF mouth and 3SG.PROG=shout frog=DEF
      "He's standing at the window and he is shouting for the frog."

In spite of their ability to retain their meaning when conjoined by *nî̀* 'and', CSVCs are syntactically distinct from coordinate constructions. Unlike coordinate constructions, they are mono-clausal; they exhibit all the formal properties of mono-clausality such as harmonious TAMP marking. For example, in future CSVCs, the initial verb is marked with the future prefix while subsequent verbs are marked with the subjunctive prefix (77). But in a coordinate construction all the verbs in the conjuncts must be marked with the future prefix (78).

(77) *è=bàá-nɛ́ɛ̌*   ó=nɛ̃̀nè   nɔ̌   *é=kpá*   hè   fàí
      3SG=FUT-step   2SG=foot   top   3SG.SBJV=remove body   hat
      "He will step on your foot and apologize."

(78) *è=bàá-nɛ́ɛ̌*   ó=nɛ̃̀nè   nɔ̌   *nî̀*   *è=bàá-kpá*   hè   fàí
      3SG=FUT-step   2SG=foot   top   and   3SG=FUT-remove   body   hat
      "He will step on your foot and he will apologize."

Also, while the verbs in a CSVC cannot have opposing polarities (79b), those in a coordinate construction can (80).

(79a) *é=nɛ́ɛ́ɛ̌*   ó=nɛ̃̀nè   nɔ̌   *è=kpáɛ́ɛ́*   hè   fàí
      3SG=step.NEG   2SG=foot   top   3SG=remove.NEG   body   hat
      "He did not step on your foot and did not apologize."

(79b) **é=nɛ̃̀ɛ̌*   ó=nɛ̃̀nè   nɔ̌   *è=kpáɛ́ɛ́*   hè   fàí
      3SG-step   2SG-foot   top   3SG=remove.NEG   body   hat
      "He stepped on your foot and did not apologize."

(80)   *é=nǎ̰ǎ*   ó=nǎ̰nè   nɔ̰̃   *nḭ̌*   *è=kpá̰á̰á̰*   hè   fâí

       3SG = step   2SG = foot   top   and   3SG = remove.NEG   body   hat

       "He stepped on your foot and did not apologize."

In addition, the sub-events in a CSVC must all occupy the same relative temporal frame (81a).

Therefore, they cannot be modified by contradictory time adverbs (81b). But this is possible

with coordinate constructions (82).

(81a)   ákú   *tè*   *shì*   lèébí   *è=bèɛ́*   kpó=ɛ̀   nɔ̰̃

        Aku   rise   down   morning   3SG = sweep   compound = DEF   top

        è=tèè   fàà

        3SG = go.PST   river

        "Aku woke up in the morning, swept the compound and went to the river."

(81b)   *ákú   *tè*   *shì*   lèébí   *è=bèɛ́*   kpó=ɛ̀   nɔ̰̃

        Aku   rise   down   morning   3SG = sweep   compound = DEF   top

        è=tèè   fàà   shwǎ̰né

        3SG = go.PST   river   afternoon

        "Aku woke up in the morning, swept the compound and went to the river in the

        afternoon."

(82)   ákú   *tè*   *shì*   lèébí   *è=bèɛ́*   kpó=ɛ̀   nɔ̰̃   *nḭ̌*

       Aku   rise   down   morning   3SG-sweep   compound-DEF   top   and

       è-tèè   fàà   shwǎ̰né

       3SG-go.PST   river   afternoon

       "Aku woke up in the morning, swept the compound and went to the river in the

       afternoon."

Finally, coordinated clauses obey Ross's constraint against extracting one of the conjuncts (83) but CSVCs do not obey this constraint (84).

(83a)   ákú   shì-ɔ̃̀   àmã́dằŋ   **nì̃**   è=hɔ́-ɔ̃̀
       Aku   fry-HAB   plantain   and   3SG=sell-HAB
       "Aku fries plantain and sells it."   →   COORDINATE CONSTRUCTION

(83b)   *àmã́dằŋ=!ã́   nĩ́   ákú   shì-ɔ̃̀   **nì̃**   è=hɔ́-ɔ̃̀
       plantain=DEF   NMLZ Aku   fry-HAB   and   3SG=sell-HAB
       ŋɔ̃̀ɔ̃̂
       be.sweet
       "The plantain that Aku fries and she sells is sweet." → EXTRACTION NOT ALLOWED

(84a)   ákú   **shì̃-ɔ̃̀**   àmã́dằŋ   **è=hɔ́-ɔ̃̀**
       Aku   fry-HAB   plantain   3SG=sell-HAB
       "Aku fries plantain and sells it."   →   CSVC

(84b)   àmã́dằŋ=!ã́   nĩ́   ákú   **shì̃-ɔ̃̀**   **è=hɔ́-ɔ̃̀**
       plantain=DEF   NMLZ Aku   fry-HAB   3SG=sell-HAB
       ŋɔ̃̀ɔ̃̂
       be.sweet
       "The plantain that Aku fries and sells is sweet."   →   EXTRACTION ALLOWED

There are other syntactic factors which clue one in on the degree of cohesion within an SVC, such as whether or not there is concordant subject marking on the verbs and whether or not the non-initial verb is marked with the pre-verb *kɛ.* These two topics will be looked at in detail in sections 4.5. For now, a progression of semantic cohesion can be established with lexicalized SVCs being the most cohesive and sequential SVCs without the preverb *kɛ-* being least cohesive. The following diagram illustrates this.

lexicalized/idiomatized   most integrated

asymmetrical

simultaneous (with pre-verb *kɛ*)

simultaneous (without pre-verb *kɛ*)

sequential, cause-effect (with pre-verb *kɛ*)

sequential cause-effect (without pre-verb *kɛ*)   least integrated
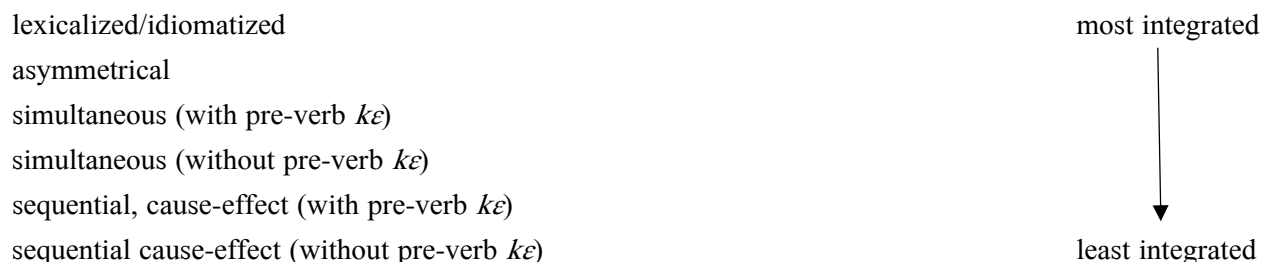
4.4.1 Chained SVCs, mono-predication and the notion of cultural appropriateness

As other writers (Durie 1997; Bruce 1988, Enfield 2002) have noted, it is not the case that any

set of events may be stringed together to form a serial verb construction. Rather, each language

has limitations on the extent to which multiple, temporally distinct events can be expressed as a

single clause. These restrictions are based on what speakers of the language construe (based on

shared experience and knowledge) to be "formulaic" activities that are relatively routine and

predictable or at the very least unmarked. Such macro-events qualify to be serialized, whereas

those that are marked, unusual and do not conform to "cultural logic" Pawley (1997) do not

qualify for serialization.

Although Gã has chained serial verb constructions, it seems they are not a popular

construction choice for speakers. Very few were found in the data collected and none consisted

of more than two sub-events. Also, there were no examples in the data of the kind of chained

SVC described by Osam (1994) for Akan, and Pawley (2009) for Kalam, where the SVC

comprises several verb phrases which give a detailed description of a set of activities which

together form a readily recognizable event in that culture. For Kalam, Pawley terms them

narrative SVCs. An example from Akan is given in (85), where buying raw foodstuffs, cooking

them and selling them is a very regular occurrence for many people, especially women.

(85) Araba tɔ-ɔ   nam   kyew-ee   Ø   tɔne-ee   Ø
      Araba buy-COMPL fish   fry-COMPL 3SG OBJ   sell-COMPL 3SG OBJ
      Araba bought fish, fried it and sold it.   (Osam 1994:194)

The majority of chained SVCs in the data contained at least one motion verb, usually in V1

position. The paucity of chained SVCs in Gã is not unexpected, since symmetrical SVCs

generally comprise a mere one-third of all SVCs. In spite of their near-absence from the

recorded data, they do exist and native speakers are able to offer up example sentences during

elicitation (86), (87).

(86) í̋=!téɛ́ɛ́   !shí̋   í̋=bá-yéɛ́ɛ́   ní!í̋
      1SG=rise.NEG   down 1SG=VENT-eat.NEG   thing
      "I won't get up and come and eat."

(87) ákú   tè   shí̏   è=bèɛ́   kpó=ɛ̀   nɔ̋   è=tèè
      Aku   rise down 3SG=sweep compound=DEF top   3SG=go.PST

      fàà
      river
      "Aku woke up, swept the compound and went to the river (to fetch water)."

The examples of CSVCs seen so far are acceptable because they meet the requirement of

cultural appropriateness. Being told to get out of bed to enjoy a meal is almost universally

relatable and in rural Gã homes the morning routine of waking up, sweeping your surroundings

and going out to fetch water for the day's needs is a common experience. On the other hand,

(88) is not acceptable, because the component events are viewed as unrelated, such that there is

no culturally-defined umbrella event to speak of. For most Gã speakers, studying is not a

normal activity to partake in after waking up. Adding speaking on the phone to the list of

activities makes it even less plausible as a routine occurrence.

(88) *ákú *tè*   *shĩ̀*   *è＝kàsé*   nĩ́!í   *è＝wìé*   tèlèfóŋ
       Aku   rise   down 3SG＝study thing 3SG＝talk   telephone
       "Aku woke up, studied and talked on the phone."

(88) can be remedied by inserting the linker *nĩ̀* 'and' between each verb phrase.

(89) ákú   tè   shì   *nĩ̀*   è＝kàsé   nĩ́!í   *nĩ̀*   è＝wìé   tèlèfóŋ
       Aku   rise   down   and   3SG＝study thing   and   3SG＝talk   telephone
       "Aku woke up and studied and talked on the phone."

It should be mentioned, though, that many speakers insisted on inserting the coordinator

between the various verb phrases of the clause chain or at the very least inserting intonational

breaks or pauses between the verb phrases. Such speakers found sentences like (87) unnatural,

because of the absence of coordinators or pauses between the various components. It seems

then, that some speakers' construal of these activities is that they are entirely separate and

distinct from one another, and not just component events under one major event.

These intuitions beg a reassessment of the notion of single predication of the verbs in an SVC. It seems an exception must be made for chained SVCs, because although syntactically, the verbs in CSVCs behave as a single unit and a single clause, requiring compatible and sometimes concordant marking of TAMP categories as well as subject-sharing, the sub-events comprising the whole appear to be predicated separately. Here the verbs have distinct properties, which are ascribed to the subject separately, but these separate predications are asserted only once. In integrated SVCs, the various verbs make a complex yet single predication and the verbal property is ascribed to the subject just once. As Baker and Harvey (2010) show, monoclausality does not necessarily equate with mono-predication. The fact that pauses are allowed between component verb phrases in CSVCs is one piece of evidence in favour of the multi-predicational status of CSVCs. Another indicator is the preference of some speakers for CSVCs to be expressed as coordinate structures. As Foley (2010) has observed, SVCs within the same language may have different properties and Gã appears to be one such language. While integrated SVCs exhibit canonical features of SVC-hood such as mono-predication, mono-clausality and a prohibition on pauses between verb phrases, chained SVCs are mono-clausal but multi-predicational, and they allow pauses.

4.5 The status of *kɛ*

This morpheme has received a great deal of attention in the Gã literature due to its cross-

categorial nature and ability to occur in various syntactic positions. It has no real content

meaning and is glossed 'take' because of its syntactic and functional parallel to Akan *de*, whose

semantic meaning is 'take' or 'hold' as well as morphemes in other related languages which

also mean or once meant 'take'. For example, according to Lord (1993) the morphemes in the

following Benue-Congo languages have a meaning and function similar to *kɛ* 'take': Awutu *nɛ*,

Idoma *bi*, Nupe *la*. In addition, Zimmerman's (1858:143) dictionary notes that it formerly

meant 'to take' or 'to hold' and gives *ŋɔ* 'take' as its synonym. *ŋɔ* 'take' can take all verbal

inflections.

The morpheme *kɛ* occurs in three main syntactic positions:

i)   immediately after the subject of the clause
ii)   as an adjunct in combination with an NP
iii)   in a serial construction as a prefix on a non-initial verb

4.5.1 *kɛ* occurring immediately after the subject

In this position, *kɛ* has been analysed as a verb by Adjei (1999) and Dakubu (2004b, 2008).

However, it lacks several defining characteristics of verbs. For example, it cannot occur as the

only verb in a clause; it must always occur in a serial construction. It takes no inflectional

markers whatsoever and so cannot give any aspect, mood or polarity information. All such

information is carried by the other verb(s) in the SVC. For example, in (90) the subjunctive is

marked on the non-initial verb *yà* 'go'. In (91), which is a continuation from the same

discourse, the future is marked on the non-initial verb *fí!tá* 'join'. In both sentences, *kɛ* remains

uninflected.

(90) wɔ̀=bàá-sùmɔ̀   mòŋ́ ní̋   ***ɔ̀=kɛ̀***   gbé!kɛ̋=!ɛ̋   ***á-!yá***
      1PL=FUT-like   rather NMLZ   2SG=take   child=DEF   SBJV-go
      shí̋!ɑ̋
      house
      "We would rather prefer that you take the child home."   [CH:51]

(91) ***wɔ̀=kɛ̀***   tsòfɑ̃̀   ***bàá-fìtà***   è=hè
      1PL=take   medicine   FUT-join   3SG=body
      "We will give him some medicine to take along."   [CH:52]

On the other hand, *kɛ* occupies the immediate post-pronominal subject slot, which in Gã

is solely reserved for verbs. It is preceded by subject pronouns and followed by object

pronouns. Lord (1993:54) notes that in imperative *kɛ*-SVCs, the second verb is in the

subjunctive (92a), as is the case in normal SVCs (92b).

(92a) kóní̋   ***ɔ̀=kɛ̀***   é!kó   ***á-fɔ̃***   ó=nɑ̃̀-jĩ̀   à-hè
       NMLZ   2SG=take   some   SBJV-wash   2SG=leg-PL   PERT-body
       "So that you use some (of the herbal mixture) to wash your legs."   [OYO:104]

(92b) ***hé***   è=nɔ̃̀   ***ó=!yé***
       buy.IMP   3SG=top   2SG.SBJV=eat
       "Trust in him."   [CH:430]

Also, just like regular verbs, when a third person inanimate object of *kɛ* is pronominalized, it is

realised as null (93) and (94).

(93) shìká = !á   nī́   *à-kɛ́-!hā́*   !lɛ́ = !ɛ́
      money = DEF NMLZ   3PL.IMPERS-take.PERF-give   3SG.OBJ = DEF

      è = kɛ́-Ø-!bá
      3SG = take.SBJV-3SG.OBJ.INAM-come
      "The money that she has been given, she should bring (it)"   [MM:109]

(94) kɛ́   è = fèé   mā́ = !ā́   *wɔ̀ = kɛ̀*   Ø
      when 3SG = do   corn.dough = DEF   1PL = take   3SG.OBJ.INAM
      bàá-hóó   kpékpĺé = !ɛ́
      FUT-cook   food.type = DEF
      "When it becomes corn dough, we will use (it) to cook the *kpekple*."   [OYO:47]

The object of *kɛ* could be an instrument (95), patient (91), comitative (96), manner (97)

or what I would term a derogatory personal descriptor (98).

(95) *mì̃ = kɛ̀*   kakla   *fò*   brodo
      1SG = take   knife   cut   bread
      "I cut the bread with a knife."   (Dakubu 2008:122)

(96) *ì̃ = kɛ̀*   lɛ̀   *tsɔ̀ɔ̃́*   nī̃̃   yɛ̀   *Ebenezer*
      1SG = take   3SG.OBJ   teach   thing   be.located   Ebenezer
      "I taught with her at Ebenezer (secondary school)."   [DF:63]

(97) òblánũ̃́ = !ɛ́   *kɛ̀*   mùsùŋshã̀ã̃   *jè*   *kpò*   yɛ̀
      young.man = DEF   take   anxiety   exit   compound   be.located
      tsū́ = ɛ̃̀   mĩ̀ŋ
      house = DEF   inside
      "The young man anxiously exited the room."   [NAR:31]

(98) òkó **kὲ** è=yítsò àgbó=ὲ **bà-kpá** fàí
     Oko take 3SG=head head=DEF VENT-remove hat
     "Oko came and apologized, with his big head."

Lord (1993) is of the view that *kɛ* in these sentences has grammaticalized from a verb to a prepositional case marker whose function primarily is to mark instrument NPs, and to a lesser extent, patient NPs. However, I do not think there is enough evidence to categorize *kɛ* as a case marker. It *is* undergoing grammaticalization, as can be seen from its lack of typical verb features, but this has not progressed to the point where it would be viewed as a prepositional case marker; it retains enough characteristics to still identify as a verb. Furthermore, as Dakubu (2008:29) points out, analysis as a preposition would mean that *kɛ* and its object form an adverbial and this adverbial separates the subject from the verb. As mentioned earlier, the pronominal subject and its verb form a very tight and contiguous syntactic unit and absolutely nothing is allowed to intervene, not even adverbs. Another question raised by Lord's analysis is, "Why, if *kɛ* is an instrumental case marker, doesn't it mark all instrument NPs?". For instance, the instrument NP in (99), *tsò* 'stick', is unmarked. If it is a case of differential object marking, then what criteria determines which objects are marked and which are not?

(99) è tswà gbékɛ̃ lὲ tsò
     he hit child the stick
     "He hit the child with a stick."   (Lord 1993:117)

It is best, therefore, to maintain that *kɛ* in this environment is a verb, albeit a defective one.

In a *kɛ*-serialization, when the second verb is either *bà* 'come' or *yà* 'go' a causative

('bring' or 'take') meaning results in addition to the comitative.

(100) *è=kɛ̀*   lɛ̀   *tèè*   shi̋!ǎ
3SG=take   3SG.OBJ   go.PST   house
Causative: "S/he took him/her home"
Comitative: "S/he went home with him/her."   [ELL:71]

In certain contexts, *kɛ* appears to be bi-categorial, in that it may be viewed as a verb or as a

coordinating conjunction. This happens when both the subject and object of *kɛ* are animate and

the subject is capable of exercising some degree of control over the object. This type of

ambiguity was first encountered in the discussion in §4.3.1.1 on causation. *ké* may be viewed

as a coordinating conjunction only if the arguments are full noun phrases and not pronominals.

In the third interpretation for (101a), the construction is no longer analysed as a serial

construction. Instead, it is a simple sentence with a coordinate subject, *Oko kɛ̀ Ama* 'Oko and

Ama'.

(101a) òkó   *kɛ̀*   á̋!mǎ   *ŋ̀-yà*   shi̋!ǎ
Oko   take   Ama   PROG-go   home
Causative: "Oko is taking Ama home."
Comitative: "Oko is going home with Ama."
Coordinate: "Oko and Ama are going home."

Note that the coordinate NP interpretation will not be possible if either or both arguments were

replaced with pronouns (101b). The reason for this is not clear.

(101b) *è=kɛ̀*   ắ!mắ   *ŋ̀-yà*   shí̋!ắ

        3SG=take   Ama   PROG-go   home

        Causative: "S/he is taking Ama home."

        Comitative: "S/he is going home with Ama."

        *Coordinate: "S/he and Ama are going home."

(101c) *è-kɛ̀*   lɛ̀   *ŋ̀-yà*   shí̋!ắ

        3SG-take   3SG.OBJ   PROG-go   home

        Causative: "S/he is taking her/him home."

        Comitative: "S/he is going home with her/him."

        *Coordinate: "S/he and her/him are going home."

In order to express the coordinate meaning when at least one of the actors is a pronoun, the coordinate NP must be topicalized by left-dislocation and followed by the third person plural pronoun in subject position.

(102)   è=kɛ̀   ắ!mắ   ằmɛ̃̀=ŋ̀-yà   shí̋!ắ

        3SG=take   Ama   3PL=PROG-go   home

        "He and Ama, they are going home."

In such SVCs which have *kɛ* as V1 and a motion verb as V2, the semantic relationship between the various interpretations - comitative, causative and coordinative - is quite obvious. Assuming that *kɛ* did originally mean 'take', it is a logical implication that if a person, A takes an object X and moves while still in possession of X, then A is accompanied by X for as long as A is in possession of X, making a comitative interpretation possible. If X is inanimate, or is animate but subject to A's control and manipulation, then it is A who causes or makes X move, hence the causative sense. When X is animate but is not subject to A's control or manipulation, X

may on their own volition move in the company of A. The result is that A and X are now both

involved in the same activity at the same time and *kɛ* is reanalysed as a coordinator.

With little historical data on Gã, it is difficult to unequivocally ascertain what the path

of grammaticalization is and the order in which these senses (including the instrumental sense)

appeared. Based on the semantics of *kɛ,* it can be assumed that originally, objects of *kɛ* had to

be inanimate entities; things that could be picked up by hand in order to be transferred to

another location or to be used to achieve some goal. This original construction will thus have

featured instruments and inanimate patients as objects of *kɛ*. With further grammaticalization,

inanimate objects which could not literally be 'taken' were permitted to serve as objects of *kɛ*.

For example, *yí!tsó* 'head' (103) and *shĩ́!ã́* 'house' (104) respectively. In (103) we see vestiges

of the instrumental role of the object of *kɛ*, in that *yí!tsó* 'head' is the entity that was utilized to

bring about the action of pushing the patient, '3SG.OBJ'. Stolz et al (2006:42) would term

yí!tsó 'head', a body part instrument.

(103) kòòlòó=!ɛ̀ ***kɛ̀*** è=yí!tsó ***é-bà-tsí*** !lɛ́
       animal=DEF take 3SG=head PERF-VENT-push 3SG.OBJ

      é-yà-gbèé è=yítsò nɔ̃̀
      PERF-ITIV-fall 3SG=head top
      "The animal has pushed him with his head and he's fallen onto his (animal's) head."
      [DEB:104]

(104) *è=kὲ*   shî́!ɑ̋=!ɑ̋   *é-!há!í*
       3SG=take   house=DEF   PERF-hire
       "S/he has rented out the house."

Manner NPs were also allowed to serve as objects of *kɛ*, as well as personal descriptors which

for the most part tend to be derogatory. The semantic range of the object of *kɛ* was also

expanded to include animate entities, where a comitative interpretation was formed in sentences

like (105) and (106).

(105) *ò=kὲ*   wɔ   *bὰá-wìê*
       2SG=take   1PL   FUT-speak
       "You will speak to us."   [CH:137]

(106) *è=kὲ*   lὲ   *fɔ́*
       3SG=take   3SG.OBJ   give.birth
       "She had a baby by him."   [DF:71]

It has been demonstrated above that the coordinate interpretation arose from the comitative. An

argument for the direction, instrumental > comitative, also makes some semantic sense. A

person "A" may "utilize" another, "B" for some activity by simply having the person partake

in that activity. The instrumentality lies in the fact that the activity could not have been

accomplished without the participation of the other person. So in (105) the conversation cannot

take place without the participation of *wɔ* '1PL', in the same way that the bread could not have

been cut without the utilization of the knife and the boy could not have been pushed without

the utilization of the head. Another semantic angle is that both the instrument and the entity

that controls it are actors, in so far as they are both responsible for the accomplishment of the

action. In this semantic extension, the instrument is personified and both the instrument and its

controller become co-participants in the activity, leading to a comitative interpretation which

allows for "human instruments". This construction is therefore favoured for predicating

naturally reciprocal actions such as 'talk', 'fight' and 'argue'.

(107) *è=kè*   mĩ̀   *ŋ̀-bέ*
      3SG=take   1SG.OBJ   PROG-quarrel
      "She's quarrelling with me."

However, this directionality is in opposition to what has been reported for many languages,

particularly Indo-European languages (Luraghi 2001; Stolz et al 2006:358; Heine and Kuteva

2004, 2005). Indeed, Heine et al (1991:159) propose a unidirectional cline of

grammaticalization in which comitative gives rise to instrumental and never the other way

round. All the same, the facts of Gã do appear to present a challenge to this particular cline (not

to the validity of unidirectionality in general). Given that the prototypical object of *kɛ* 'take' is

inanimate (a characteristic which is better suited for instruments) and the prototypical

comitative object is human, the challenge is reconciling these facts with the generally accepted

hypothesis that in cases of syncretism the category that involves an inanimate participant is

more grammaticalized than the category that involves a human participant (Heine et. al.

1991:156).

4.5.2 *kɛ occurring as an adjunct in combination with an NP*

In addition to verb *kɛ*, there is also preposition *kɛ*. It occurs with an NP in post-verbal position.

That it is not a verb is evidenced by its inability to allow null pronominal objects (107b), as

verbs do. The NP object of preposition *kɛ* may be an instrument (107a), a comitative (108),

manner (109) or personal descriptor (110). This semantic range of objects is the same as that

found for initial verb *kɛ* in an SVC.

(107a) mì-fò   bĺòdò kɛ̀   kàkĺ!á
       1SG-cut   bread with knife
       "I cut bread with a knife."   (Dakubu 2008:122)

(107b) mì̃-fò   bĺòdò kɛ̀   Ø
       1SG-cut   bread with 3SG.OBJ
       "I cut bread with it."

(108) gbé!kɛ̃́=!ɛ̃́ tè   shĩ̀   kɛ̀   gbèé=!ɛ́
      child=DEF rise   down with dog=DEF
      "The child got up with the dog."   [ELL:59]

(109) è=nyĩ̀ɛ̃́   kòòlòó=ɛ̀ sɛ̀ɛ̀ kɛ̀   fòì
      3SG=walk   animal=DEF back with running
      "He chased the animal." (Lit: "He followed the animal, running.")   [PAT:155]

(110) jè-é   jɛ̃́!mɛ̃́, kɛ̀   ó=nɑ̃̀nè   bɔ́ɔ̀lú=!ɛ́
      exit-IMP   there with 2SG=leg   ball=DEF
      "Clear off, with your legs that look like a ball."

When the object of preposition *kɛ* is a personal descriptor, the prepositional phrase may be set off from the rest of the clause by a short intonational pause, indicated in writing by the comma.

Although these are not SVCs, it is appropriate to discuss this construction type here because of its close relation to the canonical *kɛ*-SVC construction type. Exactly the diachronic relation between them is not clear. Based on Stassen's (2000) observations in his typology of NP conjunction encoding, one hypothesis as to how these construction types are related is that the preposition *kɛ* construction gave rise to the comitative/coordinate construction involving verb *kɛ*. This position is untenable for Gã. A brief summation of Stassen's findings is in order. Stassen noted that there are two kinds of languages: AND-languages and WITH-languages. AND-languages have two ways of encoding noun phrase conjunction. They either use a strategy in which the two NPs are of equal syntactic rank (coordinate strategy) or they use a strategy in which the two NPs are of unequal syntactic rank i.e. one is subordinate to the other (comitative strategy). In the coordinate strategy the NPs are often linked by a morpheme - the coordinator, while with the comitative strategy a comitative morpheme is employed. He notes that in WITH-languages the comitative strategy often grammaticalizes to produce a coordinate structure, making such languages more like AND-languages, with the major difference being that their coordinate and comitative markers are identical. The process in SVO languages,

according to Stassen (2000:27), involves the shift of the comitative phrase in sentences like (94a) into pre-verb position, resulting in a comitative/coordinate structure. He notes that many languages of Sub-Saharan Africa and Indonesia have undergone or are undergoing this type of grammaticalization. This path, however, is untenable for Gã, because it is rarely the case that a preposition will give rise to a verb. It is far more likely that the construction with the preposition arose from the SVC by movement of *kɛ* and its object from before the main verb to after it.

Preposition *kɛ* cannot be analysed as a verb either, because this will contradict the iconic ordering of first taking an instrument and then utilizing it, moving with it etc. If *kɛ* in this instance were a verb, then one would cut the bread and then take the knife which is logically and practically unsound.

The phenomenon where the V1 of a serial construction grammaticalizes into a preposition is not unique to Gã. Tetun Dili has two verbs, *hodi* 'carry, bring, take' and *lori* 'carry, bring, take' whose distribution is exactly like *kɛ* in that they occur as verbs in V1 position and after V1 as prepositions (Hajek 2006:244). The same development is found in Obolo with the verb *sè* (Durie 1997:335).

4.5.3 *kɛ* occurring as a pre-verb on a non-initial verb in an SVC

This occurrence of *kɛ* was very common in the data. A few example sentences are given below:

(111) hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   ***è=mɔ́***   ékòmé   ***kɛ̀-tèè***   shĩ́!ɑ́
      sake=TOP   3SG=catch   one   take-go.PST   house
      "So he caught one and took it home."

(112) ***à=bàá-féé***   ó!tɔ́   fí!óó   !kó   ***ké-hɑ̃́***   nyɛ̃̀
      3PL.IMPERS=FUT-do   food.type   little   INDEF   take-give   2PL
      "A little *otɔ* will be made for you." [OYO:366]

(113) ***è=jè***   ***kpò***   ***kɛ̀-bà***   tsṹ=ɛ̃̀   sɛ̀ɛ̀   yɛ̀
      3SG-exit   compound   take-come   house=DEF   back   be.located

      kpó=ɛ̀   nɔ̃̀
      compound=DEF   top
      "S/he exited and came to the back of the house, outside." [PAT:50]

(114) nĩ̀   ***è=bɔ́ì***   lè   tàò-mɔ̃̀   ***kɛ̀-nyĩ̃́ɛ́***   tsṹ=ɛ̃̀
      and   3SG=start   3SG.OBJ   look.for-NOM   take-walk   room=DEF

      mĩ̃̀ŋ   fɛ́ɛ́
      inside   all
      "And he started looking for him all over the room." [NAR:18]

(115) tɔ́=ɔ̀   ***bú***   gbèé=!ɛ́   yí!tsò   ***kɛ̀-dàmɔ̀***   sɑ́ḿfɛ̀lɛ́=ɛ̀   nɑ̃̀ɑ̃̀
      bottle=DEF   cover   dog=DEF   head   take-stand   window=DEF   mouth
      "The bottle is over the dog's head as he's standing at the window."
      "The dog is standing at the window with the bottle over his head." [PAT:45]

In the past literature, there have been two main syntactic analyses of *kɛ* in this construction.

Both agree that the subject of *kɛ* is the subject of the SVC. The difference lies in what is

analysed as the object of *kɛ*. Adjei (1999:151) believes that the object of *kɛ* is the object of the

first verb which precedes *kɛ*. In (111) this would be *ékòmé* 'one' and in (112) it would be *òtɔ́*

'food.type'. When the first verb is intransitive, as in (113) then it is the entire event preceding

kɛ that is the object of *kɛ*. Presumably, there is no overt manifestation of the object of *kɛ*

because inanimate pronouns are realised as zero.

Dakubu (2004b), on the other hand, observes that it is not possible for the object of *kɛ*

to be identical with the object of the preceding verb. Her evidence is that when the object of the

preceding verb is human, one would expect an overt pronoun co-referential with that object to

occur after *kɛ*. However this is not the case, as the following example shows:

(116) e-ya-mɔ́   lè   kɛ-ba
      3S₁.AOR-EGR.AOR-catch   3S₂   move.AOR-come
      "He caught him and brought him back."   (Dakubu 2004b:121)

Dakubu takes the fact that there is no overt 3SG *(lè)* pronoun after *kɛ* to be proof that *kɛ* and

mɔ́ 'catch' do not share the same object. Instead she believes the function of *kɛ* to be to

"integrate the VPs into a single event, by bringing the event of the first VP into the semantic

domain of the second VP." (Dakubu 2004b:121). According to her, there are two semantic

types. In one, the action of the first VP gives information about the manner in which the action

in the second VP was carried out (117).

(117) *èè=jò*   fòì   *kè-ŋ-yà*
      3SG.PROG=dance   running   take-PROG-go
      "S/he's running away."
      "S/he's going away, running."   [BOR:31]

In the other, the second VP is a logical resultative of the action of the first VP (111), (112) and (113). I would add a third semantic type. In this type, the action in V2 is accompanied by that in V1 i.e. they are performed simultaneously and *kɛ* serves to make that connection e.g. (114) and (115).

Dakubu's analysis is not only consistent with the syntactic facts of the language but it is also semantically sound and is able to account uniformly for different occurrences of this SVC type. To further buttress her point, it is observed that in SVCs with initial verb *kɛ*, where there is no preceding verb + object constituent to speak of, it makes sense semantically to ascribe the object of *ke* to the entire event in the preceding clause. Here, *kɛ* retrospectively links the event in the preceding clause to the current clause. Consider (118) from a narrative:

(118) ã̀mɛ̃̀=ŋ̀-táò   gbɛ̀   nĩ́   ã̀mɛ̃̀=bàá-tsɔ̃́   nĩ́   àmɛ̃́=jè
      3PL=PROG=search way   NMLZ 3PL=FUT-pass   NMLZ   3PL=exit

      kpò
      compound
      "They're looking for a way to exit."

      nĩ̀   ã̀mɛ̃̀=nã̀   tsò   kò   ã̀mɛ̃̀=mɔ̃́   mĩ̀ŋ
      and   3PL=see   tree   INDEF   3PL=catch   inside
      "And they saw a log and held on to it."

      nĩ̀   ã̀mɛ̃̀=kɔ̀   tsó=!ɛ́
      and   3PL=climb   tree=DEF
      "And they climbed the log."

nĩ̀	ằmɛ̃̀=kɛ̀-jɛ̀	fàá=à	mĩ̀ŋ
and	3PL=take-exit	river=DEF	inside

"And through that, they exited the river."

The deployment of *kɛ* in the final sentence is a way of indicating explicitly the means by which the protagonists were able to come out of the river i.e. log-climbing. Although without *kɛ*, this information is still available to the hearer by inference, the use of *kɛ* reinforces it. In this sentence it would be illogical to conclude that *tsɔ̀* 'log' is the object of *kɛ*. It is therefore not unusual for the object of *kɛ* to be a whole event rather than an NP. The use of *kɛ* in this example can be viewed as a semantic extension of the manner function of initial verb *kɛ*. Not all instances of initial verb *kɛ* can trace their objects to the event in the preceding clause. Some do trace their objects to an NP in the previous clause. In the following excerpt of a conversation, the object of *kɛ* in line 3 is *bàá!á* 'the herbs' in line 1.

(119)	1	Yoomo:	bàá=!á	à=yééê
			herb=DEF	3PL.IMPERS=eat.NEG

"As for the herbs, they are not eaten."

	2	Akua:	ằháã̀
			IJ

"That's what I thought."

	3	Yoomo:	*à=kɛ̀-jù̀-ɔ̀*	*à=hɛ́́-ằ*
			3PL.IMPERS=take-bathe-HAB	3PL.IMPERS=give-HAB
			ằmɛ̃̀	
			3PL	

"They are used to bathe them."

Ascertaining the object of initial verb *kɛ* is therefore a matter of closely examining the

preceding discourse and determining which NP or event is semantically compatible with V2.

Pre-verb *kɛ* in a non-initial VP, on the other hand, has grammaticalized to a point where it no

longer allows an NP object and its object must be the event coded by the preceding verb.

4.6 Finiteness and SVCs

There are many who would question the validity of SVCs which contain *kɛ.* After all, most

writers on SVCs (e.g. Aikhenvald 2006:1, Sebba 1987:39) consider the ability of a component

verb to appear independently as one of the basic requirements for SVC-hood. Matthews

(2006:72), for instance, rules out Cantonese constructions that contain the object marker *zoeng*

because although it is a verb, it does not occur as a main verb outside of the SVC. As briefly

discussed earlier in this chapter, Shibatani (2009) has debunked this misconception by showing

that in many canonical SVCs, one of the component verbs cannot occur as a main verb in

simple clauses either, unless some morphological adjustment is made to them. He also notes

that only one verb is responsible for indicating formal finiteness; the rest of the verbs are

dependent on it.

The issue boils down to an understanding of finiteness and whether the verbs concerned

exhibit formal or functional finiteness. Shibatani (2009:264) argues that in SVCs, none of the

verbs separately is functionally finite. Shibatani (2011) defines finiteness features as the

"linguistic manifestation of the speech act of contextualizing a proposition, i.e. the anchoring of

a proposition to a specific speech event". Many languages do this by specifying the time of the

event with relation to the time of speaking (tense). Some languages also indicate mood,

evidentiality etc. But what is crucial is that this anchoring allows the verb to perform its

function of predication i.e. to make an assertion, to question, command etc. SVCs by their very

nature as mono-clausal, single event-depicting constructions cannot have each individual verb

being functionally finite. Rather, it is together, as single predicates that they exhibit functional

finiteness. The inability of *kɛ* to occur independently should therefore not preclude it from

occurring in SVCs.

In the following SVCs, for instance, the second component is incapable of standing on

its own.

(120a) *é=mà*   ŋwɛ̀ŋ   tsṹ   ényɔ̀   *é=wò*   nɔ̃̀
3SG.PERF=build   up   house two   3SG.PERF=put   top
"S/he has built two storey buildings on it."   [MM:80]

(120b) *é=wò   nɔ̀
3SG.PERF=put   top

(121a) nĩ̀   kòòlòó=ɛ̀   *télé*   lɛ̀   *kɛ̀-nyĩ̌ɛ́*   fòì
and   animal=DEF   carry.on.head 3SG.OBJ   take-walk   race
"And the animal was running with him on his head."   [PAT:151]

(121b) *kὲ-nyĩɛ́   fòì
        take-walk   race

Also, when it comes to the formal expression of finite categories in Gã, it is only the first verb

that carries this responsibility. This is especially evident for the future, where the future

aspectual morpheme is found only on the initial verb, while subsequent verbs are marked for

the subjunctive. Even though the non-initial verbs are marked for subjunctive, the entire SVC is

viewed as having future aspect. In addition, the second component cannot stand on its own.

(122a) *à=bàá-féé*   *party*   *á=hɛ́*   ãmɛ̃
        3PL.IMPERS=FUT-do   3PL.IMPERS.SBJV=give   3PL
        "A party will be thrown for them."   [YM:154]

(122b) *á=hɛ́*   ãmɛ̃
        3PL.IMPERS.SBJV=give   3PL

The stipulation that each verb in the SVC must be finite is therefore invalid. In Gã, for

example, only the first verb displays formal finiteness features.

        Here, the deviation of chained SVCs from prototypical SVCs is particularly stark.

Chained SVCs make separate predications as can be seen from the temporal independence of

the actions involved as well as the preference of some speakers for them to be coordinated with

the coordinator *nĩ*, but syntactically, the various verbs also do not exhibit individual finiteness.

In terms of marking, they are just like integrated SVCs. All SVCs probably started off as such

chained structures, with ISVCs emerging as the result of the elimination of coordinators

coupled with the grammaticalization of some verbs and requirements for harmonious TAMP

marking. CSVCs appear to be in some kind of limbo, where they are still composed of chained

structures and obey the rules on TAMP marking but on the other hand, allow coordinators.

Crucially, the verbs in CSVCs do not easily fall victim to grammaticalization and retain their

independence and predicational function. CSVCs are therefore like a cross between coordinated

clauses and ISVCs. Their formal manifestation (that of mono-clausality) is that of a typical

SVC, but semantically they are more akin to coordinated clauses.

4.7 SVCs and other multi-verbal constructions

SVCs in Gã are superficially similar to other multi-clausal constructions such as causatives and

purpose constructions. However, there are major differences between these and SVCs.

In Gã, causation is expressed by the same verb that expresses benefactive i.e. *hɛ̃́* 'give',

as in example (123a).

(123a) ĩ̀=hɛ̃́   à=yà-kpɔ́   lɛ̀
       1SG=give   3PL.IMPERS=ITIV-dislocate   3SG.OBJ
       "I made them sack him/her."   [MM:184]

Although, the sentence above comprises a series of two verbs, it is not an SVC primarily

because each verb has a different syntactic subject. The subject of *hɛ̃́* 'give' is the first person

singular while the subject of *kpɔ́* 'dislocate' is the third person plural impersonal pronoun. The

sentence clearly expresses two different events with two different actors. If it is to be negated,

only *hɑ́* can take the negative marker, the second verb will be marked for the subjunctive.

Perhaps it is due to a mistaken equivalence between this construction and negative SVCs that

results in some speakers negating SVCs by marking the non-initial verb with the subjunctive,

as we saw in (9b).

(123b) ĩ̀ = hɑ́ɑ́ɑ̀ɑ̀　　　　　á = yá-kpɔ́　　　　　　　　　　　lɛ̀
　　　　1SG = give.NEG　　3PL.IMPERS.SBJV = ITIV-dislocate　　3SG.OBJ
　　　　"I didn't make them sack him/her."

The causative construction actually consists of the main causative verb phrase containing *hɑ́*

'give' and a nominal complement (event nominalization (chapter 6)) which is optionally

marked by the nominalizer *nɪ́*. Therefore, another way to render (123a) is (124).

(124)　ĩ̀ = hɑ́　　　nɪ́　　　　　à = yà-kpɔ́　　　　　　　lɛ̀
　　　　1SG = give　　NMLZ　　3PL.IMPERS = ITIV-dislocate　　3SG.OBJ
　　　　"I made them sack him/her."

This nominalizer also optionally occurs in purpose constructions. Such constructions resemble

SVCs when the marker *nɪ́* is not present, as in (125).

(125)　èè = tũ̀　　　　　(nɪ́)　　　é = yá-mɔ́　　　　　wò-bí!í
　　　　3SG.PROG = jump　　NMLZ　　3SG.SBJV = ITIV-catch　　honey-people

　　　　à-tsṹ = !ɛ̃́
　　　　PERT-house = DEF
　　　　"S/he is jumping to catch the beehive."

Example (125) is disqualified from being an SVC because in SVCs, the progressive is concordantly marked on all verbs. However, in purposives it is marked just once on the initial verb and the second verb is marked for the subjunctive.

The similarity of constructions that contain the nominalization marker *nɪ́* to SVCs may not simply be a synchronic coincidence. It could be that these constructions actually gave rise to SVCs in some contexts. Adjei (1999:166) has postulated that serial verb constructions may have arisen from coordinate constructions, which make use of the clausal coordinator *nɪ̀* (with low tone, as opposed to the high tone of the nominalizer found in purposives). It is interesting to note that in purposive constructions, tense is carried only on the main (initial) verb; the rest are marked for subjunctive. This is exactly the case with future SVCs and SVCs with imperative mood. What all these have in common is their irrealis semantics. It is therefore possible that future SVCs evolved from future purposives. Compare the following two sentences: (126) is an SVC with future aspect and (127) is a purposive, also with future aspect. Purposives are marked by *nɪ́* which also functions as the coordinator for irrealis clauses. Hence (127) could also be analysed as a coordinate construction. This intricate set of relationships will be explored in §6.6.2.2.

(126) *è=bàá-tè*   shɪ̃̀   *é=jù*   è=hè
     3SG=FUT-rise   down   3SG.SBJV=bathe   3SG=body
     "S/he will wake up and take a bath."

(127) è=bàá-tè   shĩ̀   nĩ́   é=jù   è=hè

       3SG=FUT-rise   down NMLZ   3SG.SBJV=bathe 3SG=body

       "S/he will wake up to take a bath."

4.8 Summary

In this chapter, it has been shown that Gã SVCs do form a distinct syntactic construction

characterized by mono-clausality, subject sharing, compatible AMP marking on all verbs and

construal as a single event. SVCs carry out many grammatical functions that in other languages

are performed by case markers and prepositions. This is made possible via the

grammaticalization of one of the verbs, usually the final verb. The semantics of the various

types of SVCs have been discussed and suggestions about possible pathways of development of

the different semantic senses have been put forth. Using SVCs with the initial verb, *kɛ* as an

example, it has been shown that a verb need not be finite nor be capable of appearing

independently in simple clauses in order to occur in an SVC (§4.6). Chained SVCs have been

shown to be a deviation from prototypical SVCs, making separate predications but presenting

as a single clause. Finally, SVCs have been shown to differ from syntactically similar multi-

verb constructions, to which they may also be diachronically related (§4.7).

Chapter 5: Voice and Valency

5.0 Introduction

Valency refers to the number of arguments that are required by a verbal predicate. It is

inextricably tied to transitivity, which refers to the number of objects that a verbal predicate

takes. As shown in chapter 3, a verbal predicate may be intransitive, in which case it has only

one argument - the subject - and no object. Such a verb is monovalent. A monotransitive verb

has two arguments - subject and one object - and is termed bivalent, while a ditransitive verb

has three arguments - a subject and two objects - and is termed trivalent.

Each argument in a clause plays a role in the development of the action - a semantic

role - and these roles may be marked morphologically or by word order. Languages differ in

how the marking of semantic roles in a typically transitive clause corresponds to the marking of

a single argument in an intransitive clause. This sets up the well-known binary division

between nominative-accusative languages and ergative-absolutive languages. In nominative-

accusative languages, the agent (A) of the transitive clause is marked the same as the single

argument (S) of an intransitive clause, while the patient (P) of the transitive clause receives

unique marking. In ergative-absolutive languages, it is the P of the transitive clause that is

marked the same as the S of the intransitive clause, with the A of the transitive clause being

uniquely marked.

Whenever there is a realignment of these standard roles and marking patterns in a transitive clause i.e. a particular semantic role is marked non-canonically, or there is a deviation from the norm in terms of the number of arguments a verb takes i.e. arguments are added or removed (changes in valency), a voice contrast results. This is the received, traditional understanding of voice that has guided research for decades and still underpins most investigations of voice in specific languages. It emphasizes the importance of morphological marking in determining voice categories and alignments, and it places primacy on the pragmatic function of valency changes. For example, the English passive voice is said to be a valency-reducing process which promotes a patient to subject position (from object position), and deletes the agent or demotes it to oblique position. So that for the English active i.e. transitive (bivalent) sentence, *Jane found the dog*, we get the passive form, *The dog was found (by Jane),* which is intransitive (monovalent). The passive sentence reflects a communicative purpose that is unconcerned with who found the dog; it is only concerned with the fact of it being found. The following are reflective of currently accepted definitions of voice:

"The term voice refers to a system of oppositions involving a change in the semantic role which is associated with the subject relation (Kroeger 2004:54)."

"Every language has operations that adjust the relationship between semantic roles and grammatical relations in clauses. Such devices are sometimes referred to as alternative voices" (Payne 1997:169)

Voice is "an inflectional (and sometimes derivational) feature of verbs that indicates a function-changing operation (categories: active, passive, reflexive, antipassive) (Haspelmath 2002:276).

In recent times, typologically-minded linguists such as Givón (2001b) and Shibatani (2006) have pointed out that the exclusive focus on morphology and pragmatic function in voice studies has led to the exclusion of structures in some languages that perform the same functions as voice constructions in languages that mark voice morphologically or by valency changes. As a result, Givón (2001b:155) advocates an approach in which a voice category is defined functionally, independently of language structure, and then the various constructions in individual languages that carry out these functions are identified. Shibatani (2006:219) goes even further to propose that there are conceptual bases underlying voice phenomena, and the grammarian's task is to identify the structures that convey these voice oppositions. Shibatani explains that major voice phenomena have their bases rooted in the human conceptualization of actions; where actions originate, how they develop and how they terminate. He terms these stages the evolutionary properties or phases of an action. Voice phenomena are concerned with the development of actions, the participants involved in the actions and the discourse or communicative relevance of those participants. He defines voice as "a system of correspondences between actions or event types and syntactic structures." (Shibatani 2006:220). In order to determine the existence of a voice parameter in relation to another, one

may pose pertinent questions relating to a specific evolutionary phase of concern. For instance, with the origin phase of an action, one may ask where the action originates, how it is brought about and what the nature of the agent is. Regarding the developmental phase of an action, one may ask whether or not the action extends beyond the agent's personal sphere and whether or not the action achieves its intended effect on the patient. The termination phase of an action beckons questions of whether the action terminates with a participant in the main event or develops further to affect another entity (Shibatani 2006:222). Regardless of the formal structure of a particular language, these are questions that can be answered by virtue of the fact that the structure or framework of an action varies little from culture to culture. It is the recognition of this intuitive, cross-cultural dissection of the "anatomy of an action" that makes it possible to identify major voice categories without appealing to morphological evidence or realignment of semantic roles with grammatical relations.

In this chapter, I will apply Shibatani's inclusive methodology to Gã in order to determine how major voice categories are realized in this language. In §5.1, the well-known active/passive voice opposition will be examined. §5.2 takes a look at the causative voice, §5.3 looks at middles, and §5.4 at antipassives. Benefactives and applicatives have their turn in §5.5 and the chapter is summarized in §5.6.

5.1 Active/Passive voice

This is the most common voice opposition found in language. The active is the default voice

category in the discourse of nominative-accusative languages. It involves a transitive situation

in which a volitional agent initiates an action which goes beyond the agent's personal sphere

and achieves its intended effect on a patient (Shibatani 200:257). The passive is commonly

characterized as a demotion of the A from subject position to oblique or null, and a promotion

of P from object to subject position. Dixon and Aikhenvald (2000:8) state that the function of

the prototypical passive is to focus attention on the original O, downgrade the importance of

the original A and focus on the state the original O is in. They list the following as the

characteristics of a passive[21]:

a) Passive applies to an underlying transitive clause and forms a derived intransitive.
b) The underlying O becomes S of the passive.
c) The underlying A argument goes into a peripheral function, being marked by a non-core case, adposition, etc; this argument can be omitted, although there is always the option of including it.
d) There is some explicit formal marking of a passive construction – generally by a verbal affix or by a periphrastic verbal construction.   (Dixon and Aikhenvald 2000:7)

If these requirements were applied to Gã, one would have no choice but to conclude that Gã

does not possess passive voice, because the formal markers that Dixon and Aikhenvald (2000)

list as indicators of a passive simply do not exist in Gã. However, if we focus on the conceptual

---

[21] Dixon and Aikhenvald's (2000) O (object) corresponds to P (patient) as used in this work.

basis of the passive voice in relation to the evolution of the action that it expresses, as Shibatani

(2006) does, then we see that Gã does have a construction that performs the same pragmatic

functions as the passives identified by Dixon and Aikhenvald. In Shibatani's (2006:219) work,

the parameter controlling the active/passive voice opposition can be formulated in the following

question pertaining to the origin phase of the action:

> *Does the action originate in an agent with extremely low discourse relevance or at least lower than the patient?*
> *Active: No*
> *Passive: Yes*

If the agent of the action is somehow conveyed as being of little relevance to the message, in

comparison with the patient, then a passive construction results. The agent may be given this

treatment because perhaps its identity is unknown or is inconsequential. In Gã this is

accomplished by what Givón (2001b) calls a non-promotional impersonal passive. It is non-

promotional because there is no realignment of semantic roles and grammatical relations. The

patient is not promoted to subject position and the agent is not omitted or demoted to oblique

status. Instead a non-referential, impersonal third person plural pronoun occurs as subject,

while the patient retains its object position. The impersonal pronoun is *à-* '3PL.IMPERS' and is

probably derived from the third person plural pronoun, *àmɛ̀* '3PL'. Examples of this passive

construction are given below in (1)-(3).

(1)   ɛ̀ɛ́   **à**=kɛ̀   lɛ̀   é-tèè   *region*

      yes   **3PL.IMPERS**=take   3SG.OBJ   PERF-go.PST

      "Yes, she's been taken to the regional office."   [MM:142]

(2)   wɔ̀=shí!á=ā́   jɛ́ŋ̀   **à**=fɔ̀   wɔ̀=fɛ́ɛ́

      1PL=house=DEF   there   **3PL.IMPERS**=give.birth   1PL=all

      yɛ̀

      be.located

      "Our house…that's where we were all born."   [FH:3]

(3)   ɛ̀ɛ̀   **à**=tsé-ɔ̀   mɪ̀   nã́ã́ kwèíkɔ́

      IJ   **3PL.IMPERS**=call-HAB   1SG.OBJ   Naa Kweikor

      "errm, my name is Naa Kweikor." [Lit: "They call me Naa Kweikor/I am called Naa Kweikor]   [YM:16]

Unlike promotional passives in languages such as English, the non-promotional property of Gã

passives means that even intransitive sentences can be passivized, as (4) and (5) demonstrate.

(4)   hɛ̀wɔ́=!ɔ́   **á**=!mɛ̃́   dã́ŋ̀

      sake=TOP   **3PL.IMPERS.SBJV**=wait   before

      "So they should wait a while."   [FH:131]

(5)   **á**=sɔ̀lè

      3PL.IMPERS.PERF=pray

      "Prayers have been said/Praying has been done/They have prayed."   [CH:64]

In all the examples above, the pronominal subject, *a-* does not refer to any particular individual

or group of individuals. Like all agent-suppression in passivization generally, it is done when

the speaker does not know who the agent of the action is or does not deem it worth the

mention. However, its use strongly implicates a plural agent, most likely owing to its possible

diachronic relationship with the third plural pronominal, *àmɛ̀*. In Gã, the impersonal pronoun

must denote an animate agent, and cannot be used of inanimate objects i.e. activities undergone

by inanimate entities cannot be passivized. So (6a) is ungrammatical because the impersonal

pronoun, which most probably refers to food, is an inanimate entity. In such a scenario one

must use a referential NP, such as a personal pronoun or a full NP, as in (6b).

(6a) *á= bèbèé = !í
  3PL.IMPERS.PERF = be.cooked.DISTRIB = PL
  "They (the meals) are cooked i.e. ready."

(6b) ní!yéní!í = ɛ́ fɛ́ɛ́ é-bè
  food = DEF all PERF-be.cooked
  "All the meals are cooked i.e. ready."

That the ungrammaticality of (6a) is due to the inanimateness of the subject and not the fact

that it is a patient rather than an agent (i.e. an undergoer rather than a volitional actor) is

evidenced by the grammaticality of the following passive sentences which have human

patientive subjects.

(7) ***àà*** = gbógbòó-!í ní wɔ = núúú shìshì
  3PL.IMPERS.PROG = die.DISTRIB-PL NMLZ 1PL = hear.NEG under
  "People are dying mysteriously." (Lit: People are dying that we don't understand)

(8) ***àà*** = gbèégbèé-ì shì sɔ́ŋ́ŋ́ yɛ̀ nàkàì
  3PL.IMPERS.PROG = fall.DISTRIB-PL down numerous be.located that

jɛ̃́!mɛ̃́ = !ɛ̃́

there = DEF

"People are falling down a lot in that place."

5.2 Causative/Non-causative voice

This is another voice parameter which is determined by looking at some characteristic of the

origin phase of an action. The question that needs to be answered is as follows:

> *Does the action originate with an agent heading the action chain that is distinct*
> *from the agent or patient of the main action?*
> *Yes: causative*
> *No: non-causative*   (Shibatani 2006:230)

In a causative construction, an entity, A causes a change in some entity, P or an entity, A

causes another entity, A to carry out an action. The former characterization would describe

lexical causatives of the *kill, break, burn* type, while the latter points to non-lexical causatives,

which consist of morphological and periphrastic causatives. Thus, for causatives we arrive at

the usual tripartite formal realization of many a linguistic category: lexical, morphological and

periphrastic (analytical). Of these, Gã exhibits only the lexical and periphrastic types.

5.2.1 Lexical causatives

Examples of lexical causatives in Gã are *gbè* 'kill', *jwà, kữ* 'break', *shã̀* 'burn', *sèlè* 'melt',

bó!dá 'mangle', *wò X nằằ* [put X mouth] 'feed X', *gbèé X shǐ* [fall X down] 'cause X to fail',

tsĩ̀ɛ̃̀ 'wake' *gbélé* 'open' and *ŋã́* 'close'. The majority of these are labile or ambitransitive verbs;

verbs which may be transitive or intransitive. In their causative function they must occur as

transitive verbs, as in (9) and (10).

(9)   ákú   ŋɑ́   shɪ́nɑ̀ɑ́=!ɑ́
        aku   close   door=DEF
        "Aku closed the door."

(10)   ó=jwà   tɔ́=!ɔ́
        2SG.PERF=break   bottle=DEF
        "You've broken the bottle."

The coding of lexical causatives is iconically related to the semantics of the causative events

they express, according to Shibatani and Pardeshi (2002:89). They note that in lexically-

expressed causative events, the causer acts directly upon the causee to bring about a change in

the causee. In so-doing the causer and causee occupy the same spatio-temporal domain. Lexical

causatives are hence known to equate to direct causation, as opposed to the indirect causation

expressed by morphological and periphrastic causatives. Shibatani (1976) uses the terms

manipulative and directive in lieu of direct and indirect causation respectively. Both pairs of

terms echo essential semantic properties of the causative event they describe. "Direct"

highlights the close spatial proximity of the causer and causee (as well as the fact that there is

no intermediate agent) and the close temporal proximity of the causing event and the caused

event. "Manipulative" indicates that the causee lacks control or volition to some degree. This is

the case for the subjects of most labile verbs that occur in intransitive clauses; they are

inanimate patients and have little independence or control over their states. Shibatani and

Pardeshi (2006) call such intransitive clauses "inactive intransitives". It is easier to bring about

a change of state in such inert causees than it is to do so with agentive causees. In (9) and (10)

above, for instance, the causees *shḯnàǎ* 'door' and *tɔ̀* 'bottle' are inanimate and lack volition.

Therefore, the more direct, lexical method is ideal for causativizing such labile verbs.

Because of the existence of inherent complement verbs (ICVs) (§3.5) in the lexicon of

Gã, a situation pertains where verbs that are normally intransitive in most languages occur as

transitive in Gã. These are essentially middle intransitive verbs which take an obligatory NP

object argument e.g. *gbèé !shḯ* [fall down] 'fall' and *yí !shḯ* [pass down] 'drop off'. When such

verbs are used causatively they result in ditransitive clauses, in which the first post-verbal NP is

the causee and the second is the inherent complement NP. This is the case in (11), where the

transitive middle verb is the ICV *gbèé !shḯ* [fall down] 'fall' and *ènḯtsṹ!mɔ̃́* 'his business' is the

causee. In (12), the causee is the third singular object pronoun, *lὲ*.

(11) òkó   *é=gbèé*   è=nḯtsṹ!mɔ̃́=ɔ̃̀   *shì̃*
      Oko   PERF=fall   3SG=work=DEF   down
      "Oko has caused his business to fail."

(12) *ì̃=yí*   lὲ   *shì̃*   yὲ   shḯ!ɛ́
      1SG=pass   3SG.OBJ   down   be.located   house
      "I dropped him/her off at home."

It will be shown later on that transitive verbs are normally causativized by periphrastic means. Middle transitives such as the ICVs seen above constitute an exception, an unsurprising one nevertheless, considering that the causees in such causative constructions are patientive and lack autonomy and control. *ènĩ́tsṹ!mɔ́* 'his business' is a classic example of such an argument because it is inanimate and even abstract in some sense. In (12), *lὲ* '3SG.OBJ' must refer to someone who voluntarily got into the car because they needed a ride. Therefore, although they have control, they have no means to exercise it, neither do they wish to.

Importantly, intransitive labile verbs in which the subject is an agent (what Shibatani and Pardeshi term "active intransitives") cannot be causativized lexically i.e. they do not have causative meaning when they occur in transitive clauses. Examples of such verbs are *shwέ* 'play', *fő* 'cry', *ŋmɔ̂* 'laugh', *wìê* 'speak', *nṹ* 'hear', *bí* 'ask', *bò* 'shout'. Example (13a) shows (active) intransitive use of *shwέ* 'play', (13b) shows its transitive use and (13c) is an attempt at making it function as a lexical causative. It is ungrammatical.

(13a) ã̀mɛ̃̀=ŋ̀-shwέ
       3PL=PROG-play
       "They are playing."

(13b) ã̀mɛ̃̀=ŋ̀-shwέ   lúdù
       3PL=PROG-play   ludo
       "They are playing ludo."

(13c)   *ằmẽ̀=ŋ̀-shwɛ́   lɛ̀
        3PL=PROG-play   3SG.OBJ
        "They are making him play."

5.2.2 Periphrastic causatives

The analytic or periphrastic causative mechanism can be used to causativize transitive as well as intransitive verbs. This involves a construction consisting of the verbal predicate, *hấ* 'give', and an object which constitutes a grammatical event nominalization denoting the caused event. This event nominalization denoting the caused event is optionally marked by the ubiquitous nominalizer, *nĩ́.* In most instances, however, *nî́* is omitted. The verb, *hấ* 'give' in the causative construction is a full verb and is capable of taking all verbal inflections. Its subject is the causer while the subject of the event nominalization is the causee. In the causative construction in (14), the agent heading the action chain - the causer, is *ò* '2SG' and the agent of the main action, the causee, is *mɔ̃̀kò* 'somebody'.

(14)   *ò=hấ*   mɔ̃̀=kò   *yà-jìɛ́*   shìká   àlóó
       2SG=give   person=INDEF   ITIV-remove money   or
       "You had someone go and take money. Or?"   [DT:5;20]

5.2.2.1 Semantics of periphrastic causatives

Causatives formed this way are "indirect causatives" or "directive causatives" because they are less direct than lexical causatives; the causing event and the caused event may be greatly separated in time and space and the causer does not need to have physical contact with the

causee. The term, "directive" reflects the fact that oftentimes the causer gives a verbal directive or command to the causee to carry out the desired action. In (14) for example, the causer may have asked someone to take money on one day while the withdrawal would have taken place several days later. In addition, both agents may have been thousands of miles apart. The causee in a periphrastic causative may or may not be animate and therefore may or may not possess any control. It may or may not be a willing agent of the caused event. Similarly, the causer may be animate or inanimate; it may even be an abstract entity. Consequently, the causer role is not restricted only to entities with autonomy and control over their actions. Basically, this causative construction has relatively few restrictions on the semantics of the participants in the causative event. The initiator of the entire chain - the initial agent - if it is human, may bring about the action of the second entity (which could be an agent or patient) by verbally or non-verbally requesting, persuading or ordering the causee, or by removing impediments to the execution of the action or giving explicit permission to an already willing causee to carry out the action.

A permissive reading is therefore very common in Gã causatives and is not uniquely marked. (15) is an example of a causative construction with permissive meaning.

(15) gbé!ké̋=ɛ̏   kpá   fàí   ààhṹ   nɪ̏   ȁmɛ̏=há̋   nɪ̋
      child=DEF   remove   hat   continuously   and   3PL=give   NMLZ

è=bà-hɪ̏̃   ȁmɛ̏=mȁsɛ̏í
3SG=VENT-live   3PL=side

"The child begged and begged and they allowed him to come and live with them."

In (16), the causer, ì- '1SG' brings about the caused event (the removal of the patient, lɛ̀

'3SG.OBJ') indirectly, perhaps by giving a verbal directive to the causers, who may or may not

have been willing. The identity of the causers in this case is considered irrelevant and is

therefore passivized.

(16) í̋=!há̋   á=yà-kpɔ́   lɛ̀
      1SG.PERF=give   3PL.IMPERS.PERF=ITIV-dislodge   3SG.OBJ
      "I have gotten her removed (from office)."   [MM:184]

A similar scenario is found in (17), where the children may have been willing or unwilling to

go. In both (16) and (17), the causers have some authority over the causees and it is this

authority that induces acquiescence in the causees.

(16) shí̋   Ellen   nɔ̋=!ɔ́   pàpá tɛ̀í   nɔ̋=!ɔ́   lɛ́=!ɛ́
      but   Ellen   NM=DEF   Papa Tei   NM=DEF   3SG.OBJ=TOP

í̋=nyɛ́ɛ́ɛ́ɛ́   má̋=!yá
1SG=able.NEG   1SG.FUT=go

"But as for Ellen's and Papa Tei's I couldn't attend them."

nò   hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   ì̋=há̋   gbé!ké̋-bí!í=ɛ̀   tɛ̀ɛ̀
that   sake=TOP   1SG=give   child-PL=DEF   go.PST

"So I had the children go."   [DF:99]

Causers may be inanimate, and such causative constructions are semantically different from those exemplified above, where action on the part of the causer induces compliance on the part of the causee. Rather, often in these causative constructions with inanimate causers, the mere existence of a particular state of affairs triggers a change of state in the causee. The triggering state of affairs is the causer, the affected entity is the causee (in this case a semantic patient), and the resulting state of the causee is the caused event. In the excerpt in (18), the causer or triggering event is the weakness in faith of Christians, as noted in the first line. In the second line, there is a negative causative construction which states that said weakness does not make us strong Christians. This same message is reiterated in the final line, where the speaker uses an affirmative causative. In both causative constructions, the triggering event is the state of being lacking in faith.

(18) á!kɛ́   wɔ̀=hé-mɔ̀-kè-yé-lí   mɔ̃́ɔ̃́ɔ̃́   shǐ   hèwɔ́ !lɛ́
      NMLZ   1PL=buy-NOM-and-eat-NOM   hold.NEG   down   sake   TOP
      "Because our faith is weak…"

      è=hɛ̃́ɛ̃́ɛ̃́   wɔ̀=kr̀ístòfónyò   fèé-!mɔ̃́   !lɛ́   *á-mà̰*
      3SG=give.NEG   1PL=christian   do-NOM   DEF   SBJV-be.situated

      shǐ   jògbã̰ŋ̀ŋ̀
      down   well
      "…it does not make our Christian life healthy"

      é=!hɛ̃́   *wɔ́=!gbédé*   yè   wɔ̀=nyɔ̃̀ŋmɔ̃̀ já-mɔ̃̀
      3SG.PERF-give   1PL.PERF=be.weak   be.located   1PL=God   worship-NOM

ml̃ĩ
inside
"It has made us weak in our fellowship with God."   [CH:266]

In (19), the trigger or causer is a women who has just suffered the loss of a child. The speaker

is the causee, *í-* '1SG' and the caused event is the remembering of old memories.

(19) yòó = !ɛ́   ní̋   è = bí   é = gbò   né̋!ɛ̋   ní̋
      woman = DEF   NMLZ   3SG = child   PERF = die   this   NMLZ

      wɔ̀ = tèé = !ɛ́   < INDEC >   ***è = há̋***   ***ĩ̀ = ká!í***
      1PL = go.PST = DEF   3SG = give   1SG = remember

      í̋ = bí-!í = !ɛ́   bè   ní̋   ã̀mɛ̃̀ = gbó
      1SG = child-PL = DEF   time   NMLZ   3PL = die
      "The woman whose child has died who we went to < INDEC >, she reminded me of
      when my children died." (Lit: "…she made me remember when my children died")
                                                                              [FH:161]

Causative constructions such as (18) and (19) above and (20) below are semantically

reminiscent of reason/result constructions. The causative construction may be employed to

express such meanings. This is done by first stating the reason in an independent clause. This

clause is followed up with a causative construction in which the causer or initial agent is an

anaphoric noun that is co-referential with the stated reason. The result is conveyed in the

caused event. The reason clause may or may not be linked to the causative clause by a

conjunction such as *hèwɔ̀* 'sake (of)/so'. In (20), the subject of the causative verb is the

demonstrative, *nò* 'that', which refers to the previous discourse regarding the expensive item.

The causee is the speaker and the caused event is the act of her posing a question.

(20) nằkằĩ ékòmé=!ɛ́ lɛ̀ è=yè-ɔ̀ mɔ̃̀ shìká
      that one=DEF TOP 3SG=eat-HAB person money

      hèwɔ́=!ɔ́ **nò** **hɑ̂** **ɪ́=!bɪ́-ɔ̀=ɔ́=!ɔ́**
      sake=DEF that give 1SG=ask-HAB=DEF=DEF
      "As for that other one, it is very expensive, so that's the reason why I'm asking." (Lit:
      "…that's what's making me ask.") [DT:53]

In (21), although the causer, Aku, is human, she does not in fact carry out any sort of action at

all to bring about the caused event, which is the addressee not visiting or coming around.

Indirectly, however, Aku is the cause of this absence because the addressee can only make one

trip each year and she chooses to visit Aku and not the speaker.

(21) ákú mòŋ̀ **é=!hɑ̃́** mòŋ́ ò=tsɔ́-kò bí!ɛ́
      Aku rather.FOC 3SG.PERF=give rather 2SG=pass-PERF.NEG here

      kẃráá mòŋ́ nɛ̃́ɛ̃̀ ê
      at.all rather this IJ
      "It is rather because of Aku that you have not passed by here at all." i.e. "It is rather
      Aku who has caused you to not pass here at all."

As (22) shows, this could be expressed in a non-causative by employing the reason noun, *hèwɔ̀*

'sake'.

(22) ákú   mòŋ   **hèwɔ**   mòŋ   ò=tsɔ́-kò   bí!ɛ́   kẃráá mòŋ
     Aku   rather sake   rather 2SG=pass-PERF.NEG   here   at.all rather

nɛ̂ɛ̀   ê
this   IJ

"It is rather because of Aku that you have not come here at all."

It is clear, then, that even among periphrastic causatives there are variations in the

extent of directness or involvement of the causer in motivating the caused event. To this end,

one may set up two broad semantic types. In the first type, the causer willingly motivates the

caused event verbally or non-verbally. In such causatives there is some kind of communicative

interaction between the causer and causee and both participants have awareness about the entire

causative event. This is seen in (14)-(17). This type will be termed volitional causation. In the

second type, the causer does not willingly instigate the causative event. Such a causer may

bring about a change in the causee without even being aware of this change. All causative

events with inanimate causers necessarily fall into this second type. This second type is known

as non-volitional causation. Examples are (18)-(22).

5.2.2.2 Syntax of periphrastic causatives

i) Marking of causee

One way in which periphrastic causatives are differentiated typologically is via the manner in

which the causee is marked i.e. whether it is marked as the object of the first clause or the

subject of the second clause. This question needs to be re-framed for Gã because in this work I

maintain that the causative construction is mono-clausal. The caused event or resulting event is

not coded by a clause but a grammatical event nominalization which functions as the

complement or object of the causative verb, *hã́* 'give' (See chapter 6 for a fuller discussion of

grammatical event nominalizations). The causee in the grammatical nominalization is marked

as a subject. As Gã has no case marking on full nouns, this is evident only in causatives where

the causee is expressed as a pronominal. The causee is always expressed as a subject pronoun

and never as an object pronoun. In (23a) for example, the causee is the subject pronominal, *e-*,

and not its object counterpart, *lɛ,* which would be ungrammatical (23b).

(23a) *è=hã́-!ã́*   nĩ́   *è=wɔlɔ-ɔ*
        3SG=give-HAB   NMLZ   3SG=cough-HAB
        "It makes him cough."

(23b) **è=hã́-!ã́*   nĩ́   *lɛ̀=wɔlɔ-ɔ*
        3SG=give-HAB   NMLZ   3SG.OBJ=cough-HAB
        "It makes him cough."

ii) Transitivity

In terms of transitivity of the verb, both intransitive and transitive verbs can be causativized.

Example (23a) above contains an intransitive verb, *wɔlɔ* 'cough' while (17) exemplifies

causativization of a transitive verb, *hǐ* 'live'. In (14), we see that it is also possible to

causativize a lexical causative verb - *kpɔ́* 'dislodge'.

iii) Tense, aspect, mood and polarity (TAMP)

When the causative verb is realis i.e. bare, perfect, habitual or progressive, the verb coding the

caused event must receive the same realis marking (19), (21), (23a) above and (24) below.

(24)   *òò=hǎ́*   í̋=yítsò   *ŋ̀-gbá*   !mí̋
       2SG.PROG=give   1SG=head   PROG-split   1SG.OBJ
       "You are giving me a headache."

If the causative verb is marked as irrealis i.e. future or negative, then the main event verb is

marked for the subjunctive.

(25)   kòjó   *bàá-hǎ́*   *ní̋*   *wɔ́=féè*
       Kojo   FUT-give   NMLZ   1PL.SBJV=do
       "Kojo will make us do (it)"/"Kojo will let us do (it)."

(26)   kòjó   *hǎ́ǎ́ǎ́*   *ní̋*   *wɔ́=féè*
       Kojo   give.NEG   NMLZ   1PL.SBJV=do
       "Kojo did not let us do (it)."/"Kojo will not let us do it."

5.2.2.3 Comparison with serial verb constructions

There is a striking similarity between causative constructions which do not have the

nominalizer, *ní̋,* and serial verb constructions (SVCs). This is because causative constructions,

just like many SVCs, contain two verbs, each with their own overt subject. The resemblance is

stronger when both verbs in the causative have identical pronominal subjects, as is required of

some SVCs. But causative constructions in Gã are not serial constructions, as noted in §4.7. An

SVC contains two or more verbs which act as one clause and code a single event. SVCs are

hence mono-clausal and have certain formal features that reflect this. Causative constructions in this work are also analysed as mono-clausal and mono-predicational, but with the predication being carried out by a single verb (the causative verb), and with a complex nominal argument functioning as object of this verb. All the same, the structural similarity between causatives and SVCs is undeniable. In what follows, I note other, more formal distinctions between these two constructions.

i) The most obvious difference between SVCs and causatives is that causatives have an optional element, the nominalizer, *nî,* whose presence or absence does not change the meaning of the causative. In other linguistic traditions, *nî* would be categorized as a complementizer conjoining two clauses. The crucial point here is that in an SVC, no such particle or linker is inserted between the various verb phrases. (27a) shows an SVC. The same SVC is seen in (27b) but with the nominalizer, *nî.* The presence of *nî* triggers subjunctive marking on the second verb and results in a different meaning - a purposive meaning.

(27a) ákú   !hé   mî̃   è = yè
      Aku   buy   1SG.OBJ   3SG = eat
      "Aku believed me."

(27b) ákú   !hé   !mî́   ***nî́***   é = !yé
      Aku   buy   1SG   NMLZ   3SG.SBJV = eat
      "Aku bought me so that she could eat."

ii) With the exception of the future and imperative categories, all SVCs must be concordantly

marked for the same tense, aspect, mood and polarity (TAMP) values. However, for causatives,

the causative verb and the event verbs may have differing polarities. The causative verb is the

only verb that can be negated. The main event verb is marked for the subjunctive. For example,

line 2 of (18), repeated below as (28a) has a negative causative verb, *hááá* 'give.NEG' but an

affirmative main verb, *mà̀ shì̀*[be.situated down] 'stand firm'.

(28a) *è=hááá*   wɔ̀=kr̀ístòfónyò   fèé-!mɔ́=!ɔ́   *á-mà̀*
        3SG-give.NEG   1PL=christian   do-NOM=DEF   SBJV-be.situated

       shì̀   jògbã̀ŋ̀ŋ̀
       down   well
       "It has not made our Christian life healthy."   [CH:267]

Indeed, it is ungrammatical for both the causative verb and the event verb to be negated:

(28b) *kòjó   *hááá*   *í=wɔ́ɔ́ɔ̂*
       Kojo   give.NEG   1SG=sleep.NEG
       "Kojo doesn't make me not sleep."

The opposite scenario obtains in SVCs. The two verbs in the series must have the same polarity

(29a); contradictory polarities result in ungrammaticality (29b).

(29a) *é=!jóóó*   fòì   *è=bótééé*   fíɔ̀=ɔ̀   mĩ̀ĩ̀ŋ̀
       3SG=dance.NEG   race   3SG=enter.NEG   hole=DEF   inside
       "He didn't run and enter the hole."

(29b) *è = !jóóó   fòì   é = bó!té   flɔ̀ = ɔ̀   mĩ̀ŋ
       3SG = dance race   3SG.SBJV = enter hole = DEF inside
       "He did not run to enter the hole."

The same pattern of grammaticality is seen with the negative future. SVCs require concordant

marking of the negative future suffix, -ŋ on all verbs but this is banned in causatives.

SVCs:
(30a) è = hé-ŋ̀   mĩ̀   è = yé-!ŋ́
       3SG = buy-NEG.FUT   1SG.OBJ   3SG = eat-NEG.FUT
       "S/he will not believe me."

(30b) *è = hé-ŋ̀   mĩ̀   è = !yé
       3SG = buy-NEG.FUT   1SG.OBJ   3SG.SBJV = eat
       "S/he will not believe me."

Causatives:
(31a) è = hǎ́-!ŋ́   ó = !yá
       3SG = give-NEG.FUT   2SG.SBJV = go
       "S/he will not let you go."

(31b) *è = hǎ́-!ŋ́   ó = !yá-!ŋ́
       3SG = give-NEG.FUT   2SG = go-NEG.FUT
       "S/he will not let you go."

iii) Another area where SVCs and periphrastic causatives differ is adverbial modification. In

one type of SVC known as integrated SVCs, a time adverb cannot occur between the first and

second verb. It may only occur at the beginning or end of the sentence.

(32a) nyɛ̃́ = !ɛ̃́   ákú   !tsí   mĩ̀   è = gbèé   !shɩ̃́
       yesterday = TOP   Aku   push 1SG.OBJ 3SG = fall   ground
       "Yesterday, Aku pushed me to the ground."

(32b) ákú   !tsí   mĩ̀   è=gbèé   !shí   *nyɛ́=!ɛ́*
       Aku   push   1SG.OBJ   3SG=fall   ground   yesterday=TOP
       "Aku pushed me to the ground yesterday."

(32c) *ákú   !tsí   mĩ̀   *nyɛ́=!ɛ́*   è=gbèé   !shí
       Aku   push   1SG.OBJ   yesterday=TOP   3SG=fall   ground
       "Aku pushed me yesterday to the ground."

With periphrastic causatives however, in addition to the time adverb being able to occur at the

beginning (33a) and end (33b) of the clause, it can also occur between *hɛ́́* 'give' and the event

verb (33c).

(33a) *nyɛ́=!ɛ́*   mɛ́ã̀   hɛ́   è=tèè   skûl
       yesterday=TOP   mother   make   3SG=go.PST school
       "Yesterday, mother made him go to school."

(33b) mɛ́ã̀   hɛ́   è=tèè   skûl   *nyɛ́=!ɛ́*
       mother   make   3SG=go.PST school   yesterday=TOP
       "Mother made him go to school yesterday."

(33c) mɛ́ã̀   hɛ́   *nyɛ́=!ɛ́*   è=tèè   skûl
       mother   make   yesterday=TOP   3SG=go.PST school
       "Mother made him go to school yesterday."

iv) The final difference between SVCs and *hã*-causatives is that in SVCs there is only one

syntactic subject and it is marked accordingly on all the verbs in the series. This is irrespective

of whether there are actually different semantic subjects. If the subject of the first verb in an

SVC is a full NP, then the subjects of subsequent verbs must be pronouns coreferential with the

initial NP subject. If the initial subject is a pronoun, then subsequent subjects must be the same

pronoun. This is not the case with causatives, where the subject of *hǎ* 'give' (the causer) and

the subject of the main event verb (the causee) must have different referents and must be coded

as such in the syntax. So in (34), the causer and causee have two different referents,

represented by two different pronouns, *e-* '3SG' and *ĩ-* '1SG' respectively.

(34) kèké=!έ   mĩ̀   hṹ   é=!hǎ   ĩ́=!ká!í   bè
      then=TOP   1SG   too   3SG.PERF=give   1SG.PERF=remember   time

      nĩ́   óyóó=mɛ̃̀ĩ̀   gbó=!έ
      NMLZ   Oyo=ASSOC.PL   die=DEF
      "Then me too, it reminds me of when Oyo and company died."   [FH:172]

But in the SVC in (35), the subjects must be the same (i.e. *ĩ-* '1SG') syntactically, even though

the logical subject of *gbèé* 'fall' is actually the third singular person.

(35) ĩ̀=tsí   lè   ĩ̀=gbèé   !shĩ́
      1SG=push   3SG.OBJ   1SG=fall   down
      "I pushed him to the ground."

5.3 Active/middle voice

This voice opposition is concerned with the development stage of an action. According to

Shibatani (2006:231), the conceptual basis for the active/middle opposition is whether the

action extends beyond the agent's personal sphere and affects another entity (active) or whether

the effects of the action are confined to the agent's personal sphere (middle). Shibatani's

account allows lexical middles, morphological middles and periphrastic middles. Lexical

middles are essentially intransitive verbs such as *stand, walk, sit, go* which require only one

participant - the agent. With these, the agent alone executes the action and it is confined to his

own person; it affects no other entity. Shibatani notes that morphological middles tend to be

used of actions that one normally applies on oneself but which can also be applied to others.

These are usually grooming or body care actions such as *shave, bathe, comb one's hair.*

Periphrastic middles are used to express actions that one typically directs at others but which

one is directing at oneself e.g. *punch, look, hate.* Such middles usually take the form of

reflexive pronouns. The prominence of marking corresponds to the "naturalness" of the

situation (Shibatani 2006:325). Lexical intransitives are the most natural and so receive no

marking. Grooming or body care actions being carried out on others is less natural but not

counter-normative so it receives some marking, while the most prominent means - the

periphrastic means - is reserved for the least natural actions of hitting oneself, kicking oneself

etc.

Like many languages, Gã has lexical middles. These are intransitive verbs such as *yà*

'go', *lá* 'sing', *wɔ̀* 'sleep' *jù* 'bathe' and *há!kú* 'yawn'. But Gã also has lexical middles which

happen to be transitive. These are inherent complement verbs (ICVs) which express single-

participant actions e.g. *jò fòì* [dance race] 'run', *tá !shī́* [sit down] 'sit', *yí !shī́* [pass down]

'descend' and *dằmɔ̃̀ shī̀* [stand down] 'stand'. These verbs have nominal objects built into them.

These objects, however, are not interpreted as additional event participants to whom the actions are directed to.

Gã has no morphological middles but has a periphrastic form that is used for reflexives and reciprocals. A reflexive construction is a type of middle construction in which the object of a sentence refers back to the subject. Kemmer (1994:207) writes that the use of a reflexive marker signals the unusual situation where the initiator and endpoint of an activity are the same entity. Kemmer's views on the reflexive differ from Shibatani's in that she does not consider the reflexive to be a middle category. Rather, the reflexive is related to the middle in so far as one and only one entity carries out and is affected by the action. The semantic phenomenon that separates middles from reflexives is termed by Kemmer (1993:66) as "relative distinguishability of participants". Reflexives have a higher relative distinguishability of participants than middles do. By this, Kemmer means that although in reflexive events, the initiator and endpoint are coreferential, there is still some maintenance of a distinction between them. That is, in a reflexive event, the initiator and the endpoint are construed as separate entities, even though they are marked as coreferential. This contrasts with middle situations, where the initiator and endpoint are viewed as one, indistinguishable and holistic entity.

The reflexive form in Gã is a possessive NP in which the possessor is a pronoun referring to the subject of the clause and the possessum is the noun, *hè* 'body, self'. This

possessive NP as a unit functions as a reflexive pronoun and hence a middle marker. Schladt

(2000:112) notes that the word for 'body' is a very common source for reflexive marking in

African languages. In neighbouring Akan, it is also the word for 'body' that has

grammaticalized as a reflexive marker. Examples (36)-(39) illustrate the use of reflexive

pronouns to index that an action affects its agent.

(36) bὲ   wɔ̀=ŋ̀-bí   **wɔ̀=ɦὲ**   á!kέ   nɑ̃́mɔ̃̀ nɔ̃̀
      so   1PL=PROG-ask   1PL-body   NMLZ   who   top

      wɔ̀=hé-ɔ̀   wɔ̀=yὲ-ɔ̀
      1PL=buy-HAB   1PL=eat-HAB
      So we are asking ourselves that, "Who do we trust?"   [CH:124]

(37) sɔ́lé-mɔ̃́   ó=hɑ̃́   **ó=!ɦέ**
      pray-IMP   2SG.SBJ=give   2SG=body
      "Pray for yourself." [CH:132]

(38) ɔ̀kó   shɑ̃́   **è=ɦὲ**   m̀fɔ̀nírí
      Oko   snatch 3SG=body   photo
      "Oko took a picture of himself."

(39) nɑ̃́   **è=kὲ**   **è=ɦὲ**   **yà-wɔ̀**   mῐ̃́ŋ=!ɛ̃́   àsòmòɑ̃́!ŋ́
      when   3SG=take   3SG=body   ITIV-put   inside=DEF   unbeknownst
      àdòwá
      antelope
      "When he ventured inside it, it turned out to be an antelope." (Lit: "When he put
      himself inside it…") [BOR:47]

The antecedent of the reflexive NP cannot occur outside of the grammatical unit containing the reflexive. In (40), the reflexive cannot refer to Oko because it is outside of the event nominalization containing the reflexive. It can only refer to Ama.

(40) òkó_i   lè   nɪ̃́   ã́!mã́_j   ŋ̀-jɛ́   è_{*i/j}＝hè
     Oko   know   NMLZ   Ama   PROG-insult   3SG＝body
     "Oko thought that Ama was insulting herself."
     *"Oko thought that Ama was insulting him."

The PRON＋*hè* reflexive form is quite pervasive in the lexicon and discourse of the language. It occurs as a complement in several ICVs, where it signals the middle semantics of those verbs. These are considered special uses of the reflexive pronoun, different from those exemplified above because the noun, *hè* 'body' is part of the lexical entry for that word. When it is deployed in discourse it must necessarily have a pronominal possessor. These middles usually express emotion and non-translational motion . Examples are:

(41)   *tsɔ̃́ !hé*   [pass body]   'turn around'

       fò hè   [cut body]   'turn around halfway'

       sɯ̀̃ hè   [shrink body]   'draw (oneself) inwards, draw away'

       shá !hé   [snatch body]   'hurry'

       shwá !hé   [blame body]   'regret'

       jɔ̀ɔ́ !hé   [rest body]   'rest'

       gbɔ́jɔ̀ hè   [relax body]   'relax'

       yè hè   [eat body]   'be free'

       nyã̃́ !hé   [rejoice body]   'rejoice'

mĩĩ shè hè   [*mĩĩ²²* reach body]   'be happy'

nàà kpὲ hè   [mouth sew body]   'be surprised'

(42)   bé   mìŋ   ní   **ã̀mὲ̃=tsɔ̃́-ɔ̃̀**   **ã̀mὲ̃=hè**   é!kóŋ́ŋ́   ã̀mὲ̃--

    time   inside   NMLZ   3PL=turn-HAB   3PL=body   again   3PL--

    ã̀mὲ̃=tá-à   tsó=ὲ   nɔ̃̀   òjògbàŋ=!á

    3PL=sit-HAB   tree=DEF   top   well=DEF

    "By the time they turned around again and they-- they sat properly on the log…"

    [BOR:64]

(43)   hὲwɔ́=!ɔ́   tɔ́=ɔ̀   jwà   hὲwɔ́=!ɔ́   **è=yὲ**   **è=hè**

    sake=TOP   bottle=DEF   break   sake=TOP   3SG=eat   3SG=body

    "So the bottle broke, so he was free."   [PAT:55]

(44)   è=tã̀mɔ̃̀   sὲ̃í   ní   **wɔ̀=gbɔ́jɔ̀-ɔ̀**   **wɔ̀=hè**   ní

    3SG=be.like   chair   NMLZ   1PL=relax-HAB   1PL-body   NMLZ

    wɔ̀=tá-à   nɔ̃̀

    1PL=sit-HAB   top

    "He is like the chair that we sit comfortably on."

(45)   è=mí!í   **é-shὲ**   **è=hè**

    3SG=?   PERF-reach   3SG=body

    "He is happy."   [PAT:203]

The canonical reflexive middles in (36)-(39) differ from the non-reflexive middles in (41)-(45),

in that while the reflexive forms in the former may be replaced by other nouns, those in the

---

[22] It is difficult to ascertain the meaning of this word because it does not occur outside this ICV.

latter cannot. For example, the reflexive pronouns in (38) and (39) above can be replaced by

other nouns, resulting in well-formed, meaningful sentences:

(46) sɔ́lé-mɔ̃́   ó=hɑ̃́   ***ákú***
      pray-IMP   2SG.SBJV=give   Aku
      "Pray for Aku."

(47)   òkó   shɑ̃́   ***lὲ***   m̀fònírí
      Oko   snatch   3SG.OBJ   photo
      "Oko took a picture of him."

But replacing the reflexive form in (43) and (44) with other nouns results in nonsense meanings

(48), (49). This is because the reflexive NP is an inherent object of the verb and contributes

semantically to the interpretation of the verb.

(48) *hὲwɔ́=!ɔ́   tɔ́=ɔ̀   jwà   hὲwɔ́=!ɔ́   ***è=yὲ***   ***ákú***
      sake=TOP   botlle=DEF   break   sake=TOP   3SG=eat   Aku
      "So the bottle broke, so he ate Aku."

(49) *è=tɑ̃̀mɔ̃̀   sὲ̃í   nɑ̃́   ***wɔ̀=gbɔ́jɔ̀-ɔ̀***   ***lὲ***   nɑ̃́
      3SG=be.like   chair   NMLZ   1PL=relax-HAB   3SG.OBJ   NMLZ

      wɔ̀=tá-à   nɔ̃̀
      1PL=sit-HAB   top
      "He is like the chair that we relax him/it and we sit on."

My claim, following Shibatani is that, conceptually, the two kinds of middles are the same.

They both indicate actions whose effects are confined to the agent. With the reflexive middles,

the action could potentially affect another entity but use of the reflexive pronoun indicates that

it only affects the initiator of the action. With the non-reflexive middle, there is no possibility of another entity to which the action could be directed at. Such actions necessarily involve just the initiator. Syntactically, both types of middles are identified by the co-referentiality between the agent or initiator of the action and the pronominal possessor of the *hè*-NP. Kemmer (1993), on the other hand, maintains that non-translational motion events and grooming events are middles, but what she terms 'direct reflexives', involving actions that could be carried out on others but are directed towards oneself, are not middles. They are a separate category known as reflexives that are characterized by a higher degree of distinguishability of participants.

Apart from the middle situations discussed above, there are certain specific situation types which also employ a possessive NP with *hè* 'body' as the possessum. These may resemble middle situations at first glance but one must be careful to ascertain definitively that the possessor of *hè* 'body' is coreferential with the subject of the clause before ascribing it middle voice status. The ambiguity only exists when the subject is third person. For example, in (50) and (51), the third singular pronoun possessor of *hè* 'body' could refer to the subject Kojo, in which case it would be a reflexive middle, or it could refer to another person, in which case it would be an ordinary active sentence.

(50)   kòjó   ŋ̀-sàá   *è=hè*
          Kojo   PROG-dress   3SG=body
          Middle: "Kojo is getting dressed."
          Active: "Kojo is getting him/her dressed."

(51)   kòjó   yàá-jù   *è=hè*
          Kojo   PROS-bathe   3SG=body
          Middle: "Kojo is going to bathe."
          Active: "Kojo is going to bathe him/her."

In these constructions, *hè* 'body' is not as grammaticalized as it is in reflexive constructions; it

retains its semantics of referring to the body (human or animal) or by semantic extension, the

outer covering of an object, as the following examples show.

(52)   mɪ́ɪ̃́=sáá   lòó=ɛ̀   hè
          1SG.PROG=dress   fish=DEF   body
          "I'm cleaning the fish."

(53)   èè=fɔ́   àtàlé-ì=ɛ̀   à=hè
          3SG.PROG=wash   clothing-PL=DEF   PERT=body
          "S/he is washing the clothes."

PRON+*hè* in such instances does not function anaphorically to refer to the subject i.e. it is not

a reflexive pronoun like English *yourself, himself* etc. As such, it can occur as the subject of a

sentence (54), (55).

(54)   è=hè   é-wò   mɪ́ɪ̃́!jɪ́
          3SG=body   PERF-put   dirt
          "She/he/It is dirty."

(55) è＝hè   yὲ   fέó
      3SG＝body   have   beauty
      "S/he is beautiful."

Reciprocals

Ambiguity between a reflexive and reciprocal reading is possible in middle constructions when

the subject is plural. This is a possibility for reflexive middles only; it does not apply to non-

reflexive middles. Reciprocals express situations involving two entities each carrying out an

action that affects the other entity. Since the effects of the action do not remain in the agents'

personal domains, reciprocals do not count as middles although they utilize the middle form,

PRON＋*hè*. Examples of reciprocal constructions are:

(56) yèí＝ὲ   jέ   *ằmέ̃＝hè*
      women＝DEF   insult   3PL＝body
      "The women insulted each other."
      "The women insulted themselves."

(57) nyέ̃＝bàá-pílá   *nyέ̃＝hè*
      2PL＝FUT-hurt   2PL＝body
      "You will hurt each other."
      "You will hurt yourselves."

Disambiguation may be achieved by deploying the emphatic noun *díὲ̃ŋtsὲ* to which is prefixed

an object pronoun coreferential with the subject (to give *mìdíὲ̃ŋtsὲ, lèdíὲ̃ŋtsὲ, ằmὲ̀díὲ̃ŋtsὲ* etc.)

This emphatic form functions as a modifier to the *hè*-NP and gives it a reflexive-only

interpretation (58).

(58) yèí = ɛ̀   jɛ́   *ằmɛ̃̀ = díèŋtsɛ̀*   ằmɛ̃̀ = hè
      women = DEF   insult 3PL = EMPH   3PL = body
      "The women insulted themselves."
      *"The women insulted each other."

5.4 Antipassive voice

This voice category, like the middle, relates to the development stage of an action. Particularly,

it pertains to whether or not there is a patient which is fully affected by the action. Shibatani

(2006:239) poses the inquiry in this fashion:

"Does the action develop to its full extent and achieve its intended effect on the patient?"
Yes: ergative (/active)
No: antipassive

It is important to add that in addition to whether or not the patient is fully affected, the

antipassive has as one of its main pragmatic functions, the demotion or suppression of the

patient (Givón 2001b:168). Givón notes that it is the non-topicality of the patient that triggers

antipassivization. Markers of non-topicality include plurality, indefiniteness, non-referentiality,

low-affectedness and habitualness among others (Givón 2001b:169).

Cooreman (1994:51) aims at a unifying statement regarding the various semantic and

functional facets of antipassivization. She writes that the general function of antipassives is to

indicate a certain degree of difficulty with which the effect of the action of A(gent) on O(bject)

is recognized. She also notes that use of the antipassive corresponds to low identifiability of the

patient and indicates a preoccupation more with the activity the agent is engaged in or the state

in which the agent is, than with the effect of the action on a patient. Cooreman's definition of

antipassive constructions, however, is structural and has the expected effect of excluding

structures that do not meet the formal criteria for antipassives although they carry out the same

functions. She counts as antipassives only those constructions in ergative languages in which

the agent of a transitive clause is marked absolute and the object (if there is one), is marked

as something else.

Adopting Givón (2001b) and Shibatani's (2006) functional approaches, one arrives at a

clause type in Gã that fulfils the functions of antipassivization. These clauses downgrade the

importance of the patient by not mentioning it uniquely. Instead, the patient object is the

generic noun *nǐ!ǐ* 'things' (for inanimate patients) or *mɔ̀* 'person' (for human patients).

Examples are:

(59) nò   m̀ŋ̀=!ɛ̃́   á=yè   ***nǐ!ǐ=!ɛ̃́***   fɛ̃́ɛ̃́
      that   inside=TOP   3PL.IMPERS.PERF=eat   thing=DEF   all

      á=tã̀
      3PL.IMPERS.PERF=be.finished
      "By that time, all the food has been eaten up."   [YM:147]

(60) wɔ́   bé   nǐ   ò=bàá-!bá=!á   wɔ̀=jwélé   !nɔ̃́
      tomorrow   time   NMLZ   2SG=FUT-come=DEF   1PL=lie   top

ní   wɔ̀=ŋ̀-hòó   ***nɪ́!ɪ́***

NMLZ   1PL=PROG-cook   thing

"By the time you come tomorrow, we'll be busily cooking."   [YM:292]

(61)   èè=kɛ̀ɛ́   !wɔ́   á!kɛ́   wɔ̀=núŋ̀!tsɔ́ yésù kr̀ístò kɛ̀

        3SG.PROG=tell   1PL   NMLZ   1PL=lord   Jesus Christ take

        è=kàsé-lɔ̀-í=è   nyĩ̀ɛ̃   nì̃   è=tsɔ̀ɔ́   ã̀mɛ̃̀   ***nɪ́!ɪ́***

        3SG=learn-NOM-PL=DEF   walk and   3SG=teach 3PL   thing

        "It is telling us that our lord Jesus Christ fraternized with his students (disciples) and he

        taught them."   [CH:296]

(62)   mɪ̃́ɪ̃́=ká!né   ***nɪ́!ɪ́***

        1SG.PROG=read   thing

        "I am reading."

(63)   nì̃   ã̀mɛ̃̀=yà-nã̀   nɛ̃̀kɛ̃́ kòòlò-ì   bíbí!í bíbí!í nɪ́

        and   3PL=ITIV-see   this   animal-PL   small small NMLZ

        tsɛ̃́-ɔ̃̀   ***mɔ̀̃***

        sting-HAB   person

        "And they went and saw these small small animals that sting."   [MAV:46]

(64)   ò=kwɛ́-!ɔ́   ***mɔ̀̃***   ê

        2SG=look-HAB   person IJ

        "You stare!"

In these examples, the referents of *nɪ́!ɪ́* 'thing' and *mɔ̀̃* 'person' are not identifiable. They refer

broadly to entitites that can be cooked, things that can be taught and read, and whoever can be

stung or stared at. The focus of the message is thus on the activity rather than on the person or

thing affected by the activity. One reason why these generic noun objects are useful in the

grammar of Gã is that without them i.e. with the object slot empty, the interpretation would be

that the object is a third singular inanimate pronoun whose referent is recoverable from the

discourse. This is because third singular inanimate pronouns are realized as zero. Such a

construction will not be an antipassive but an active sentence, as in (65). (65) has a specific

object referent which the speaker assumes is known by the addressee.

(65)   mĩ́ĩ̀=ká̃!né
      1SG.PROG=read
      "I am reading (it)."

The use of these generic nouns as objects shows that Gã is a highly transitive language that is

hostile to valency-decreasing mechanisms.

5.5 Benefactive and applicative voice

The nature of the termination phase of an action brings with it a couple of possibilities, such as

whether the action culminates in the patient only or whether it extends beyond the patient and

involves other participants. This forms the conceptual basis of the benefactive and applicative

(comitative, instrumental, locative) voice categories. The parameter for making this

determination is embodied in the following question:

*Does the action develop further than its normal course such that an entity other than the direct
event participants becomes a new terminal point registering an effect of the action?*

No: active/middle

Yes: benefactive/malefactive/applicative   (Shibatani 2006:240)

What follows is a very brief illustration of the formal means of expressing benefactives and applicatives in Gã. For a more detailed discussion, see §4.3.1.1. There are two kinds of benefactive constructions in Gã. In the first kind, the benefit is direct and tangible, in that the agent transfers some tangible entity from his possession to the possession of the beneficiary. This is expressed by ditransitive constructions, where the beneficiary is the immediate post-verbal object of *hã́* 'give' (66).

(66)   kòjó   !hã́   ***mì̀***   shìká
        Kojo   give   1SG.OBJ   money
        "Kojo gave me money."

(66) above may also be expressed as an SVC with initial verb, *kɛ,* as in (67)*.*

(67)   kòjó   kὲ   shìká=à   hã́   ***!mí́***
        Kojo   take   money=DEF give   1SG.OBJ
        "Kojo gave me the money."

In the second kind of benefactive construction, there is no transfer but rather an agent carries out an action for the benefit of another. This is coded by an SVC where the benefitting event is coded by the initial verb and the beneficiary is coded as the object of the non-initial verb, *hã́* 'give'. This is seen in (68), where the speaker implores the addressee to raise her voice or speak louder for their benefit i.e. so they can hear her better.

(68)   mã́ã̀   ófáìnɛ̃́ nĩ́   ó=wó   ó=gbèè   nɔ̃̀
        mother please NMLZ   2SG.SBJV=lift   2SG=voice   top

ó=hɛ́ǽ !wɔ́ fí!óó
2SG.SBJV=give 1PL little
"Mother, can you please raise your voice a little for us?" [OYO:19]

Comitatives and instrumentals have a very close semantic and syntactic relationship so

it is no surprise that they both occur in the same structural type of SVC. In (69), the comitative

NP is *Oko* and in (70), the instrumental NP is *té* 'stone'.

(69) ì̃=kɛ̀ **òkó** tèè sɔ̀lè-mɔ̃̀
1SG=take Oko go.PST pray-NOM
"I went to church with Oko."

(70) ì̃=kɛ̀ **tɛ́** tsòò ŋmɛ́
1SG=take stone break palm.kernel
"I broke a palm kernel with a stone."

They may also be expressed as oblique objects of the preposition, *kɛ,* though this is not always

possible with the comitative.

(71) ʔì̃=tèè sɔ̀lè-mɔ̃̀ kɛ̀ **kòjó**
1SG=go.PST pray-NOM with Kojo
"I went to church with Kojo."

(72) ì̃=tsòò ŋmɛ́ kɛ̀ **tɛ́**
1SG=break palm.kernel with stone
"I broke a palm kernel with a stone."

Locative NPs are expressed in prepositional phrase adjuncts, as complements of the

preposition, *yɛ̀.* In (73) the locative NP is *òsú gɔ́ɔ̀ mĩ̀ĩ̀* 'in the Osu cemetary'.

(73) òblá-yòò   kò   tsɛ́   m�'ì̃   yɛ̀   *òsú*   *gɔ́ɔ̀*
      life-female   INDEF   call   me   be.located   Osu   cemetery

mìĩ̀ŋ

inside

"A woman called out to me in the Osu cemetary." [DF:118]

5.6 Summary

This chapter has surveyed the various voice categories found in Gã with the understanding that

major voice categories are rooted in the human conceptualization of the evolution of an action.

As such, all languages will display these major voice oppositions albeit via different structural

means. It has been shown that voice expressions in Gã often do not involve a change in valency

or a realignment of grammatical relations. In §5.1 it was shown that Gã employs a non-

promotional impersonal passive construction. The semantic and syntactic scope of causatives

was discussed in §5.2. Causatives are expressed by a construction involving the causative verb,

hã́ 'give' and a grammatical event nominalization which functions as its object. The middle

voice was the subject of §5.3 and in Gã it is expressed lexically, by intransitive verbs and some

transitive verbs (all ICVs), as well as periphrastically by the PRON + *he* possessive NP. This

NP is primarily used to mark reflexive middles and reciprocals but may also be employed for

non-reflexive middles. Antipassives were shown in §5.4 to be conveyed by fully transitive

clauses with a generic noun (*nɪ́!ɪ́*'thing' or *mɔ̀*'person') in object position. Benefactives and

applicatives were the topic of §5.5.

Chapter 6: Lexical and Grammatical nominalization

6.0 Introduction

This chapter will take an in-depth look at nominalizations in Gã, as well as other larger grammatical units such as adverbials and conditionals. According to Comrie and Thompson (2007:334), nominalization essentially means "turning something into a noun". This definition, however, is sufficient as a characterization of lexical nominalizations alone. In lexical nominalization, a word belonging to another word class (usually adjective or verb) is used nominally. The adjective or verb may be used nominally without any morphological adjustment to the root i.e. zero derivation (e.g. *walk* in *I went for a walk*), but in most instances, there is an overt modification of form via affixation, vowel alternation or some other structural means e.g. *walker*. Lexical nominalizations of verbs and adjectives in Gã were touched on briefly in §2.4.1.5 and §2.4.2.2, so the discussion here will constitute an expansion on that discussion. It will be shown that Gã accomplishes lexical nominalization mainly by deploying a number of nominalizing prefixes and suffixes. It may also use whole sentences as nouns without any formal nominal marking.

The main focus of this chapter, however, will be grammatical nominalizations. Givón (2001b:24) defines grammatical nominalizations as "the process via which a finite verbal

clause - either a complete clause or a subject-less verb phrase - is converted into a noun phrase." It will be shown that this definition is too narrow to encompass all the structures in Gã that have a nominalization function. The perspective taken here is radically different from that accepted widely by linguists. It is a view most ardently propounded by Shibatani (2009b) and Shibatani and bin Makhashen (2009). Here, constructions are classified as nominalizations based on what function they carry out in the discourse. Does a particular construction type carry out functions normally associated with nominals, such as denotation, reference and modification, in which case they would be nominalizations? Does it predicate only, making it a clause? Or does it execute an illocutionary function, such as making an assertion or giving a command, in which case it would be a sentence? After establishing that a construction does indeed meet the functional threshold for nominals, structural evidence, if it is available, is then adduced to buttress the analysis. The view of nominalization adopted here is holistic and inclusive and is amenable to cross-linguistic application due to its under-reliance on structural evidence. As we shall see later in the chapter, the approach leads to the conclusion that so-called relative clauses, complement clauses and several adverbial clauses are all actually nominalizations.

6.1 Lexical nominalizations

As quoted above from Comrie and Thompson, lexical nominalization involves turning a non-

noun into a noun. Even this definition fails in English where the so-called agentive nominalizer

–er applies to nouns, as in *villager, New Yorker, 49ers,* etc. In Gã, as well, a noun such as

'àmálé' can be made into an agentive noun, *amálé!lɔ* 'liar'. In any case, the newly-minted

noun, like non-derived nouns, is hence capable of denotation of things and thing-like entities. In

Gã, adjectives, verbs (including ICVs and SVCs) and verb phrases containing an object can all

be nominalized. This is done by prefixation, suffixation or vowel lengthening, depending on

word class and syllable length. In addition, for verbs, the tone on the verb and whether it is a

stative (property) verb or active verb also dictate the type of morphological nominalization they

can undergo. The nominalization may denote an action or state (action/state nominalization) or

it could denote an entity that carries out an action or exhibits a particular property (agent

nominalization or argument nominalization). See §2.4.1.5.

6.1.1 Action/state nominalization

Monosyllabic, low-toned active verbs are nominalized by lengthening the final vowel.

Example:

(1) *mũ̀*   'breathe'   →   *mũ̀ũ̀*   'breathing'

     yì   'beat'   →   *yìì*   'beating'

     shã̀   'burn'   →   *shã̀ã̀*   'burning'

     dɔ̀   'bend'   →   *dɔ̀ɔ̀*   'bending'

wò   'dress'   →   *wòò*   'dressing'

Monosyllabic, high-toned active verbs as well as multisyllabic active verbs are nominalized

using the suffix *-mɔ̄.* Example:

(2)   *wó*   'lift'   →   *wó!mɔ́*   'lifting'

   tsɨ̋   'send on errand'   →   *tsɨ̋!mɔ́*   'sending sb. on an errand'

   tá̋   'narrate'   →   *tá̋!mɔ́*   'narration'

   ŋá̋   'close'   →   *ŋá̋!mɔ́*   'closing'

   gbélé   'open'   →   *gbélé!mɔ́*   'opening'

   kèɛ̂   'tell'   →   *kèɛ́!mɔ́*   'telling'

   tsá!ké   'change'   →   *tsákèmɔ̀*   'changing, change (n.)'

   sùmɔ̀   'like, love'   →   *sùɔ̀mɔ̀*[23]   'love (n.)'

The situation with property verbs is slightly different, as first discussed in §2.4.1.5. Monosyllabic,

low-toned property verbs are nominalized via suffixation with *-lɛ:*

(3)   *dà*   'be big'   →   *dàlè*   'size'

   kὲ   'be tall'   →   *kὲlè*   'height'

   dɔ̀   'be hot'   →   *dɔ̀lè*   'temperature'

   shwì   'gain weight   →   *shwìlè*   'being fat, obesity'

   bɔ̀   'be muscular'   →   *bɔ̀lè*   'being muscular'

---

[23] In this example, there is deletion of the second consonant of *sùmɔ̀* 'like, love' after it is nominalized. *sùɔ̀mɔ̀*
→ *sùɔ̀mɔ̀*

Multisyllabic and high-tone monosyllabic property verbs are nominalized with the suffix *-mɔ̀,*

as is the case with active verbs of the same phonological shape. Examples of such

nominalizations are:

(4)　*lú*　'be foolish'　→　*lú!mɔ́*　'foolishness'
　　ŋɔ̀ɔ́　'be sweet'　→　*ŋɔ̀ɔ́!mɔ́*　'sweetness'
　　tɔ̀tɔ́　'be entangled'　→　*tɔ̀tɔ́!mɔ́*　'being entangled'

There are some exceptions to these rules. For example, the active verbs, *nɔ̀* 'fight' and *nṳ̀*

'drink' are nominalized as *nɔ̀mɔ̀* 'fight (n.)' and *nṳ̀mɔ̀* respectively, not **nɔ̀ɔ̀* and **nṳ̀ṳ̀* as the

rules spell out. The nominal of *gbó* 'die' is *gbé!lé* 'death', not **gbó!mɔ́.* There are also three

nominalizing affixes, *-li, -i* and *a-,* that are unproductive in the language. Indeed, they each

occur uniquely with one verb; *-li* occurs with only *yè* 'eat' to form the nominal *yé!lí* 'eating'; *-i*

occurs with just *bé* 'quarrel (v.)' to give the noun *bé!í* 'quarrel (n.)' and the nominalizing

prefix, *a-* occurs with *mɑ̃́lé* 'lie (v.)' to give the noun, *àmɑ̃́lé* 'lie (n.)'.

6.1.2 Agentive/argument nominalization

Agentive nominalizations are derived from verbs, adjectives or existing nouns. They denote an

entity that carries out the action described by the active verb from which it is derived, or an

entity that exhibits an attribute described by the adjective from which it is derived, or an entity

that is in some way intimately associated with the action or quality denoted by a noun. *-lɔ* is the

suffix of choice for the nominalization of active verbs and some nouns. Other nouns are

nominalized by the less productive suffix -*fo* - a loan from Akan - where it also functions as an

agentive suffix. Nominalization of adjectives and property nouns is achieved by apposition with

tsè 'father/master'. Colour adjectives and a few other basic adjectives can be nominalized with

a prefix *e-*. Examples are given below.

Agentive nominalization of active verbs *(-lɔ)*

(5) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| shɛ̀̃mɔ̀̃ | 'urinate' | → | shɛ̀̃mɔ̀lɔ̀ | 'one who wets the bed/idiot' |
| jù | 'steal' | → | jùlɔ̀ | 'thief' |
| lú | 'be foolish/act foolishly' | → | lú!lɔ́ | 'a fool' |
| fɔ́ | 'give birth' | → | fɔ́!lɔ́ | 'parent' |
| gbà | 'divine, prophesy' | → | gbàlɔ̀ | 'prophet' |
| tsɔ̀ɔ̂ | 'show, teach' | → | tsɔ̀ɔ́!lɔ́ | 'teacher' |
| sùmɔ̀̃ | 'like, love' | → | sùɔ̀lɔ̀ | 'lover' |
| hàò | 'bother, torment' | → | hàòlɔ̀ | 'tormentor' |

Agentive nominalization of adjectives and property nouns *(-tsè)*

This typically applies to dimension property words and the resulting noun denotes "one who

exhibits the property":

(6) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| àgbò | 'big' | → | àgbòtsè | 'big one' |
| bíbìóó | 'small' | → | bíbìóótsè | 'small one' |
| kpìtíóó | 'short' | → | kpìtíóótsè | 'short one' |
| kàkàdɛ́ŋŋ́ | 'tall' | → | kàkàdɛ́ŋtsè | 'tall one' |

-lɔ and *tsè* may also be attached to nouns to create new nouns with the general semantics of

"one who possesses N or one who possesses notable quantities of N". Example:

(7) ànî́háó   'laziness'   →   ànî́háó!lɔ́   'lazy person'

     bé!ĺ   'quarrel(n.)   →   béîlɔ̀   'quarrelsome person'

     àmálé   'lie (n.)'   →   àmálé!lɔ́   'liar'

Some speakers employ both *-lɔ* and *-fo* in the last example to give *àmáléfő!lɔ́* 'liar', a usage

that is frowned upon by some speakers, who maintain that the version in (7) is the "correct"

one.

Examples of nouns that are nominalized by *-tsɛ* are given below

(8) àfű́   'hump'   →   àfű́tsè   'hunchback'

     shìká   'money'   →   shìkátsè   'rich person'

     nî́!ĺ   'thing'   →   nî͡àtsè   'rich person'

     mű́!jĺ́   'dirt'   →   mű́jì̀àtsè   'filthy person'

The presence of the pertensive marker *a-* (generally prefixed to a possessed noun if its

possessor is plural) in *nî͡àtsè* 'rich person' suggests that when *tsè* 'father/master' is juxtaposed

to a noun, it is better viewed as a lexical word - the possessum - in a possessive noun phrase,

rather than a suffix. The pertensive suffix is also seen in *mű́jì̀àtsè* 'filthy person'. *tsè* may also

occur with a modifying noun to denote a person who sells or owns the item denoted by the

modifying noun. Example:

(9)   *àkùtútsὲ*   'orange seller'

       kɔ̃m̀tsὲ   'kenkey (food type) seller'

       ŋã̀ĩ̀tsὲ   'charcoal seller'

       shĩ̂ãtsὲ   'landlord/landlady'

       mǔsǔ àgbò-tsὲ   [stomach big-master]   'one with a big stomach'

Examples of nouns that are nominalized by the suffix -*fo* are given in (10).

(10)   *òhĩ̀ã́* 'poverty'   →   *òhĩ̀ã́!fó*   'poor person'

        àbĺó 'slacking'   →   *àbĺó!fò*   'slacker'

        òsátó 'hypocrisy'   →   *òsátófó*   'hypocrite'

Some adjectives may also be nominalized by prefixation with *e-*. Table 7 from §2.4.2.2 shows

which adjectives are affected. The table is reproduced here for convenience.

Table 14: Nouns morphologically derived from adjectives

Semantic class	Engish gloss	Adjective	Singular noun	Plural noun
COLOUR	red	*tsùlù*	*étsùlù*	*étsùjĩ̀ĩ̀*
	white	*yɛ̃́!ŋ́*	*éyɛ̃́!ŋ́*	*éyéjĩ̀ĩ̀*
	black	*dĩ́!ŋ́*	*édĩ́!ŋ́*	*édĩ́jĩ̀ĩ̀*
PHYSICAL PROPERTY	raw, fresh	*ŋmɔ̃́!ŋ́*	*éŋmɔ̃́!ŋ́*	*éŋmɔ̃́jĩ̀ĩ̀*
	unripe	*ŋmílíkítí*	*éŋmílíkítí*	*éŋmílíkítí!í*
AGE	old	*mómó*	*émómó*	*éméméjĩ̀ĩ̀*
	new	*hèè*	*éhèè*	*éhèì*
VALUE	good	*kpákpá*	*ékpákpá*	*ékpákpá!í*
	bad	*fɔ̃́!ŋ́*	*éfɔ̃́!ŋ́*	*éfɔ̃́jĩ̀ĩ̀*

Agentive nouns with the suffix, *-lɔ* and *-fo* are pluralized with the plural suffix *-i.*

Example, *jùlɔ̀i* 'thieves', *tsɔ̀ɔ́lɔ̀i* 'teachers', *shã̀mɔ̀lɔ̀i* 'those who urinate/idiots' and *òhĩã́!fó!í*

'poor people'. Words nominalized by *tsɛ̀* are pluralized with *-mɛ̃̀ĩ̀,* which itself is the plural of

mɔ̀ 'person'. Example: *àkùtútsɛ̀mɛ̃̀ĩ̀* 'orange sellers', *shìkátsɛ̀mɛ̃̀ĩ̀* 'rich people'.

6.1.3 Nominalization of simple verb phrases and inherent complement verbs (ICVs)

In Gã, it is possible to nominalize any simple verb phrase consisting of a verb and its object by

switching the order of the verb and object and nominalizing the verb. That is, the object is

fronted or preposed and the nominalized verb immediately follows it. This nominalization may

then be used as an argument in a clause. Most of such nominalizations result in phrases and not

necessarily lexical items. For example, the sentence in (10a) contains the verb phrase *kɛ́ɛ́ bò*

'tell you'. It is provided in order to show the contrast between it and the nominalization, *bò*

kɛ̀ɛ́!mɔ̃́ 'telling you' in (10b). In (10a) the verb precedes the object; in (10b) it is nominalized

and it now follows the object. The entire nominalization in (10b) also functions as an argument

- the object of *sà* 'fit'.

(10a) è=sà   á!kɛ́   é=kɛ́ɛ́   bò
       3SG=fit   NMLZ   3SG.SBJV=tell   2SG.OBJ
       "He has to tell you."

(10b) nɔ̃́fɛ̃́ɛ̃́nɔ̃́   nĩ́   sà   ***bò***   ***kɛ̀ɛ́-mɔ̃́=!ɔ̃́***   é=!kɛ́ɛ́
       everything NMLZ fit   2SG.OBJ   tell-NOM=DEF   3SG.SBJV=tell

bò
2SG.OBJ
"Everything that you need to be told, he should tell you."   [CH:136]

The nominalizations in (11) and (12) also give phrases, not nouns. In (11), the nominalization

nɔ́kò fèé!mɔ́ 'something to do' is the subject of *bɛ́* 'exist.NEG' and in (12), the nominalization,

kùsṹŋ nɛ̃ɛ̃ fèé!mɔ́ 'doing of this custom' is the object of *bɔ̃ĩɔ̃* 'start.HAB'.

(11) kɛ́   à = yà-tsí   à = shwìé = !ɛ́   ***nɔ́-kò***
      when   3SG.IMPERS = ITIV-push   3PL.IMPERS = pour = DEF   thing-INDEF

      fèé-!mɔ́   bɛ́   dɔ́ŋŋ́
      do-NOM   exist.NEG   anymore
      "After they go and pour it away, there's nothing left to do anymore" (Lit: "…there isn't
      something doing anymore.")   [OYO:40]

(12) áfí-!í   é!nyíɛ́   ãmɛ̃ = yè-ɔ̀   dấnĩ   nyɛ̃ = bɔ̃ĩ-ɔ̃   ***kùsṹŋ***
      year-PL   how.many   3PL = eat-HAB   before 2PL = start-HAB   custom

      nɛ̃ɛ̃   ***fèé-!mɔ́***
      this   do-NOM
      "How old are they before you start doing (performing) this custom"   [OYO:409]

There are also several lexical items that can be formed this way. In (13a), the object of the verb

is a possessive noun phrase, *nĩĩ à-hè* [things PERT-body] 'body of things'. It is nominalized

and functions as subject in (13b). The nominalization results in a lexical noun, laundry or

'things to be washed'. The orthographic conventions in Gã are such that when a verb phrase

whose object contains a relator noun possessor (e.g. *hè* 'body', *mìŋ* 'inside') is nominalized, the

resulting nominalization is written as one word.

(13a) èè = fɔ́   *nî͡ì*   *à-hè*
       3SG.PROG = wash   things PERT-body
       "She's washing clothes/She's doing the laundry."

(13b) *nî-à̃-hè-fɔ́-mɔ̀*   pìì   yὲ
       things-PERT-body-wash-NOM   many   exist
       "There's a lot of laundry to do."

The nominalized verb can also function as the object within another nominalization:

(13c) ò = yὲ   *nî-à̃-hè-fɔ́-mɔ̀*   pìì   fê̂é-!mɔ́
       2SG = have   things-PERT-body-wash-NOM   many   do-NOM
       "You have a lot of laundry to do."

Since the complement of an ICV is the same as its object (§3.4.2), nominalization of

ICVs proceeds in the same manner as verb phrases, with a reversal of the verb and object order

and a nominalization of the verb. Nominalized ICVs often produce new lexical items (14), (15).

Just as with independent verbs, most active noun derivation utilizes the strategies of suffixation

by *-mɔ̃* (14) or final vowel lengthening (15):

(14)   *kpá fâí* [remove hat] 'beg'   →   *fâíkpá!mɔ̂*   'begging, pleading'

       bí gbὲ [ask way]   'ask permission'   →   *gbὲbí!mɔ̂*   'asking permission'

       tsû̃ nî!î [work thing] 'work'   →   *nî̃tsû̃!mɔ̂*   'work'

       tsɔ̀ɔ̃ nî!î [teach thing] 'teach'   →   *nî̃tsɔ̀ɔ̃!mɔ̂*   'teaching'

       gbálà mìŋ [split inside]   'explain'   →   *mìŋgbálàmɔ̀*   'explanation'

jìé yì	[remove head]	'praise (v.)'	→	*yìjìé!mɔ́*	'praise (n.)'

(15)
jè kpò	[exit compound]	'exit'	→	*kpòjèè*	'going out'
bò tòí	[shout ear]	'listen'	→	*tòíbòò*	'listening, being attentive'
dà shǐ̃	[ICV down]	'thank'	→	*shǐ̃dàà*	'thanks'
lè nǐ̃!í	[know thing]	'be clever'	→	*nǐ̃lèè*	'knowledge'
gbè nà̃ã̀	[kill mouth]	'be done (doing sth)'	→	*nà̃ã̀gbèè*	'end (n.)'

There are some irregularly derived nominalizations, which are listed below in (16).

(16)
yè nǐ̃!í	[eat thing]	'eat'	→	*nǐ̃yélí*	'eating'
nà̃ mɔ́bɔ̀	[see pity]	'pity(v.)'	→	*mɔ́bɔ̀nà̃lè*	'pity (n.)'
gbá nà̃ã̀	[split mouth]	'bother'	→	*nà̃ã̀gbá*	'bother, stress (n.)'
jò fòì	[dance race]	'run'	→	*fòìjèè*	'running'

The second, third and fourth examples are especially curious because the complements, *gbá* 'split', *jò* 'dance' and *nà̃* 'see' as stand-alone verbs will be nominalized as *gbá!mɔ́* 'splitting' (not *gbá*), *jòò* 'dancing, dance (n.)' (not *jèè*) and *nà̃ã̀* 'seeing' (not *nà̃lè*) respectively. I speculate that *jò* in *jò fòì* was originally *jè* 'exit, leave' and over time became rendered as *jò* to harmonise with the [o] in *fòì* 'race'. Speakers felt no need to harmonise the nominal *fòìjèè* 'running' to *fòìjòò* because despite the orthography, the last sound in *fòì* is actually [e] i.e. *fòì* is pronounced [fòè]. This deduction makes sense from a phonological perspective and it also makes semantic sense given the motional semantics of *jè* and the fact that it occurs in various other motion ICVs e.g. *jè kpò* [exit compound] 'exit', *jè dè̀ì̃* [exit palm] 'die, get out of

control' and *jè fṹ* [exit bad.smell] 'stink, /smell bad'. As far as the nominalization of *nã̀* 'see' is concerned, the use of *-lɛ* as a nominalizer is unsurprising because *-lɛ* is the nominalizer for property verbs, which are also stative verbs and *nã̀* 'see' could be viewed as a stative verb.

Agent nominalization of ICVs is made possible by preposing the complement of an ICV, following it with the verb and suffixing *-lɔ* to the verb. This type of nominalization is not particularly productive because it favours actions that are considered to be habitually undertaken by the agent to the point of being occupational or at least having a regular, predictable occurrence. In addition, such nominalizations are considered defining characteristics and so serve as an identificational marker of sorts. The following are some examples.

(17)   *bɔ̀ kó* [create *kó*]   'wander aimlessly' →   *kóbɔ̀lɔ̀* 'one who wanders aimlessly'
        tsṹ nĩ́!í [work thing] 'work' →   *nĩ́tsṹ!lɔ́*   'worker'
        bɔ̀ tòí [shout ear]   'listen' → *tòíbòlɔ̀-ì* 'listener-PL' [often used by radio presenters]

The ICVs in 18, on the other hand, are not so receptive to agentive nominalization because they are not conventionally conceived of as actions that are carried out habitually and that denote a group of people.

(18)   *bí gbè* [ask way]   'ask permission' → **gbèbí!lɔ́*   'person who asks permission
        hĩ̀ ŋmã̀ã̀ [hate millet] 'fast (v.)'   → **ŋmã̀ã̀hĩ̀lɔ̀*   'person who is fasting'
        yè nĩ́!í [eat thing]   'eat'   → **nĩ́yélɔ̀*   'person who eats'
        gbá nã̀ã̀ [split mouth] 'bother'   → **nã̀ã̀gbá!lɔ̀*   'person who bothers others'

6.1.4 Nominalization of SVCs

For the most part, it is lexicalized, idiomatized SVCs that can undergo lexical nominalization,

resulting in a unique compounded noun lexeme. Lexicalized SVCs are SVCs which have a

non-compositional meaning; it is difficult to deduce the meaning of the SVC from the

meanings of the individual verbs in the SVC. Of these, only a few avail themselves to lexical

nominalization, which is accomplished by nominalizing the individual verbs and conjoining

them with the noun phrase coordinator, *kè* 'and'.

(19) *wìé tsɔ́ɔ̂*   [speak show] 'advise'   →   *wìémɔ̂kètsɔ́ɔ̂!mɔ́*   'advice (n.)'

      hé yè   [buy eat]   'believe' →   *hémɔ̂kèyélí*   'trust, faith'

      yè bú!á   [eat help]   'help'   →   *yélíkɛbúàmɔ̂*   'help (n.)'

In (20), the nominal nature of *hémɔ̂kèyélí* is evident in its ability to be possessed. The same is

seen in (21) with *yélíkɛbúàmɔ̂* 'help (n.)'.

(20) bɛ̀   jà   *ó=hé-mɔ̂-kè-yé-lí*   dà   dɛ́nî   ò=bàá-nyɛ̃́

      then   unless 2SG=buy-NOM-and-eat-NOM   be.big before 2SG=FUT-be.able

      ó=yè   nɔ̂

      2SG.SBJV=eat   top

      "Your faith must be big (strong) in order to abide by it." (Lit: "Unless your faith is big

      before you can abide by it.")   [CH:329]

(21) nĩ̀   ó=yé-lí-kè-búà-mɔ̀̃   mĺì   mã̀ŋtsé   !lɛ́   nyá̋-à̃

and   2SG=eat-NOM-and-help-NOM   inside   king   DEF   rejoice-HAB

yɛ̀

be.located

"And the king rejoices in your help (deliverance)"   [BSG:675; tones and glosses

mine]

Other SVCs cannot be so nominalized:

(22)   tsí bɛ̋ŋ̀kɛ̋   [push draw.near] 'come closer'   →   *tsímɔ̀̃kèbɛ̋ŋ́kèmɔ̀̃ 'coming closer'

        tsɛ́ fɔ̀̃   [call throw]   'throw away'   →   *tsɛ́mɔ̀̃kèfɔ̀̃ɔ̀   'throwing away'

        tsí tò   [push hide]   'postpone'   →   *tsímɔ̀̃kètòò   'postponement'

When the verbs in the SVC have objects, each verb phrase is nominalized and the two

nominalized VPs are then conjoined by the NP linker, kè. These produce noun phrases and not

lexical nouns. A few examples will serve to further illuminate this process. The nominalization

of (22a) is given in (22b). The first VP, bólɔ̀ 'shout.ITER' is nominalized to give bólɔ̀mɔ̀̃

'shouting'. The second VP, wò mĩ̀ 'put me' is nominalized to produce mĩ̀wòò 'me putting' and

the two nominalized VPs are linked by kè 'and'.

(22a)   è=bó-lɔ̀   è=wò   mĩ̀

        3SG=shout-ITER   3SG=put   1SG.OBJ

        "S/he shouted at me."

(22b)   è=bɔ̋!í̋   bó-lɔ̀-mɔ̀̃   kè   mĩ̀-wòò

        3SG=start   shout-ITER-NOM   and   1SG.OBJ-put.NOM

        "S/he started shouting at me." (Lit: "S/he started shouting and me-putting.")

lòó nî́bí!íɛ̀ 'gather the things' in (23a) is nominalized to obtain *nî́bííɛ̀ lòó!mɔ̃̀* 'gathering of the

things' in (23b) while *shwìɛ́ shì̀kpɔ̃́!ŋ́* 'pour on the ground' in (23a) gives *shì̀kpɔ̃́!ŋ́ shwìɛ́mɔ̃́*

'pouring on the ground' in (23b). The two nominalizations are then joined by *kɛ̀* 'and'.

(23a) *ɛ̀=lòó*   nî́-bíí=ɛ̀   *ɛ̀=shwìɛ́*   shìkpɔ̃́!ŋ́
       3SG = gather   thing-PL = DEF   3SG = pour   ground
       "She gathered up the things and poured them on the ground."

(23b) è=bɔ̃̂ĩ   *nî́-bíí=ɛ̀*   *lòó-mɔ̃̀*   *kɛ̀*   *shìkpɔ̃́ŋ̀*   *shwìɛ́-!mɔ̃́*
       3SG = start   thing-PL = DEF   gather-NOM   and   ground   pour-NOM
       "S/he started gathering up the things and pouring them on the ground." (Lit: "S/he
       started things-gathering and ground-pouring.")

The following pairs of examples are from Dakubu (2004b:118, 119). Some of the glossing has

been modified to conform with the convention in this work.

(24a) è=shí   fùfùí   è=hɑ̃́   !mí́
       3SG = pound   food.type   3SG = give   1SG.OBJ
       "S/he made *fufu* for me."

(24b) è=bɔ̃̂ĩ   *fùfùí*   *shí-mɔ̃̀*   *kɛ̀*   *mì̃̀*   *hɑ̃́-!mɔ̃́*
       3SG = begin   food.type   pound-NOM   and   1SG.OBJ   give-NOM
       "S/he began to make fufu for me."

(25a) mì̃̀=*kɛ̀*   lɛ̀   *wìɛ́*   sɑ̃̀né=ɛ̀   hè
       1SG = take   3SG.OBJ   speak   matter = DEF   body
       "I discussed the matter with her."/"I spoke with her about the matter"

(25b) mì̃̀=kà   *lɛ̀*   *kɛ̀*   *sɑ̃̀né=ɛ̀*   hè   *wìɛ́-!mɔ̃́*
       1SG = try   3SG.OBJ   and   matter = DEF   body   speak-NOM
       "I tried discussing the matter with her."/"I tried speaking to her about the matter."

One important issue that needs to be resolved is whether in (25b), *kè* is the verb 'take' or the coordinator 'and'. I propose, contrary to Dakubu (2004b:118), that *kè* in such nominalizations is the coordinator and not the verb. This means that the verb, *kè* is totally absent from the nominalization in (25b), a notable deviation from the usual process of serial nominalization, where the verb is nominalized and preceded by its object. But *kɛ* is no ordinary verb. Recall from §4.5 that it takes absolutely no inflections, and our analysis of it as a verb is based mostly on syntactic behavior and historical semantics. It should therefore not be surprising if *kɛ* does not feature at all in serial nominalization; afterall if it did, it would be impossible to display any markers of nominalization. The fact that sentences such as (25b) contain serial nominalizations can be seen from the nominalization of the second verb (V2). The semantic nature of propositions containing verb *kɛ* is also such that it is primarily the second verb that bears the bulk of the semantic weight of the predication. The function of the verb *kɛ* is either to signal co-participation of the arguments in the activity described by V2 (comitative and instrumental sense) or to signal transfer of the object of *kɛ* to the object of V2. *kɛ,* therefore does not carry great semantic weight and so there is no major threat to the attainment of the communicative goal when it is omitted from a nominalization. The coordinator *kè* 'and' on the other hand, is a crucial signal that its two conjuncts are nominalizations of a serial verb and so there is an incentive for maintaining its presence over

that of verb *kɛ,* which cannot be inflected and hence does not give much grammatical information. It is also possible that historically, both *kɛ's* appeared in serial nominalizations (after all, the definite article *lɛ* and topicalizer *lɛ,* are capable of occurring successively with the same NP) and in the modern language have coalesced into just one syllable. Dakubu (2004b:119) suggests in a footnote that this scenario is also possible.

Agentive/argument nominalization of SVCs is not possible.

6.1.5 Nouns derived from sentences

A phenomenon occurs in Gã, whereby an entire sentence complete with subject, verb and if available, object, is used as a noun to denote a concept. There is no morphological operation of any kind applied to these sentences; they are taken as stock and used as words. The sentence usually asserts a quality that is characteristic of the referent of the noun. If the noun refers to an activity, the proposition could constitute a description of the actions involved in that activity.

Examples are:

(26) *òjèŋmɛ́*   'lavender, perfume' or 'a kind of aromatic, hot pepper; habanero pepper'
      ò = jè   ŋmɛ́
      2SG = exit   sweet.smell
      "You smell good"

(27) *óshàáyòòm̀bà* 'a plant *(Mimosa pudica)* that is sensitive to touch and folds up its leaves
      when touched. Also known as sensitive plant, shy plant'

ó=shàayòò   ŋ̀-bà

2SG=mother-in-law PROG-come

"Your mother-in-law is coming"

(28)   *òjèònyɛ̀*   'a type of fish'

       ò=jè   ò=nyɛ̀

       2SG=resemble   2SG=mother

       "You resemble your mother"

(29)   *àkèɛ́àkèê*   'rumour'

       à=kèɛ́   à=kèê

       3PL.IMPERS=say   3PL.IMPERS=say

       "They said, they said."

(30)   *àwɔ́ɔ́ɔ́sh�í̃!ɑ̃́*   'spending the night away from home, usually with a lover'

       à=wɔ́ɔ́ɔ́   shɪ̃́!ɑ̃́

       3PL=sleep.NEG   home

       "They don't sleep at home."

(31)   *òyèfɑ̃́òshwìéfɑ̃́/òyèfɑ̃́òshɪ̃́fɑ̃́*   'a small, spreading tree, *Sarcocephalus russegeri.*

       ò=yè   fɑ̃́   ò=shwìé   fɑ̃́

       2SG=eat   half   2SG=pour   half

       "You eat half, you pour half away."

       ò=yè   fɑ̃́   ò=shɪ̃́   fɑ̃́

       2SG=eat   half   2SG=leave   half

       "You eat half, you leave half."

As nouns, these are capable of occupying subject (34) and object (32), (33) positions in clauses

and taking all noun modifiers such as articles, demonstratives, quantifiers and adjectives. In

(32), the sentential noun, *òjèònyɛ̀* 'type of fish' is modified by a numeral and adjective and in

(33), *óshàayòòm̀bà* 'shy plant' is modified by a definite article.

(32) ì̀=yà-hé   *òjèònyɛ̀*   *àgbò-ì*   *énùmɔ̀*
      1SG=ITIV-buy   fish.type   big-PL   five
      "I went and bought five, big, *ojeonyɛ* fish."

(33) gbé!kɛ́-bí!í=ɛ̀   kɛ̀   *óshàáyòòǹbá=!á*   ǹ-shwɛ́
      child-PL=DEF   take   shy.plant=DEF   PROG-play
      "The children are playing with the shy plant."

(34) *òjèŋmɛ́*   é-bù
      pepper.type   PERF-be.plentiful
      "There is a glut of *òjèŋmɛ́* peppers.

(35) míí=féé   *àwɔ́ɔ́ɔ́shí!ɛ́*
      1SG.PROG=do   sleep-over
      "I'm sleeping over at my lover's."

6.2 Grammatical nominalizations

There are two types of grammatical nominalizations: grammatical argument nominalizations

and grammatical event nominalizations. Shibatani (2009b:191) defines grammatical argument

nominalizations as constructions that denote an entity characterized in terms of its involvement

in an activity or its relevance to another entity. Grammatical event nominalizations are

constructions which denote a state of affairs by characterizing or spelling out the state of affairs

itself. Most grammatical nominalizations on the surface look like clauses and have been so-

analysed by many linguists, an analysis that is reflected in the terms relative clause,

complement clause, adverbial clause etc. My proposal, following Shibatani and bin Makhashen

(2009) and Shibatani (2009b), is that these are all nominalizations and not clauses, because they

do not predicate as is expected of clauses; they rather denote. As nominalizations they may have other functions apart from denotation; for example, they may be used for modification or complementation. In the following paragraphs, I will give the rationale behind this assessment, based on works by Shibatani and his co-writers, by examining in turn the structures that have variously been called relative clauses, complement clauses etc. and showing them to be nominalizations. I will rely initially on data from English, and I will show later that equivalent Gã constructions also favour a nominalization analysis.

6.3 The relationship between relativization and nominalization

The observation that the structures that have been identified as relative clauses in many languages are actually nominalizations is not a recent one. Tibeto-Burman and Austronesian languages, for instance, offer up the clearest examples of nominalization structures used for relativization, due to the formal nominalizing morphology found in such constructions. Delancey (1986:1) observed that in Lhasa Tibetan and Newari, "... relativization is simply one function of nominalization, i.e. "[that] relative clauses are simply dependent or appositive NPs." The same nominal morphology found in relativization is also found in possessives or the genitive. In the following Newari examples from Delancey (1986:2), the morpheme *gu* is a nominalizer. This obviously makes the construction *jinɔ khunagu* 'what I cooked' in (35) a nominalization, and in (36), this nominalization is used to modify *la* 'meat'.

(35)   ji-nɔ   khun-a-gu
     I-ERG cook-PART-NOM
     'what I cooked', 'my cooking'

(36)   ji-nɔ   khun-a-gu   la
     I-ERG cook-PART-NOM   meat
     'the meat which I cooked'

In (37), this same nominalizer is suffixed to the first singular pronoun and the resulting nominal

is used to modify *la* 'meat' to produce a possessive NP.

(37)   ji-gu   la
     I   meat
     'my meat'

Similarity in marking as well as other morpho-syntactic similarities between relative clauses

and possessives has been noted by Aristar (1991). He lists about twenty languages that show

this similarity and is able to show for two of them (Agaw and Iranian) that these two

constructions are rooted in the same diachronic source; an anaphoric construction with a

pronominal that is reanalyzed as a modificational structure.

     In another language, Chantyal (Tibeto-Burman, Bodish), there is a suffix *-wa* that

features in several structures with differing functions. Some of these functions are

relativization, verb and noun complementation and purpose clause complementation. For

example, in (38), it is clear that *-wa* is a nominalizer. It nominalizes the verbs, *pəri* 'study' and

gãra 'good' so that they can serve as arguments.

(38) pəri-wa   gãra-wa   mu
      study-NOM   good-NOM   be + PST
      'Studying is good'.   (Noonan 1997:375)

Example (39) shows a *-wa* nominalization in a purpose construction while (40) shows it in a

relative construction. A more literal translation of (39) and (40) would be "Sanglal and some

others went honey-gathering" and "the beef-eating person" respectively.

(39) səŋlal-ma   məə   tara-wa-ri   hya-i
      Sanglal-PL   honey gather-NOM-LOC   go-PERF
      'Sanglal and some others went to gather honey.'   (Noonan 1997:376)

(40) gay-ye   sya   ca-wa   mənchi
      cow-GEN   meat eat-NOM   person
      'the person who is eating beef'   (Noonan 1997:376)

It is not difficult to convince linguists that the constructions above in Newari and

Chantyal are nominalizations. After all, they have nominalizing morphology to mark them so.

However, showing that so-called relative clauses such as *who gave me the book* in *The man*

who gave me the book was wearing a white shirt requires more effort. This is because apart

from the absence of nominal morphology, there is a fully finite verb, *was,* and as linguists, we

have been trained to associate finiteness with clauses and non-finiteness with nominalizations.

Definitions of "relative clauses" such as the following from Andrews (2007:206) make it clear

that the construction is clausal: "A relative clause is a subordinate clause which delimits the

reference of an NP by specifying the role of the referent of that NP in the situation described

by the RC". Givón (2001b:25) writes that finiteness is an aggregate grammatical feature of

clauses, while non-finiteness is an aggregate grammatical feature of nominals. This belief is

echoed in his assessment that in many languages, relative clauses and other dependent clauses

such as adverbial clauses and complement clauses are nominalized, so that in those languages,

only matrix clauses are finite. So for him, a nominalization cannot be finite. He observes that

there are therefore various degrees of finiteness, with a clause becoming more and more

nominal as it becomes less and less finite. Typical features that mark some degree of

nominalization are genitive case marking of subject or object, nominalizing morphology on

verb, reduced TAM marking and the presence of determiners (Givón 2001b: 25). In comparing

the following two sentences, for instance, Givón concludes that the italicized portion in (a) has

fewer finiteness features and more nominal features (genitive, gerund) than (b) which has no

nominal features but lacks a finite verb. (a) is thus more nominal than (b).

> a. *Her knowing* math well helped
> b. She wanted *to know* math well   (Givón 2001b:26)

These approaches to relative clauses and nominalizations undervalue the essential

defining property of any linguistic category - its function. As previously mentioned, the

function of clauses is to predicate - to ascribe a property to a noun. The function of a sentence

is to convey illocution and perform a speech act. A declarative sentence will assert, an

interrogative sentence will question, an imperative sentence will issue a command etc. The

function of nominalizations is to denote. In the English sentence, *Marry who you love,* the

construction, *who you love* has traditionally been analysed as a headless relative clause.

Shibatani counters that it is not. Rather, it is a verb-based grammatical argument nominalization

that is being used as an NP. The object of *marry* is *who you love. who you love* is making

reference to an entity - a person, just as a lexical noun such as *the boy* or *a teacher* would make

reference to certain entities. Similarly, *what Jane stole* in *What Jane stole was a watch* is a

grammatical argument nominalization denoting an entity. The identity of this entity is then

given as *watch.* Verb-based argument nominalizations characterize their referents in terms of

some event in which the referent was somehow involved i.e. marrying and Jane's stealing in

the above examples. One difference between lexical nouns and grammatical argument

nominalizations is that the denotational boundaries of lexical nouns are well-defined and

narrow e.g. the noun *book* refers to a very specific set of entities, but the denotational

boundaries of grammatical nominalizations are open. For example, *what Jane stole* could refer

to a limitless number of entities. Another major characteristic of grammatical nominalizations

that is not shared by lexical nouns is that grammatical nominalizations contain a

presupposition. The nominalization *who you love* presupposes that you love somebody and

what Jane stole presupposes that Jane stole something. They do not assert this information. It is

this presupposed information that enables the identity of the denoted referent to be retrieved.

The addressee may have access to this presupposed information either from the preceding

discourse or in the extra-linguistic context.

The verb-based grammatical argument nominalization may contain a gap or some other

marker which corresponds to the grammatical relation of the referent. For example, *what Jane*

stole Ø has a gap in the object position and can therefore be described as an object argument

nominalization, while *what Ø fell on me* is a subject argument nominalization.

Going back to the earlier example, *The man who gave me the book was wearing a*

white shirt, my claim, following Shibatani (2009b) and Shibatani and bin Makhashen (2009) is

that *who gave me a book* is not a relative clause (or any kind of clause) but an argument

nominalization that is functioning as a modifier to the noun, *the man.* The recruitment of

argument nominalizations for this task is in line with the general functions of nominals;

ordinary nouns are able to function as modifiers to other nouns e.g. *gold* in *gold watch* or *house*

in *house party.* Just as *gold* delimits the referent of watch to only those that are made of gold,

so too *who gave me the book* delimits the referents of man from any man to only the man who

gave me the book. This is the modification function of argument nominalizations, and while

this function may be referred to as relativization, calling the construction a relative clause is

inaccurate and reflects an over-reliance on form rather than function for the classification of linguistic categories.

The fact that verb-based grammatical argument nominalizations contain fully finite verbs does not make them any less nominal; their denotational function is unaffected by the finiteness of the verbs. Finiteness and other verbal features are structure-internal properties, which do not define the category of the entire structure, which must be based on external properties. It has been shown above in §6.1.5 that even whole sentences with fully finite verbs and arguments may be used as nouns. As Shibatani (2009b:193) writes, finiteness is not a definitional feature of a sentence or clause. Moreover, Evans (2010) shows that in many languages, non-finite clauses are regularly used as independent sentences. Therefore there is no definitional correlation between finiteness and sentences or clauses. Since grammatical nominalizations denote an entity in terms of its involvement in some event, it is natural that the event be grounded temporally via a verb that is fully inflected for tense, aspect or mood (Shibatani and bin Makhashen 2009:29). This does not necessarily make the structure a clause or sentence.

Argument nominalizations need not display any nominal morphology to function as nominals, in the same way the verbs *walk* and *touch* can be used as nouns without any additional morphology: *I am going for a walk, She had a gentler touch.* Their nominal status is

obvious from the external syntax where *walk* is the object of the preposition *for,* and *touch* is

the head of an NP that functions as the object of *had.* Further evidence of their noun status is

seen in their modification by the indefinite article.

Many linguists agree that the head noun and the so-called relative clause or sentence

together form one NP (Givón 2001b, Andrews 2007, Lehmann 1986). One problem that

Shibatani (2011) has with this view is that if it is maintained that the argument nominalization

is actually a clause, it entertains a scenario where a larger, more complex structure (a clause) is

embedded within a smaller structure (a noun phrase). This is impossible and it entreats us to

search for a more syntactically sound analysis of relative constructions. This, I believe is the

nominalization analysis put forward by Shibatani.

6.4 Verb-based argument nominalizations in modification function (Relative clauses)

In Gã, the verb based argument nominalization is marked at the initial boundary by the

nominalizer, *nĩ́,* an invariant particle. It is the most important nominalizer in Gã and is found in

various other grammatical nominalizations which carry out a variety of functions, such as

complementation and adverbial modification. When the nominalized argument is subject or

object, the argument nominalization has a gap in the position where that grammatical relation

would be. Recall that Gã has strict SVO word order and grammatical relations are determined

primarily by word order.

In all examples provided, the argument nominalization will be enclosed in square

brackets. In (41), the argument nominalization referring to *bàá!á* 'the leaf/herbs' has a gap in

the object position. The argument nominalization is characterizing *bàá!á* 'the leaf/herbs' in

terms of its location and its having been prepared by the addressee.

(41) hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   ófáìnɛ́ bàá=!á   *[nɛ̃́*   *ó=fèé*   *Ø*   *yè*
      sake=TOP   please leaf=DEF   NMLZ   2SG.PERF=do   be.located

      jɛ̃́!mɛ̃́]=!ɛ̃́   mɛ̃́nĩ̀ à--   mɛ̃́nĩ̀ pɔ̀tɛ̃̀ɛ̃̀   à=kɛ̀-fé-ɔ̀
      there=DEF   what   --   what   exactly   3PL.IMPERS=take-do-HAB
      "So, please, the herbal infusion that you've made over there, what-- what exactly is it
      made from?"   [YM:158]

In (42), the argument nominalization refers to *shìká!á* 'the money' by characterizing it in terms

of its being transferred to the addressee. It is also an object and is therefore represented in the

nominalization by a gap in the object position.

(42) nì   ĩ̀=kɛ̀ɛ́   !lɛ́   á!kɛ́   shìká=!á   *[nɛ̃́*   *à=kɛ̀*
      and   1SG=tell   3SG.OBJ   NMLZ money=DEF NMLZ 3SG.IMPERS=take

      Ø   *hɛ̃́*   *!lɛ́]=!ɛ́*   è=kɛ́-!bá
            give   3SG.OBJ=DEF   3SG=take.SBJV-come
      "And I told him that, the money that he has been given, he should bring (it)."
      [MM:109]

In (43) and (44), the nominalized argument is subject. In (43) it refers to *nằnằá fí!óó nyěmí nǔǔ* 'little grandma's brother' and it is characterised with regard to the location of the referent's home.

(43)   ὲὲ   mὲ̃-nɛ̃́   hǔ   nằnằá   fí!óó   nyěmí   nǔǔ=!ɛ̃́   *[ní*
         IJ   person-this   too   grandmother   little   sibling   male=DEF   NMLZ

        Ø   *hí*   *gɔ̀ɔ́=ɔ̀*   *nɔ́]=!ɔ́*
           live   hill=DEF   top=DEF
    "This person too…little grandma's brother who lived at the top of the hill."
    [DF:107]

In (44), the nominalized argument characterises the unclean state of its referent, *àtàlé !kó* 'a certain dress'.

(44)   è=yà-wò   àtàlé   !kó   *[ní*   Ø   *é-wò*   *mű!jí]*
        3SG=ITIV-wear   dress   INDEF   NMLZ   PERF-put   dirt
    "S/he went and wore a dress that was dirty."

It is also possible for the nominalized subject to be represented within the nominalization by a pronoun rather than a gap (45), although the gap strategy is preferred.

(45)   jééé   nɔ̃́=!kó   *ní*   *è=tằmɔ̃̀*   *wɔ̃́!ŋ*   *nĩ̂*
        NEG   thing=INDEF   NMLZ   3SG=resemble   god   thing

    nĩ̀
    PRED.PRT
    "It is not something that is associated with pagan worship." [Lit: It is not something which it is like a pagan thing.]   [OYO:129]

If the nominalized argument is a possessor or object of comparison, a pronoun occurs in the position of the nominalized noun. In (46), the nominalized argument, *nùū̃!ɛ́* 'the man' is the object of comparison and is indicated in the nominalization by the third singular object pronoun, *lɛ̀.*

(46) nùū̃=!ɛ̃́   *[nɪ̃́   ákú   dà   fɛ̀   lɛ́]*=!ɛ́
      man=DEF   NMLZ   Aku   be.big   COMP   3SG.OBJ=DEF
      "the man whom Aku is bigger than..."

In (47), the argument nominalization refers to *gbé!kɛ̃́!ɛ̃́* 'the child'. Since it is a possessor, it is marked pronominally in the nominalization by the third singular pronoun, *e.*

(47) gbékɛ̃́=!ɛ̃́   *[nɪ̃́   è=pàpá   é-!gbó]*=ɛ̀   nɛ̃̀
      child=DEF   NMLZ 3SG=father   PERF-die=DEF   PROX.PRED.PRT
      "This is the child whose father has died."

A look at the examples given so far reveals that all verb-based grammatical argument nominalizations used as modifiers are bounded finally by a determiner, often the definite article, *-lɛ* or its allomorphs. This is another piece of evidence in favour of analysis of these constructions as nominals. The use of a determiner to mark some type of nominalization of a clause has been observed by Andrews (2007:232). He notes that in Lakhota, the relative clause is marked by a determiner, which is indicative of nominal status. Aboh (2010:29) also reports that the structure where a relative clause occurs between the head noun and a determiner is widespread among Kwa languages. Akan (Saah 2010) and Dangme, two close relatives of Gã,

demonstrate this feature. It is also common in Austronesian languages of Indonesia (Shibatani

p.c). The determiner at the end of the argument nominalization in Gã has scope over only the

argument nominalization and not the entire NP comprising the modifying argument

nominalization and the head noun. The head noun always has its own determiner(s) and it is

possible for the argument nominalization to lack one of the determiners that modifies the head

noun.

When the head noun is modified by the definite article, its modifying nominalization

must also be modified by the definite article (41), (42), (43), (46), (47). The argument

nominalization may or may not take a definite article when the head noun is a bare noun. In

(48), it takes a determiner, a demonstrative. When the head noun is modified by the indefinite

article, *ko,* the modifying nominalization takes no determiner (44), (49).

(48) nì̃   ì̃=kɛ̀ɛ́   gbɔ̃mɔ̃ *[ní́*   Ø   *!tá   shì]*   nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́
      and   1SG=say   person NMLZ   sit   down   this
      "And I said, "This person who is sitting here…"   [MM:193]

(49) màmí́   !kó   *[ní́   yɔ́ɔ̀*   *àsàfó=è   mì̀ŋ]*
      mother   INDEF   NMLZ be.located.HAB   group=DEF inside

      mɔ̃̀=kò   fèé   !lɛ́   ní́!í́
      person=INDEF   do   3SG.OBJ   thing
      "A woman who was in the group…someone did something to her…"   [CH:313]

That it is impossible for the modifying verb-based argument nominalization to be marked as indefinite is perfectly in keeping with its semantic status as the conveyor of given information - information that the speaker assumes is available to the addressee via either previous discourse/interaction or the immediate discourse environment. It is this information that enables the addressee to narrow the scope of referents of the head noun. The indefinite article, which marks new discourse referents is thus incompatible with the modificational argument nominalization.

The head noun in a relative construction is also the only NP that can be modified by both the indefinite and definite articles at the same time. The modifying nominalization however, is modified by only the definite article.

(50)   ò=káì-ɔ̀   nɨ̀ɨ̌mó   kó=!ɛ́   *[nɨ́   wɔ̀=yà-sàlá*
       2SG=remember   old.man   INDEF=DEF   NMLZ 1PL=ITIV-visit

       Ø   *yè*   *òsú]*=ɛ̀
            be.located   Osu=DEF
       "Do you remember that old man we went to visit in Osu?"

There is a slight pragmatic difference between head nouns modified by the definite article only and those modified by both the definite and indefinite article. This was explained in detail in §2.3.1.2.

Internally, the argument nominalizations display some verbal characteristics, notably the ability to display aspectual information. As discussed previously, finiteness features serve to anchor a speech event in time and are not restricted to clauses. A nominalization that expresses an event can convey information about the time of the event without sacrificing its nominal status. In addition, while subject and object nominalizations have a gap corresponding with the nominalized argument, true clauses or sentences cannot have such a gap.

There are a few verb-based argument nominalizations that do not conform to the standard structure described here. The deviations in these nominalizations may be due to the pressures of spontaneous conversation, where the information processed by the speaker is not always produced as planned due to various factors e.g. information from an interlocutor that prompts a diversion from the original discursive trajectory. An example is seen in (51). Here, there are two nominalizations modifying *yòólɛ́* 'the woman'. In the first one, the nominalized argument is a possessor and is represented in the nominalization by the third singular pronoun, *e*. The second nominalization is unique and important because it reflects how the actual, everyday use of language sometimes flouts the very rules that shape the language, without compromising on successful communication. In the conversation that takes place before this excerpt, the speaker talks about going to a bereaved relative's house to commiserate with her. Based on this, one can deduce that in the second nominalization, the speaker is referring to

yòó!έ 'the woman' by characterising that earlier visit. However, she appears to trail off or

truncate her talk and then move on to the actual assertion in the sentence - that this woman

reminded her of when her own children died. The second nominalization, in one sense seems

incomplete; there is no gap or pronoun referring to *yòó!έ* 'the woman'. In another sense, the

presence of the definite article marks clearly the final boundary of the nominalization so that

one wonders whether it can truly be characterised as a truncation. Fortunately, this aberration is

a headache only for a syntactician, because the communicative message is conveyed and

received by the addressee with no problem at all.

(51)   yòó=!έ   *[nî̋   è=bí   é-gbò   nέ̋]=!έ̃   [nî̋*
        woman-DEF   NMLZ 3SG-child   PERF-die   this=DEF   NMLZ

        wɔ̀=tèé]=!έ   *<INDEC>*   è=hɛ̋   ì̃=ká!í
        1PL-go.PST=DEF   3SG=give   1SG=remember

        í̃=bí-!í=!έ   bè   nî̋   ằmè̃=gbó
        1SG=child-PL=DEF   time   NMLZ   3PL=die
        "This woman whose child has died, who we went <INDEC>, she reminded me of
        when my children died."   [FH:161]

In spite of its deviation from the norm, (51) is nevertheless a nominalization because of the

presence of the nominalizer and the modification of the grammatical arguments by the definite

article.

A noun may be modified by more than one argument nominalization, as (51) shows. In the second line of (52), the head noun, *àtàlé* 'dress, clothes' is modified by two nominalizations, *ní̵ ȁmȅsùmɔ̀* 'that they like' and *ní̵ ȁmȅdíḛ̏tsè ȁmȅbàá!wó* 'that they themselves will wear'.

(52) mḛ̏ĩ   kò-mḛ̏ĩ   bàá-tsɔ́ɔ́   tòò   kɛ̀   è=nɔ̃̀   wùɔ́-!í   ényɔ̃̀
       people INDEF-PL FUT-show   sheep and   3SG=top chicken-PL two
       "Some people will choose a sheep in addition to two chickens…"

       kɛ̀   mù-tsùlù   kɛ̀   àtàlé   *[ní̵   ȁmȅ=sùmɔ̃̀]*   *[ní̵*
       and   oil-red   and   dress   NMLZ 3PL=like   NMLZ
       "…and palm-oil and a dress that they like…"

       ȁmȅ=díḛ̏tsè   *ȁmȅ=bàá-!wó]=*!ɛ́
       3PL=INTENS   3PL=FUT-wear=DEF
       "…and a dress that they like that they themselves will wear."   [YM:44]

One striking observation made about Gã argument nominalizations used for relativization is that rather than use the larger NP comprising the head noun and argument nominalization as subject of a clause, speakers prefer to front or left-dislocate this NP and follow it with a clause which comments on the head noun. The result is that most verb-based argument nominalizations form part of an NP which functions as a topical argument while the assertion is contained in a comment on the topic. This is the case in examples (41), (42), (49), (51), (53) and the bulk of relative constructions in my corpus that do not function as objects. Example (48), which featured just the head noun and its modifying nominalization, is repeated

below as (53). Here, we see clearly that the head noun together with the relative construction

functions as topic. The comment appears three intonation units later, after the speaker has given

some background.

(53) nĩ̀   ì̃=kɛ̀ɛ́   gbɔ̃mɔ̃̀   *[ní̋*   Ø   *!tá*   *shì̀]*   nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́
and   1SG=say   person   NMLZ   sit   down   this
"And I said, "This person who is sitting here…""

wɔ́=*solve*   nã̀kã̀ĩ̀   *committee*=ɛ́
1PL.PERF=   that   =DEF
"We've solved that committee."

wɔ́=ŋmã̀   *report* wɔ́=!hã́   *Mr.* tɛ́tɛ̀   ómó
1PL.PERF=write   1PL.PERF=give   already
"We've written a report for Mr. Tetteh already."

nĩ̀   é=ba   é!kóŋ́ŋ́   ŋmɛ̃́!nɛ̃́   è=kɛ̀   mɔ̃̀
and   3SG.PERF=come   again   today   3SG=take   person

kĺó!ŋ́kĺóŋ́   ŋ̀-bà   é=bá-féé   thing=DEF
different   PROG-come   3SG.SBJV=VENT=do   ní!í̃=!ɛ̃́
"And she has come again today to do the thing with somebody else."   [MM:193]

6.4.1 Extraposed relative constructions

In the standard relative construction, the head noun and its modifying nominalization are

contiguous, as in (54).

(54) è=bí   !lɛ́=!ɛ́   [ní̋   !bá]=!á   èè=yà
3SG=child   DEF=DEF   NMLZ   come=DEF   3SG.PROG=go
"His child who came, he is going/leaving."   [DF:20]

Sometimes, however, the head noun and argument nominalization are not adjacent to each other. The head noun occurs first, followed by the main verb, with the argument nominalization occurring as the final constituent. This is known as an extraposed relative construction. For English, Givón (2001b:209) notes that extraposed "relative clauses" have a presentative function, where they introduce new discourse referents. As such, they often modify referential indefinite nouns and co-occur with main clause verbs which indicate "entry into the scene" such as 'live', 'enter', 'be' and 'exist'. This is true for Gã also, where the semantic restriction appears even more severe; in my corpus there is only one verb that occurred in the main verb position in an extraposed relative construction. This verb is *yè* 'exist', an "entry into the scene" verb. In (55), for example, the head noun is *kùsṹŋ* 'rites' and the modifying nominalization occurs after the predicate that carries the assertion, *yè* 'exist'.

(55) kùsṹŋ yè   *[nī́   à=fé-ɔ̀   Ø*
      rites exist NMLZ   3PL.IMPERS=do-HAB

      à=hā̃́-ā̀   nɛ̀kɛ̃́   hã̀ã̃́ã̀jì nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́
      3PL.IMPERS=give-HAB   this   twins   this
      "There are some rites that are performed for these twins." (Lit: "Some rites exist that are performed for these twins.")   [YM:29]

The extraposed nominalization in (56) is a little more complex because it contains a time adverbial, *kɛ̃́ àtsí àshwìɛ̀!ɛ́* 'when it is poured away', which precedes the actual characterization

of the head noun. This characterization is provided by a different discourse participant so that

the entire sentence is co-constructed between two speakers.

(56) Kwei: mɛ̃ì̀ yɛ̀ kwɍáá *[nɪ́ kɛ́ à=tsí*
         people exist precisely NMLZ when 3PL.IMPERS=push

         à=shwìɛ́=!ɛ́--
         3PL.IMPERS=pour=DEF
         "There are people who when it is poured away--"

      Oyo: ɑ́ɑ́ èkɛ́=!ɛ́ ɑ̀mɛ̃̀ hɯ́ ɑ̀mɛ̃̀=ŋ̀-hà
         IJ then=TOP 3PL too 3PL=PROG-loot
         "Oh yes! Then they too will be looting (the things)."   [OYO:123]

Extraposed modificational nominalizations in Gã differ slightly from regular nominalizations.

For one, the head noun is always indefinite and referential, and in many cases this is evidenced

by its modification by *ko,* the indefinite, referential/specific article. Furthermore, the

nominalized argument does not necessarily have to be gapped if it is subject or object, it may

be pronominalized. In (56), the nominalized argument, a subject, is represented by the third

plural pronoun, *ɑ̀mɛ̃̀.* Example (57) has two modifying nominalizations. In both, the

nominalized argument is represented by the second singular pronoun where one would expect

the third singular pronoun, but using the second singular pronoun is not incompatible with the

referent of the nominalization, *mɔ̃̀kòmɔ̃̀kò* 'nobody', since it is singular and is neutral as to

person.

(57) mɔ̀=kò-mɔ̀=kò   bέ   *[ní*   *ó=!fɔ́*
      person-INDEF-person-INDEF   exist.NEG   NMLZ   2SG.PERF-give.birth

      hàâjìĩ] [ní   *ò=nyέɛ́ɛ́*   *ó=!féé*   *énέ]*
      twins NMLZ   2SG=able.NEG   2SG.SBJV=do   this
      "There's nobody who has given birth to twins who can't do this."   [OYO:292]

Another difference between extraposed verb-based modificational argument nominalizations

and their non-extraposed counterparts is that the former are not modified by the definite article

or any article for that matter. Again, this is to be expected because the head noun it makes

reference to is indefinite. What both types of relative constructions have in common is that they

are both restrictive i.e. they provide information that serves to narrow down the referents of the

head noun. Here, Gã diverges from its neighbor, Akan, whose extraposed relative constructions

are non-restrictive (Saah 2010:102).

There is another type of verb-based argument nominalization which is not contiguous

with its head noun and which may not even be part of the same sentence as the head noun. I

term this type a disjointed argument nominalization. In one sub-type, the argument

nominalization characterizes the head noun by equating it with another nominal. Such

nominalizations resemble equational copula clauses with a missing subject. For example, in

(58) the argument nominalization *ní !jí Pàpá Tèí ŋ́ɑ́!ɑ́* uttered by Dina refers to the subject of

the previous sentence uttered by Sally i.e. the third singular pronominal, *è*. Dina is looking for

clarification on whether the referent of this pronominal is the same as Papa Tei's wife.

(58) Sally: nò   hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   dáá   nɛ́!ɛ́   è=kɛ̀   mĩ̀
              that   sake=TOP   everyday   this   3SG=take   1SG.OBJ

              yè-ɔ̀   ŋkɔ̃mɔ̃́
              eat-HAB   lamentations
              "So everyday she would lament to me."

              kèkɛ̀   nĩ̀--
              then   and
              "And then--

       Dina: *[nĩ́   Ø   !jí   pàpá   tèí   ŋã́=à]*   ò=tsɔ̃́ɔ̃̀
              NMLZ   COP   Papa   Tei   wife=DEF   2SG=show
              "You mean Papa Tei's wife." (Lit: "Which is Papa Tei's wife, you mean.")
              [DF:59]

In another sub-type, the argument nominalization may refer not to a noun but to an entire event

that has been asserted in prior discourse. For example, the second line in (59) is an argument

nominalization. The gap in the nominalization refers to the entire situation of Oko not greeting.

This nominalization has another nominalization embedded within it i.e. *á!kɛ́ èmĩ̀ŋ é!fṹ wɔ̀* "that

he is angry at us" (*á!kɛ́* is a nominalizer for event nominalizations) and it functions as a

complement of *tsɔ̃̀ɔ̃̀* 'show'.

(59) nĩ́   òkó   bótè   mĩ̀ŋ=!ɛ́   è=ŋáá́à
      NMLZ   Oko   enter   inside=DEF   3SG=greet.NEG
      "When Oko entered he did not greet (us)."

[ní	*Ø*	*tsɔ́!ɔ́*	*á!kɛ́*	*è=mĩ̀ŋ*	*é-!fṹ*	*wɔ̀]*
NMLZ		show	NMLZ	3SG=inside	PERF-swell	1PL

"Which means that he is angry at us."

The first line of (59) is also a nominalization, one which is functioning as a time adverbial.

Time adverbials may also occur in an expanded form where the nominalization modifies the

head noun, *bè* 'time'. They will be discussed more thoroughly in §6.6.2.4 below.

Disjointed nominalizations, unlike regular nominalizations and extraposed

nominalizations do not delimit the pool of referents of the head noun, rather they make some

assessment of the head or provide commentary on the head. They are therefore, non-restrictive.

The following section examines non-restrictive verb-based nominalizations in more detail.

6.4.2 Non-restrictive verb-based argument nominalization (Non-restrictive relative clauses)

These are nominalizations that do not delimit the scope of referents of the head noun. They

modify the head noun by providing some commentary or information about it, as in (60).

(60)	kèkɛ́=!ɛ́	wɔ́	*[ní*	*!jí*	*è=nɔ̌*	*jè-tsélè-mɔ́]=!ɔ́*
	then=TOP	tomorrow	NMLZ	be	3SG=top	world-rise-NOM=DEF

	wɔ̀=bàá-hóó	hɔ̃̀mɔ̃̀wɔ́	nĩ́!ĩ́
	1PL=FUT-cook	Homowo	thing

"Then tomorrow, which is the following morning, we will cook *Homowo* food."
[OYO:41]

In Gã, the head noun that is modified by a non-restrictive argument nominalization is often a proper name or some other unique referent such as *wɔ* 'tomorrow' in the example above. The non-restrictiveness of these nominalizations is not inherent in the nominalization itself but rather stems from the fact that the head noun is a proper name and proper names are referentially unique i.e. they are as specific as nouns get. In the following excerpt, in Dina's turn, she modifies the proper name, Kathy, with a non-restrictive argument nominalization. From prior talk, both interlocutors already know who Kathy is. It is not the case that there are several Kathy's that must be differentiated. This argument nominalization, thus serves to characterize the individual referred to by the head noun in a way that will aid the recovery of that referent in the addressee's memory. It presents old or given information in order to identify a referent. This function is different from that of the restrictive relative clauses discussed above, where the head noun potentially has several referents, and the argument nominalization enables the addressee to hone in on just the one referent that the speaker has in mind.

(61) Sally: nĩ̀   ɛ̃̀ɛ̃   kòjó   hṹ=!ɛ́   lɛ̀   hṹ   mɛ̃̀ĩ   ényɔ̃̀
          and   IJ   Kojo   too=TOP   him   too   people   two

       é-!gbó
       PERF-die
       "And errm…also with regards to Kojo, two (of his children) are dead."

é=shwὲ   Kathy

3SG.PERF=remain   Kathy

"It's left with Kathy."

Dina: Kathy=!ɛ́   *[nǐ   wɔ́=!nááá   lɛ́]=ὲ*

       Kathy=DEF NMLZ   1PL=see.NEG   3SG.OBJ=DEF

       "Kathy, whom we can't find?"   [DF:228]

It is not always the case that the information in a non-restrictive argument nominalization is given or old. It may be new, as in (62) where the addressee need not have had prior knowledge about Oko's headache.

(62) òkó *[nǐ   Ø   kὲɛ́   è=yítsò   ŋ̀-gbá   lɛ́]=ὲ*   nǐ̃
      Oko   NMLZ   say   3SG=head   PROG-split 3SG.OBJ=DEF   FOC

      é=tὲὲ   è=tswà-à   bɔ́ɔ̀lú=!ɛ́
      3SG.PERF=go.PST   3SG=hit-HAB   ball=DEF

      "Oko who said he has a headache, he has gone to play football."

Notice that in (61), the head noun, a proper name, is modified by the definite article. There are two environments in which this can occur: when the proper name is modified by an argument nominalization, or when it is fronted and topicalized. As a comparision of (61) and (62) shows, this marking is not obligatory. Note that a head noun that is a proper noun cannot be modified by the indefinite article, *ko, (*Kòjó !kó)* but can be modified by *nɛ́!ɛ́* 'this' and *nàkàĩ̀* 'that'.

6.5 Verb-based argument nominalizations in NP use (Headless relatives)

These are also known as free relatives. In Gã, when the verb-based argument nominalization is used as an NP i.e. as an argument in a clause, it takes an additional marker to signal its NP use. This marker occurs immediately before *nĩ* and marks the initial boundary for an argument nominalization in NP use. There are two different markers that may be employed, based on whether the referent of the nominalization is non-human or human. *nɔ̃́,* which also means 'thing', is used for non-human referents and *mɔ̃̀,* which means 'person' is used for human referents. I maintain, however, that they are grammatical markers and not noun heads. In (64)-(67), the argument nominalizations have non-human referents and so are marked by *nɔ̃́.* Argument nominalizations with human referents will be discussed later in this section. In (64) and (65), the argument nominalization is being used as an object argument; in (66) it is a subject and in (67) it is a possessor.

(64) nĩ̀   ầmɛ̃̀   ầmɛ̃̀=bàá-tsɔ̃́ɔ̃́   *[nɔ̃́   nĩ́   ầmɛ̃̀=bàá-!yé   Ø]*
       and   3PL   3PL=FUT-show   NM   NMLZ 3PL=FUT-eat
       "And it is they who will decide what they will eat."   [YM:42]

(65) *[nɔ̃́   nĩ́   wɔ̀=bà-nĩ́nà̃   Ø]*   nɛ̃́   á!kɛ́
       NM   NMLZ 1PL-VENT-meet   PROX.PRED.PRT   NMLZ

       mɔ̃̀-fíá-mɔ̃̀   nĩ́   à=bàá-fɔ́   lɛ̀
       person-all-person   NMLZ   3PL.IMPERS=FUT-give.birth   3SG.OBJ

hã̀ã̂jǐí =!έ

twins = DEF

"What we came and met is this, that everyone who is born a twin…" [OYO:5]

(66) *[nɔ́* *nɪ́* *Ø* *hè* *hɪ̃ã́-ã̀]* kèkè jí wɔ̀=bàá-féé

　　　NM　NMLZ　　body　be.important-HAB　simply　COP　1PL=FUT-do

tòí-bò-ò　　　　wɔ́=hã́　　　　　lὲ

ear-shout-NOM　　1PL.SBJV=give　　3SG.OBJ

"What is important is that we will be obedient to him…"　[CH:409]

(67) gbèé=!έ lὲ hṹ hɪ̃ɛ̃̀ tsó=!έ wòsò-mɔ̃̀ *[nɔ́* *nɪ́*

　　　dog=DEF　3SGOBJ　too　carry　tree=DEF　shake-NOM　NM　NMLZ

wòbɪ̃́í=ὲ *sɛ̃̀ŋ* *Ø* *nɔ́]=!ɔ́*

bees=DEF　hang　　　top=DEF

The dog too kept shaking the tree; the one the bees were hanging from.　[PAT:97]

The alternative analysis for the above constructions is to view *nɔ́* as a lexical noun

meaning 'thing'. In that case, it will merely be a head noun of the generic sort and the

construction marked by *nɪ́* will be the modificational nominalization (or relative clause,

depending on your persuasion) that delimits the referent of these very referentially vague

nouns. It is my position that such an analysis does not reflect the extensive grammaticalization

that *nɔ́* has undergone.

nɔ́ in argument nominalizations is very semantically bleached and does not refer to a

physical entity. While in (64), *nɔ́* can be perceived as referring to food and therefore to a

physical entity, this is not the case for many of its uses. In (65) and (66) for instance, *nɔ́* refers

not to a tangible entity but to abstract entity concepts such as behaviour (66) and cultural

practices (65). In (68) below, it is difficult to fathom what physical entity or thing could be

referred to by *nɔ́.*

(68) è=fèé   tàmɔ̀ *[nɔ́   nɔ́*   *èè=jè*   *kpò]*
      3SG=do   like   NM   NMLZ   3SG.PROG-exit   compound
      "He acted as if he was getting out."   [FLO:12]

If *nɔ́* in these argument nominalizations was a head noun, then one would expect it to allow

modification by the definite article. However, this is impossible, as (69) shows.

(69) *nĩ̀ ãmẽ̀ ãmẽ̀=bàá-tsɔ́ɔ́   *[nɔ́=ɔ́*   nɔ́   *ãmẽ̀=bàá-!yé*   *Ø]*
      and 3PL   3PL=FUT-show   thing=DEF   NMLZ 3PL=FUT-eat
      "And it is they who will decide the thing that they will eat."

Interestingly, it may be modified by the indefinite, specific article, *ko,* but the result is a

lexicalized noun *nɔ́!kó* 'something' which can then function as a head noun and be modified by

an argument nominalization, as in (71b). There is a semantic difference between argument

nominalizations marked by *nɔ́* and constructions in which the head noun, *nɔ́!kó* 'something' is

modified by an argument nominalization. Compare (67) above with (70), which has *nɔ́!kó*

'something' in place of *nɔ́.* The argument nominalization marked by *nɔ́* carries the implication

that there is only one entity being referred to, and based on the sentence that precedes it, the

argument nominalization can have only one referent - *tsó!ɛ́* 'the tree'. When *nɔ́!kó* 'something'

is used, on the other hand, the option that the argument nominalization may characterize other

entities is available, such that *tsó!έ* 'the tree' is only one possibility. This ambiguity is what

makes (70) unacceptable, because *nɔ́!kó* 'something' does not uniquely refer to *tsó!έ* 'the tree'.

The speaker wants to make that unique reference and does so with the structure in (67).

(70)   ʔgbèé=!έ   lὲ   hṹ   hĩ̌έ   tsó=!έ   wòsò-mɔ̀   *[nɔ̃́=!kó*

        dog=DEF   3SGOBJ   too   carry   tree=DEF   shake-NOM   thing=INDEF

        nĩ́   *wòbĩ̀=è*   *sɛ̃̀ŋ*   *nɔ̃́]=!ɔ̃́*

        NMLZ   bees=DEF   hang   top=DEF

        "The dog too kept shaking the tree; something the bees were hanging from."

A similar disparity exists between the pair of sentences in (71). In uttering (71a) the speaker

communicates that laziness is the only thing that she does not like, while (71b) implies that

laziness is but one of the things she does not like; there may well be others.

(71a)   *[nɔ̃́*   *nĩ́*   *ĩ́=súmɔ̃́ɔ̃́ɔ̃̀]*   jí   àníháó

        NM   NMLZ   1SG=like.NEG   COP   laziness

        "What I don't like is laziness."

(71b)   nɔ̃́-!kó   *[nĩ́*   *ĩ́=súmɔ̃́ɔ̃́ɔ̃̀]*   jí   àníháó

        thing=INDEF   NMLZ   1SG=like.NEG   COP   laziness

        "One thing I don't like is laziness."

What this goes to show is that *nɔ̃́,* the grammatical marker functions differently from *nɔ̃́,* the

word meaning 'thing'.

      It is not only in such so-called headless relatives that *nɔ̃́* displays defective syntax, being

unable to take the definite article. *nɔ̃́* generally displays syntactic deficiencies that do not afflict

other nouns. It typically does not occur independently in a sentence without being modified by

an argument nominalization marked by *nɪ̋*. Its syntactic spectrum of occurrence is also quite

limited. As we have seen, it occurs together with the indefinite article, *ko* to form the

lexicalised compound indefinite noun *nɔ̋!kó* 'something'. It also occurs with the quantifier *fɛ̋ɛ̋*

'all' to form the universal noun *nɔ̋fɛ̋ɛ̋nɔ̋* 'everything'; with *kĺóŋ!kĺóŋ* in *nɔ̋ kĺóŋ!kĺóŋ*

'something else' and with *kòmé* 'one' in *nɔ̋ kòmé* 'one thing'. It also occurs in a small number

of idiomatic expressions such as the following:

(72) lɛ́=!ɛ́   tó   è=hɑ̋-ɑ̀   mɔ̰̀   nɔ̋
      3SG.OBJ=TOP   QP   3SG=give-HAB   person thing
      "As for her, she's generous, isn't she."   [DT:9;50]

(73) ó=nɑ̰̀   nɔ̋
      2SG.PERF=see   thing
      You are really suffering!

Furthermore, *nɔ́* is unlike regular nouns in that it cannot be modified by any of the

syntactic categories that normally modify nouns, with the few exceptions being *ko* 'INDEF',

kòmé 'one' and *fɛ̋ɛ̋* 'all' which result in new lexical items being formed as seen above. It

typically cannot be modified by demonstratives or adjectives. The following sound odd and

archaic: **nɔ̋ nɛ̋!ɛ̋* 'this thing', *?nɔ̋ fɛ̀ɛ́fɛ́ó* 'a beautiful thing'. Most speakers prefer to use the

synonymous *nɪ́!ɪ́* [24] in place of *nɔ́: nɪ́!ɪ́ nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́* ' this thing' and *nɪ̃ɪ̃ fɛ̃ɛ́fɛ́ó* 'a beautiful thing'. *nɔ́*

also occurs as a nominalization marker in possessives e.g. *Òkó nɔ́* 'Oko's'. These will be

discussed in the next section. Therefore, apart from the limited contexts mentioned above, *nɔ́* is

not used without being followed by the nominalizer *nɪ́* or as a nominalization marker in a

possessive. The commonly used word for 'thing' – *nɪ́!ɪ́* has none of these syntactic and

semantic defects. It mostly refers to concrete, physical entities. So in (74), *nɪ́!ɪ́* 'thing' is far less

likely to refer to someone's behaviour than to a physical entity but in (75), the argument

nominalization marked by *nɔ́* can refer to a non-concrete entity such as behaviour.

(74) nɪ̃ɪ̃=!ɛ̃   *[nɪ́   ɪ́=súmɔ́ɔ́ɔ́]=ɔ̃*   nɛ̃
      thing=DEF   NMLZ   1SG=like.NEG=DEF   PROX.PRED.PRT
      "This is the thing I don't like."

(75) *[nɔ́   nɪ́   ɪ́=súmɔ́ɔ́ɔ́]=ɔ̃*   nɛ̃
      NM   NMLZ   1SG=like.NEG=DEF   PROX.PRED.PRT
      "This is what I don't like."

---

[24] The synonym of *nɔ́* – *nɪ́!ɪ́* is not syntactically restricted in the ways that *nɔ́* is. However, if it replaces *nɔ́* in (65) and (66), these sentences will be ungrammatical (76) (77), showing that the use of *nɔ́* in these expressions is heavily fossilised. Dakubu (2009:150) as well as Christaller et al (1874) list *nii* (in addition *to nibii*) as the plural form of *nɔ́*. However, as the following example shows current speakers have reanalyzed *nii* as the singular and maintained *nibii* as the plural.

a) ì-hɛ̃́   !lé   ní!í   kòmé   pé   nì   è-hɛ̃́   !mí   níbîi   pìì
   1SG-give   him   thing   one   only and   3SG-give me   thing-PL many
   'I gave him only one thing and he gave me many things.'

Replacing the nominalization marker, *nɔ̃́* with *nɪ̃́!ɪ̃́* 'thing' in (65) and (66) above results in

ungrammatical or at best marginally acceptable sentences.

(76) **?nɪ̃́!ɪ̃́** *[nɪ̃́* **Ø** *hè* *hɪ̃ᷘ-ã̀]* kèkè jí wɔ̀=bàá-féé
    thing   NMLZ   body be.important-HAB   simply COP   1PL=FUT-do

    tòí-bò-ò   wɔ́=hɪ̃ᷘ   lɛ̀
    ear-shout-NOM   1PL.SBJV=give   3SG.OBJ
    "The thing that is important is that we will be obedient to him…"

(77) **?nɪ̃́!ɪ̃́** *[nɪ̃́* **wɔ̀=bà-nɪ̃́nã̀** **Ø]** nɪ̃ᷘ á!ké mɔ̃̀-fɪ̃ᷘ-mɔ̃̀
    thing NMLZ 1PL=VENT-meet   this   NMLZ   person-all-person

    nɪ̃ᷘ   à=bàá-fɔ́   lɛ̀   hã̀ã̂jɪ̃́ɪ̃́=!ɛ́
    NMLZ   3PL.IMPERS=FUT-give.birth   3SG.OBJ   twins=DEF
    "The thing we came and met is this, that everyone who is born a twin…"

    These facts lead to the conclusion that the NP *nɔ̃́* 'thing' is not entirely syntactically

independent and should not be classed as a head noun in the same way that regular nouns are.

This situation where a head-like nominal which is semantically defective is found in an

argument nominalization, is reminiscent of Epps' (2012) study of relative clause domain (head)

nominals in Hup. This language has nominalized relative constructions where the domain noun

may be a syntactically dependent noun, a classifier or even a plural marker. Epps shows that it

is impossible to assimilate these nouns into either the 'headed' or 'headless' relative clause

categories. She suggests a gradient approach to the classification of domain nominals that takes

into account these in-between types.

Hendery (2012:59) remarks humorously that generic nouns such as words for 'thing' that mark headed relativizations just happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time and get kidnapped into the relative clause. While I disagree that these generic nouns are heads of relative clauses, her comment captures the cross-linguistic observation that the word for thing is involved in argument nominalizations in NP use (headless relatives). A similar structure occurs in Akan, where an argument nominalization used as an NP is marked by a morpheme which is made up of a coalescence of the word for 'thing' or 'person' and the nominalizer (relativizer). Saah (2010:103) calls the constructions "relative clauses without overt complementizers". I argue that this form should be considered a grammatical marker because of the grammaticalization undergone by the nouns for 'thing' and 'person'. Heine and Kuteva (2007:230-231) also report an identical path of development for free relative clause (headless relative clause) formation in Ewe, where free relatives are marked by an article comprising a generic noun meaning 'thing', 'person', 'place' etc. and the relativizer *si*.

The argument nominalizations in the following examples refer to humans and so are marked by the nominalization marker, *mɔ̀*.

(78) shí   kòfí   bî   jí   nyɛ̃̀-sɛ̀ɛ̀   *[mɔ̀   ní   gbó]=!ɛ́*
      but   Kofi   child   COP   yesterday-back   NM   NMLZ   die=DEF
      "But Kofi's child is the one who died the other day."   [DF:187]

(79)   *[mɔ́   nɪ́   hɪ̌ɛ̌   shìká]=!á*   è=hé-ɔ̀   *six crates*

          NM   NMLZ   hold   money=DEF   3SG=buy-HAB

          "The one with a lot of money buys six crates (of eggs)."   [YM:172]

(80)   nò   hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   *[mɔ̀   nɪ́   bò   ó=!fɔ́   hǎ̀ǎjɪ̃́ɪ̃́]=!ɛ́*

          that   sake=TOP   NM   NMLZ 2SG.OBJ   2SG.PERF-give.birth twins=DEF

          kɛ́   ò=tèé=!ɛ́   ò=yàá-hé   yè   jɛ̃́!mɛ̃́

          when 2SG=go.PST=DEF   2SG=FUT.ITIV-buy   be.located   there

          "So you who has given birth to twins, when you go, you'll go and buy it from there"

          [OYO:239]

The noun *mɔ̀* 'person', appears not to have undergone the same extent of semantic bleaching as

nɔ́ 'thing'. In a parallel development with *nɔ́* 'thing', it occurs in such words as *mɔ̀kò*

'someone', *mɔ̀fɛ̃́ɛ̃́mɔ̀* 'everyone' but it is not as restricted as *nɔ́* 'thing' when it comes to

possible modifiers. It can be modified by determiners. However, its modification by adjectives

is a bit odd: *ʔmɔ̀ bíbìóó* 'a small person'; *ʔmɔ̀ fɔ̌!ŋ́* 'evil person'. For adjectival modification,

gbɔ̀mɔ̀ 'human/person' is preferred e.g. *gbɔ̀mɔ̀ bíbìóó* 'a small person'; *gbɔ̀mɔ̀ fɔ̌!ŋ́* 'evil

person'. Also, even though *mɔ̀* can be modified by determiners, this is not possible if it marks

an argument nominalization. Example (81) is ungrammatical because of the modification of *mɔ̀*

by the definite article. This further cements the grammatical marker status of *mɔ̀* and *nɔ́* since

specificity and definiteness are categories displayed by nominals but not grammatical markers.

If *mɔ̀* and *nɔ́* were nouns it would be possible to indicate their degree of familiarity or

givenness with the use of articles and determiners.

(81) *[mɔ́=!ɔ́   ní   hǐɛ̌   shìká]=!á   è=hé-ɔ̀   *six crates*
      person=DEF NMLZ   hold   money=DEF 3SG=buy-HAB
      "The one with a lot of money buys six crates (of eggs)."

It is also possible, but rare, for the argument nominalization marked by *nɔ́* to be used as a modifier to a head noun. One such example occurred in the data and is presented in (82) where the argument nominalization marked by *nɔ́* is used to modify *hɔ̀mɔ̀* 'hunger'. The head noun and the argument nominalization are produced under one intonational contour and the argument nominalization is restrictive. They are not in a paratactic relationship where the argument nominalization would function non-restrictively.

(82) ʔbɛ̀   è=bà   lɛ̀   á!kɛ́ hɔ̀mɔ́=!ɔ́   *[nɔ́   ní*
      then   3SG=come 3SG.OBJ   NMLZ hunger=DEF NM   NMLZ

      yè-ɔ̀   wɔ́]=!ɔ́   wɔ̀=bàá-wɔ́   è=yì
      eat-HAB   1PL=DEF   1PL=FUT-jeer   3SG-head
      "Then it happened that the hunger that we were experiencing, we will jeer at it."
                                                              [YM:235]

The modification use of an argument nominalization that typically occurs as an NP is a common diachronic process in language which leads to the formation of relative constructions. Givón (2009:105-106) reports on a similar pathway for Hebrew. In this language, an argument nominalization normally used as an NP first occurs in a paratactic relationship with a head noun. In this construction, the argument nominalization is non-restrictive and there is a pause between it and the head noun. Among some speakers of Hebrew, there is no longer a pause

between the two nominals, and the argument nominalization has taken on a restrictive meaning. This construction, however, is considered non-standard, much like the Gã example in (82). It will require more data to determine whether this construction is used more widely and whether it is for the most part acceptable to speakers.

6.5 Noun-based argument nominalizations (Headless genitives)

The previous sections have been focused on verb-based argument nominalizations, which have been shown to be used for modification and as NPs. There are also argument nominalizations that are based on nouns, and in Gã, these result in what are commonly called "headless genitives" or "headless possessives". These are only used as NPs and cannot be used as modifiers.

Ordinary "headed" possessives are formed simply by juxtaposition of the possessor and the possessed entity. In a so-called headless genitive, the possessed noun is not made explicit but is retrievable from the discourse. In Gã, these NPs involve the marker, *nɔ́*, which is also involved in so-called headless relatives. An example is given below.

(83) shí   *[ellen nɔ́]=!ɔ́*   *[pàpá tèí   nɔ́]=!ɔ́*   lɛ́=!ɛ́
     but   Ellen NM=DEF   Papa Tei   NM=DEF   3SG.OBJ=TOP

     í=nyɛ́ɛ́ɛ́   mɑ�́-!yá
     1SG=able.NEG   1SG.FUT-go
     "But as for Ellen's and Papa Tei's I couldn't attend them."   [DF:98]

It is my view, following Shibatani (2009b), that these NPs marked by *nɔ́* are more accurately described as noun-based argument nominalizations which are being used as NPs. *nɔ́* in these NPs does not refer to 'thing' but is a grammatical marker - a nominalization marker. These nominalizations are derived from existing nominals, but they differ from lexical nominalizations derived from other nouns (of the *parent-parenthood* type) by not having definite, explicit referents. Their referents are dependent on the discourse. Noun-based argument nominalizations denote entities that have crucial relevance to the referent of the noun marked by the nominalization marker (Shibatani and bin Makhashen 2009:27).

In (83), there are two noun-based argument nominalizations, *Ellen nɔ́!ɔ́* 'Ellen's' and *Papa Tei nɔ́!ɔ́* 'Papa Tei's'. Each of these nominalizations indicates an entity that has crucial relevance to the nouns (Ellen and Papa Tei) and whose identity is recoverable from discourse. From the prior conversation, it can be deduced that this entity is 'funeral'. The speaker had been talking about funerals that she could and could not attend. The nominalizer, *nɔ́* marks the NP as "something pertaining to Ellen/Papa Tei". In many cases, this relationship is one of possession but as seen in (83), it is not always so.

Evidence that *nɔ́* is functioning here as a grammatical marker and not a nominal head comes from the fact that it marks nominalizations which refer to animate entities and humans.

If it were strictly a noun head meaning 'thing', one would expect it to be restricted only to inanimate objects. Its use in sentences like (84) and (85), where the referents of the nominalizations are human, show that it has been grammaticalized. *nɔ́* in *ínɔ́* (84) marks that the referent of the nominalization pertains to *í* '1SG'. In the discourse, *ínɔ́* 'mine' refers to the speaker's twin babies. In (85), *pàpá kwààtèí nɔ́* 'Papa Kwatei's' refers to Papa Kwatei's children.

(84)　*[í=nɔ́]=!ɔ́*　　　　ní　　　　　ò=nà̰-à̰　　　àmɛ́=!ɛ́
　　　　1SG=NM-TOP　　NMLZ　　　2SG=see-HAB　　3PL=DEF

　　　　they were eight months　　nḭ̀　　wɔ̀=bà-fèê
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　and　　1PL=VENT-do
　　　　"Mine that you see, they were 8 months old when we came and did (it)." [OYO:428]

(85)　nò　　hèwɔ́=!ɔ́　　*[pàpá　kwààtèí　　nɔ́]=!ɔ́*　　ɛ̀ɛ̀　　kwààlé
　　　　that　sake=DEF　　Papa　Kwatei　　NM=DEF　　IJ　　Kwarley

　　　　é-!gbó
　　　　PERF-die
　　　　"So among Papa Kwatei's (children), errm…Kwarley is dead." [DF:165]

Another indication of the grammaticalization of *nɔ́* lies in the fact that it cannot be pluralized to agree with plural referents. In both (84) and (85), the referents of the nominalizations are plural (twins and children respectively). If *nɔ́* were a noun head, then one would expect its plural forms, *ní!í* or *níbí!í* to be used instead. But this is not the case because *nɔ́* is a grammatical marker.

6.6 Event nominalizations

An event nominalization denotes a state of affairs by characterizing the state of affairs itself.

The difference between an argument nominalization and an event nominalization in Gã is that

while the argument nominalization has a gap or pronoun corresponding to the nominalized

argument, the event nominalization may have full NPs in all argument positions. Furthermore,

while the argument nominalization is bounded finally by a determiner, there is no such

requirement for an event nominalization. Event nominalizations have two main functions in the

grammar of the language. These are complementation and adverbial modification. The

nominalizer, *nî* plays a major role in event nominalization, buttressing the point that it is not

just a marker of relativization.

6.6.1 Complementation

The received understanding of complementation holds that so-called complement clauses are

clausal or sentential arguments of verbs. An example of a complement clause is italicized in the

sentence below, where *that* is analysed as a complementizer which functions to identify *I don't*

like chocolate as a sentential argument:

(86)   Jane knows *that I don't like chocolate.*

Noonan (2007:52) defines complementation as "the syntactic situation that arises when a

notional sentence or predication is an argument of a verb." The qualification of 'sentence' and

'predication' by the term 'notional' implies the existence of a widely-held, semantically-based definition of what constitutes a sentence and a predication. This is assumed, and no further explanation is given. But based on the functional definition of a sentence proposed by Shibatani (2011) and adopted in this work, complement constructions cannot be deemed sentences because they do not constitute a speech act; they do not make assertions, if one counts them as declarative sentences. This property of non-assertion of complement clauses is shared with relative constructions. Unlike relative constructions, however, complement constructions do not necessarily contain presupposed or given information. Often, they contain new, foregrounded information that is given as much prominence as the main predicate which makes the assertion, as reported by Thompson (2002) and Schmidtke-Bode (2009). The functions that these so-called clauses/sentences play is arguably one of denotation; they refer to a state or an event e.g. the state of disliking chocolate. Therefore they are nominalizations. This state or event occurs as an argument of a verb much as a noun would.

It is no surprise, then, that in many languages relative constructions and complement constructions share the same marker (Horie et al 2008, Schidtke-Bode 2009). It is simply a case of one structure being co-opted for multiple functions. Gã is no different, and it will be seen in what follows that the nominalizer *nǐ* that is crucial to relativization is also important for complementation. Event nominalizations used for complementation may be marked by one of

two nominalizers: *ní* and *á!ké (!shí)*. The polyfunctionality of *ní* hints at a diachronic

relationship between the various uses of these nominalizations, a subject that will be taken up

later in the chapter. The discussion of complementation will begin with an examination of their

morphology and syntax.

6.6.1.1 Morphology and syntax of complementation

As previously mentioned, the complement construction in Gã is an event nominalization

marked by the particles *ní* and *á!ké (shí)*. The bracketing suggests that *á!ké (shí)* may occur

with or without *shí*, but in practice it occurs more often without it. *shí* cannot occur alone as a

nominalizer. *á!ké* is hypothesized by Lord (1993:190) to have grammaticalized from the verb

kèê 'say'. The choice of either nominalizer is dependent on the main verb which carries the

assertion of the sentence – what Noonan (1997) calls the complement-taking predicate (CTP) –

of which there are several semantic types. These will be discussed in §6.6.1.2 below.

Complement constructions in Gã always occur as objects of CTPs, never as subjects. The

nominalizer immediately follows the main verb phrase containing the CTP and marks the initial

boundary of the object complement. (87)-(92) all contain event nominalizations. Those marked

by *á!ké* or *á!ké shí* are given in (87)-(89), while those marked by *ní* are given in (90)-(92). In

(87), the event nominalization functions as a second object, the first object being *wɔ* '1PL'. In

(88), it is the only object.

(87) à=kèέ   !wɔ́   *á!kέ*   *έ=!gbɔ́*
      3PL.IMPERS=say   1PL   NMLZ   3SG.PERF=die
      "We were told she is dead."   [DF:200]

(88) bὲ   è=tsɔ̃́-!ɔ̃́   *á!kέ   dɔ́kìtà-fó!í=!έ*   *ằmὲ̃=nyέ́έ́έ́*   *!hέ*
      then   3SG=show-HAB   NMLZ doctor-PL=DEF   3PL=be.able.NEG   body

      nɔ̃́=kò   *àmέ̃=fέ́è*
      thing=INDEF   3PL.SBJV=do
      "Then it means that the doctors, there is nothing they can do about it."   [CH:56]

In the following example, the event nominalization (object of *nằ* 'see') has embedded within it

another event nominalization marked by *á!kέ shí̃,* which functions as the object of *kèê* 'say'.

(89) mɔ̃̀   kòmé nằ   *[á!kέ* doctor *kèê*   *[á!kέ shí̃*   *mɔ̃̀*
      person one see   NMLZ   say   NMLZ NMLZ   NM

      ní̃   *!kắ*   *shí̃=!ế*   *è=tsùí*   *έ-fằ]*
      NMLZ lie   down=DEF   3SG=heart   PERF-be.uprooted
      "One person realized that the doctor said that the person who is lying there is
      frightened."   [FH:144]

In (91) and (92), the event nominalizations marked by *ní̃* function as objects of *sáắá* 'fit.NEG'

and *tá!ó* 'want' respectively.

(91) ὲέ̃!ế   hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   é=!sáắá   *ní̃*   *kű̃!έ*
      yes   sake=TOP   3SG=fit.NEG   NMLZ   CTF

      à=tà-à   *è=hὲ*
      3PL.IMPERS=touch-HAB   3SG=body
      "Yes, so they shouldn't have touched him." [FH:146]

(92) ké   ó=bí   kò   nἳ   ò=táò-ɔ̀   *ní*
      if   2SG=child INDEF   FOC   2SG=want-HAB   NMLZ

é=fɔ́   *hἆ̃ἆjἰ̃ĩ=!ɛ̃́*   *nyɔ̀ŋmɔ̀*   *bàá-dằmɔ̀*   *mἳ̃ŋ*
3SG.SBJV-give.birth twins=DEF   God   FUT-stand   inside

é=hἆ̃́   *bò*
3SG.SBJV=give   2SG.OBJ

"If you have a child whom you want to give birth to twins, God will intervene for you."
[OYO:106]

(93) exemplifies an equational construction in which the event nominalization is a complement of the copula, *jí*.

(93) nɔ̃́   kὸmé nἵ   mἵ̃ĩ=hἳ̃   wàà   jí   *ní*
      thing one   NMLZ 1SG.PROG=hate   very.much   COP   NMLZ

mɔ̃̀=kò   *bàá-!yé*   *ἵ̃=hè*   *ŋshékú*
person=INDEF   FUT-eat   1SG=body   gossip

"One thing I hate very much is somebody gossiping about me."

The event nominalization must always have a subject and a predicate. Based on the valency of the predicate in the nominalization, it may also have an object. The requirement for an overt subject pertains even if the subject of the nominalization is raised to become object of the CTP. In such a case, the CTP will have two objects, a noun and an event nominalization, as in (94b) where the objects are *lὲ* '3SG.OBJ' and the event nominalization marked by *ní.* Raising is the traditional term used when a subject or object in a subordinate/lower clause is moved to occupy the position of object of the main/higher clause. Since it is my position that

the subordinate clause is a nominalization, sentences with complements actually constitute just

one clause. I however retain the use of the term 'raising' when speaking of cases such as (94b),

where the subject of the event nominalization is a pronoun that is co-referential with the initial

object of the CTP, which may also be a pronoun. (94a) does not involve raising and is

provided for comparison.

(94a) mî͂í=mê͂   *nî́*   *é=bá-hóó*   *wó!nú͂=!ɛ́*
       1SG.PROG=wait   NMLZ   3SG.SBJV=VENT-cook   soup=DEF
       "I'm waiting for him/her to come and cook the soup"

(94b) mî͂í=mê͂   lɛ̀   *nî́*   *é=bá-hóó*   *wónú͂=!ɛ́*
       1SG.PROG=wait   3SG.OBJ   NMLZ 3SG.SBJV=VENT-cook   soup=DEF
       "I'm waiting for him/her to come and cook the soup"

Note that the nominalizer *á!ké (shî́)* in place of *nî́* will render both sentences in (94)

ungrammatical. There is a subtle but important meaning difference between (94a) and (94b), in

that (94b) is purposive while (94a) is not. The purposive interpretation is engendered by the

fact that purpose adverbials, just like verbal complements, are structurally represented by event

nominalizations marked by *nî́* and as conveyers of intent and potential events, they are often

marked by irrealis mood in the form of the subjunctive. The semantic content of the CTP and

the event described in the nominalization also make a purpose reading possible. Waiting for

someone implies that the person's potential presence or action will be beneficial to you in some

way. This reason for waiting may be stated as a purpose construction.

Not all instances of raising will give a purposive reading. Event nominalizations and CTPs which lack the qualifying semantic and modal characteristics will not exude a purposive sense. For example, (95b) in which *Aku,* the subject of the nominalization, has been raised, does not yield a purposive meaning. Rather the complement denotes an event (of crying) which is simultaneous with that of the event described by the CTP (seeing Aku).

(95a) òkó   nã̀   *nɨ́/á!kɛ́*   *ákú*   *ŋ̀-fó*
      Oko   saw   NMLZ   Aku   PROG-cry
      "Oko saw that Aku was crying."

(95b) òkó   nã̀   ákú   *nɨ́/*á!kɛ́*   *èè-fó*
      Oko   saw   Aku   NMLZ   PROG-cry
      "Oko saw Aku crying."

á!kɛ́ (shɨ́) can replace *nɨ́* in (95a) but not (95b).

Another syntactic phenomenon commonly found in complement constructions is equi-deletion. According to Noonan (2007:76), this process results in the deletion of a subject in the complement construction if it is co-referential with an argument in the higher clause. Equi-deletion is not possible in Gã. If the subject or initial object of the sentence is co-referential with the subject of the nominalization, this is indexed in the nominalization by the corresponding subject pronoun. In (96a), the subject *gbé!kɛ́bí!í!ɛ́ ékòmɛ̀ɨ̃* 'some of the children' is topicalized in sentence-initial position and followed by a co-referential subject pronoun and then the CTP. The event nominalization that follows must also have the pronoun in subject

position. Equi-deletion of the subject of the nominalization, as is done in (96b) results in

ungrammaticality.

(96a) gbé!ké́-bí!í=!ɛ́ ékò-mɛ̀ĩ́=!ɛ̃́ ã̀mɛ̀̃=sùmɔ̀̃ *ní́* *ã̀mɛ̃́=yà*

 child-PL=DEF some-PL=DEF 3PL=like NMLZ 3PL.SBJV=go

 ã̀mɛ̃́=yá-!ná
 3PL.SBJV=ITIV-see
 "Some of the children, they like to go and see (it)." [OYO:89]

(96b) *gbé!ké̃́-bí!í=!ɛ́ ékò=mɛ̀ĩ́=!ɛ̃́ ã̀mɛ̀̃=sùmɔ̀̃ *ní́* *yà*

 child-PL=DEF some=PL=DEF 3PL=like NMLZ go

 ã̀mɛ̃́=yá-!ná
 3PL.SBJV=ITIV-see
 "Some of the children like/want to go and see (it)."

  Some complement constructions can occur without a nominalizer. This does not make

them any less nominal than their counterparts with overt nominalizers. The most common

CTPs that allow null marking are *kɛ̀ɛ̂* 'say', *nyɛ̃́* 'be able' and *hã́́* 'give'. An example sentence

each is given below.

(97) à=kɛ̀ɛ́   Ø *ã̀mɛ̀̃=kɛ̀* *ã̀mɛ̀̃=nìnè* *bà-wò-ɔ̀*   *mĩ̀ĩ̀*

 3PL.IMPERS=say   3PL=take 3PL=hand VENT-put-HAB inside
 "It is said that they come and put their hands in it." [YM:306]

(98) ò=nyɛ̃́-ŋ́   Ø *ó=!kɛ́ɛ́* *á!kɛ́ krìstòfónyò* *jí*

 2SG=be.able-NEG.FUT   2SG.SBJV=say NMLZ christian COP
 bò
 2SG.OBJ
 "You will not be able to say you are a Christian…" [CH:207]

(99) kɛ́   wɔ̀=ŋ̀-yá=!á   mã́=hã́   Ø   wɔ́=tsɔ̃́
     when   1PL=PROG-go=DEF   1SG.FUT=give   1PL.SBJV=pass

jɛ̃́!ŋ́
there
"When we are going, I'll let us pass by there."   [FH:10]

These may alternatively be rendered with the nominalizers *á!kɛ́ (shɪ̃́)* (98) and *nɪ́* (99), (100)

without any change in meaning. (98) and (99) closely resemble serial verb constructions

(SVCs). However, the fact that a nominalizer can be inserted between the CTP and the

complement without affecting meaning is one indication that they are not. Furthermore, in (98)

the CTP and the predicate in the event nominalization have opposite polarities – an occurrence

disallowed in SVCs – which require agreeing polarity across all verbs. (99) is an example of a

typical periphrastic causative construction in Gã, but since these have been examined

extensively in the preceding chapter, no further discussion is warranted here.

nɪ́ is more likely to be omitted as a nominalizer when the CTP involved is *nyɛ̃́* 'be able'

or *hã́* 'give'. The reason for this has to do with the degree of semantic integration of the event

and its relation to syntactic integration. Givón (2001b:40) observes that stronger event

integration corresponds positively to tighter clause union. In the case of *hã́* 'give', this verb has

been grammaticalized into a marker of causation; it no longer expresses an event of 'giving'

separate from the event described by the nominalization. As such, *hã́* 'give' and its complement

are more tightly integrated semantically and hence are more likely to be expressed by syntactic

structures that echo this closeness. The presence of a marker or connector between two events

indicates a looser degree of integration between them than the absence of such a marker. A

similar picture can be painted of *nyɛ̃́* 'be able', which is primarily a marker of deontic

modality. Most of its occurrences are in complement constructions such as (98). When *nyɛ̃́* 'be

able' occurs without complementation it means 'dominate, control, surpass' and often occurs

with negative polarity (100).

(100) kɛ́   è=bà   nĩ́-hòó-mɔ̃́=!ɔ̃́   ò=nyɛ̃́ɛ̃́ɛ̃́   !mĩ́
       when 3SG=come   thing-cook-NOM=DEF   2SG=surpass.NEG   1SG.OBJ
       "When it comes to cooking, you cannot surpass me." i.e. I am better than you.

nĩ́ is also more likely to be dispensed with when the CTP is *tá!ó* 'want' and the subject of the

clause and the subject of the event nominalization are co-referential (101). When the subjects

are different, an overt marker is preferred, as in (92).

(101) yèí=ɛ̀   ŋ̀-táò   *Ø*   *ầmɛ̃́=bí*   *bò*   *sằnè*
       woman.PL=DEF   PROG-want   3PL.SBJV=ask   2SG.OBJ   matter
       "The women want to ask you a question."

In addition to 'say', *kèê* can also mean 'tell' and this secondary use triggers a

mandatory nominalizer, which may be *á!kɛ́* or *nĩ́*. When used to mean 'say', the nominalizer is

optional. The requirement for a nominalizer for *kèê* 'tell' appears not to be related as much to

the semantics of the CTP as to the argument structure of the CTP. It is usually the case that

overt nominalizers are mandated by CTPs that have two objects: an initial NP object and a

second object which is the event nominalization. In the trio of examples in (102) featuring the

CTP, *kèê* 'tell', the first uses the nominalizer *á!ké,* the second uses *nî* and the third has no

nominalizer and is therefore ungrammatical.

(102a) kèé-mɔ́   nűŋ!tsɔ́   *á!ké*   *è=kè*   *bò*   *á-wíé*
      tell-IMP   lord   NMLZ   3SG=take   2SG.OBJ   SBJV-talk
      "Tell the Lord that he should speak to you."   [CH:134]

(102b) kèé-mɔ́   nűŋ!tsɔ́   *nî*   *è=kè*   *bò*   *á-wíé*
      tell-IMP   lord   NMLZ   3SG=take   2SG.OBJ   SBJV-talk
      "Tell the Lord to speak to you."

(102c) *kèé-mɔ́   nűŋ!tsɔ́   *Ø*   *è=kè*   *bò*   *á-wíé*
      tell-IMP   lord   3SG-take   2SG.OBJ   SBJV-talk
      "Tell the Lord that he should speak to you."

(102c) can be made grammatical by inserting a noticeable pause after the first object, *nűŋ!tsɔ́*

'lord'.

      There are also peculiar effects of polarity and to a lesser extent, aspect, on the

obligatoriness or otherwise of the nominalizer, *á!ké* with complements of *kèê* 'say'. When *kèê*

'say' is in the affirmative future, *á!ké* is optional (103a). However, when it is in the negative

future, then the nominalizer is obligatory (103b). It is not possible to omit it (103c).

(103a) kòjó   bàá-kèé   *(á!ké)*   *mî́í=málé*
      Kojo   FUT-say   (NMLZ)   1SG.PROG=lie
      "Kojo will say (that) I am lying."

(103b) kòjó é-kέ!ŋ́   *á!kέ*   *míí̋=málé*
       Kojo NEG-say   NMLZ   1SG.PROG=lie
       "Kojo will not say that I am lying."

(103c) *kòjó é-kέ!ŋ́   **Ø**   *míí̋=málé*
       Kojo NEG-say   1SG.PROG=lie
       "Kojo will not say I am lying."

A similar pattern is seen with the perfect, except here even the affirmative appears to favour an

overt nominalizer (104a) (104b). The negative perfect CTP is ungrammatical without one

(104d).

(104a) kòjó é-kὲέ   *á!kέ* *míí̋=málé*
       Kojo PERF-say   NMLZ 1SG.PROG=lie
       "Kojo has said I am lying."

(104b) ?kòjó é-kὲέ   **Ø**   *míí̋=málé*
       Kojo PERF-say   1SG.PROG=lie
       "Kojo has said I am lying."

(104c) kòjó é-kέ-kò   *á!kέ*   *míí̋=málé*
       Kojo NEG-say-NEG.PERF NMLZ   1SG.PROG=lie
       "Kojo has not said that I am lying."

(104d) *kòjó é-kέ-kò   **Ø**   *míí̋=málé*
       Kojo NEG-say-NEG.PERF   1SG.PROG=lie
       "Kojo has not said I am lying."

The same restrictions apply when *kὲê* is perfective – *á!kέ* is optional in the affirmative (105a)

but obligatory in the negative.

(105a) kòjó   kὲέ   *(á!kέ)*   *mȋ̋ĩ=málé*
           Kojo   PERF-say   NMLZ   1SG.PROG=lie
           "Kojo said (that) I am lying."

(105b) kòjó   é-kέέέ   *á!kέ*   *mȋ̋ĩ=málé*
           Kojo   NEG-say.NEG   NMLZ   1SG.PROG=lie
           "Kojo did not say (that) I am lying.

(105c) ?kòjó   é-kέέέ   Ø   *mȋ̋ĩ=málé*
           Kojo   NEG-say.NEG   1SG.PROG=lie
           "Kojo did not say (that) I am lying.

In another twist, when the CTP is perfective and negative, and the verb in the complement is

subjunctive, omission of the nominalizer is acceptable.

(105d) kòjó   é-kέέέ   Ø   *wɔ́=!bá*
           Kojo   NEG-say.NEG   1PL.SBJV=come
           "Kojo did not say we should come."

The pattern appears to be that when *kὲê* 'say' is in the negative, it selects a nominalizer

but when it is in the affirmative, the nominalizer is optional. The reason for this interaction

between polarity and presence or absence of a nominalizer will have to be uncovered by future

studies, as there is no motivation I know of so far for this unique behavior.

Among CTPs that select the nominalizer, *á!kέ, kὲê* 'say' is the only one that permits its

omission in certain environments. This may be a synchronic vestige of the diachronic

development of *á!kέ*. Historically, *kὲê* 'say' probably needed no nominalizer, because its

complement constituted direct or quotative speech. Meanwhile, *á!kέ,* itself a descendant of *kὲê,*

was recruited for marking quotative and later non-quotative complements of other verbs such

as *jwɛ̀ŋ* 'think' and *lè* 'know'. By analogy it then began to be used to mark non-quotative

complements of *kɛ̀ɛ̂,* even as *kɛ̀ɛ̂* had started admitting non-quotative complements without

nominalizers.

6.6.1.2 Semantics of complementation

In Gã, the semantics of sentences containing complement constructions may vary based on the

type of CTP, the type of nominalizer and the mood of the predicate in the complement. Each

property does not operate independently but constrains the manifestation of other properties,

the net effect of which engenders meaning variances. The discussion below will therefore touch

on multiple properties simultaneously, in so far as one is dependent on another.

(i) Type of complement-taking predicate (CTP)

Givón (2001b: 40) lumps all CTPs into just three classes: CPU (cognition, perception,

utterance) predicates e.g. *think, see, say, believe;* modality predicates e.g. *want, begin, finish,*

try, and manipulative predicates e.g. *ask, tell, order.* Givón's grouping appears to be based on

the syntactic types of complements that these verbs take in English i.e. infinitival complements

or *that*-complements. Noonan (2007) has identified an extensive list of semantic classes of

CTPs, many of which are found in Gã. While I find Givón's categorization too pithy to fully

capture the syntactico-semantic correspondences found in Gã, Noonan's is also too

differentiated and there are several classes that may be collapsed into one. The following

semantic classification of CTPs in Gã is meant to strike a balance between these two extremes.

1. UTTERANCE PREDICATES – *kèê* 'say, tell', *bí* 'ask', *fá̃* 'command'

2. COGNITION AND EMOTION PREDICATES – *lè* 'know', *jwèŋ̀* 'think', *hé yè* 'believe', *ká!í*

'remember', *hìễ kpá !nɔ́̃* 'forget', *shé gbéyèì* 'be afraid'

3. DESIDERATIVE PREDICATES – *tá!ó* 'want', *sùmɔ̀̃* 'like'

4. PERCEPTION PREDICATES – *nã̀* 'see', *nṵ̀* 'hear', *kwê* 'look'

5. MODAL PREDICATES – *sà* 'fit', *nyɛ́̃* 'be able'

6. COMMENTATIVE PREDICATES – *hì̃* 'be good', *yé nã̀ã̀kpèè* 'be amazing (lit: have wonder), *yè*

mìŋ̀làà 'be annoying (lit: have anger)'

7. ASPECTUAL PREDICATES – *bɔ́̃!í̃* 'start', *bɔ̀ mɔ́̃dɛ́ŋ̃* 'try'

(ii) Type of nominalizer

Members of a semantic class do not always neatly align with regard to the nominalizer they

occur with. **Commentative predicates** may take the nominalizer, *á!ké* (106) or *ní̃* (107).

(106) ô   è＝hì̃   *á!ké*   *nyɛ̃̀＝bà*   this time
       IJ   3SG＝be.good   NMLZ   2PL＝come
       "Oh, it's good that you came at this time."   [FH:105]

(107) ò＝bɛ́   hè   gbè   *ní̃*   *ò＝jù-ɔ̀*   *mɔ̀̃＝kò*
       2SG＝have.NEG   body way   NMLZ 2SG＝steal-HAB   person＝INDEF
       káplè
       penny
       "You have no right to steal someone's money."   [DT: 20;30]

All **utterance verbs** may occur with *á!ké*. Examples with *kèê* 'tell' and *bí* 'ask' are provided as follows.

(108) é = !kééé   !mí̋   *á!ké*   *è=nyềmî̂*   *jí*   *bò*
       3SG.NEG = tell.NEG 1SG.OBJ   NMLZ 3SG = sibling   COP   2SG.OB
       "He didn't tell me that he is your sibling."   [MM:105]

(109) ì̀ = bí   !lé   *á!ké*   *è=bà-hì̀*   *Auntie àmèé!lé*
       1SG = ask   3SG.OBJ   NMLZ 3SG = VENT-live   Auntie Amerley
       ŋɔ̀̂   *ló*
       presence   QP
       "I asked her whether she came and lived with Auntie Amerley."   [DF:126]

For the most part, complements of utterance predicates marked by *á!ké* convey information, as in (108). In (109) the interrogative semantics of the CTP and the question particle at the end of the nominalization indicate uncertainty about the information in the nominalization.

An utterance verb may also take a complement marked by *nî̋.* Such a complement does not simply convey information but rather it denotes a situation in which the agent of the sentence seeks to manipulate the actions of the subject of the nominalization in order to accomplish some desired goal. Since this desired outcome is a potential, unrealised event, the verb in such a complement is marked by the subjunctive, which is the go-to grammatical vehicle for irrealis expression in Gã. In (110), the verb in the nominalization, *kɔ́* 'take' is marked with the subjunctive.

(110) ì̃=kɛ̀ɛ́   kòjó *nî́*   *é=kɔ́*   *sáɱfèlé=!ɛ́* *ké-!bá*
      1SG=tell   Kojo NMLZ   3SG.SBJV=take   key=DEF   take-come
      "I told Kojo to bring the key./I told Kojo that he should bring the key"

An utterance verb complement marked by *á!kɛ́* may also have directive semantics as long as its

predicate receives subjunctive marking.

(111) ì̃=kɛ̀ɛ́   kòjó *á!kɛ́*   *é=kɔ́*   *sáɱfèlé=!ɛ́* *ké-!bá*
      1SG=say   Kojo NMLZ   3SG.SBJV=take   key=DEF   take-come
      "I told Kojo that he should bring the key."

What differentiates the distribution of the two nominalizers with respect to utterance verbs is

that while complements marked by *á!kɛ́* are capable of conveying facts and real events (and

thereby being marked as indicative) as well as conveying directives (and receiving subjunctive

marking), complements marked by *nî́* can only convey directives and so must necessarily

receive subjunctive marking. For example, an attempt to render (108), whose nominalization is

not marked subjunctive, with *nî́* results in ungrammaticality:

(112) *é=!kɛ́ɛ́ɛ́   !mî́   *nî́*   *è=nyɛ̌mî̃* *jí*   *bò*
      3SG.NEG=tell.NEG 1SG.OBJ   NMLZ 3SG=sibling COP   2SG.OBJ
      "He didn't tell me that he is your sibling."

The examples seen thus far of utterance verb complements consist of indirect speech or

non-quotative speech, where the speaker tweaks the anaphoric and deictic features in the

complement to reflect his perspective, rather than that of the subject of the utterance verb. The

complement may also be a direct quote, where the speaker reproduces the speech of the subject

directly without any change in anaphoric or deictic elements. In Gã, direct quotes can only be complements of *á!kɛ́,* never *nɛ̃́,* and the presence of the nominalizer is optional but generally preferred. The CTPs, *kɛ̀ɛ̂* 'say' and *bí* 'ask' in (113) and (114) respectively have their direct speech complements marked by *á!kɛ́.* In (115) and (116) on the other hand, there is no nominalizer with the CTPs, *kɛ̀ɛ̂* 'say' and *fã̌* 'command'.

(113) mɔ̃̀-fɛ́ɛ̃́-mɔ̃̀   bàá-kɛ́ɛ́   *á!kɛ́*   *ô*   *ĩ̀=kɛ̀*   *ĩ́=bí*
     person-all-person   FUT-say   NMLZ   IJ   1SG=take   1SG=child

    lɛ́=!ɛ́   *é-yááâ*
    DEF=DEF   NEG-go.NEG
    "Everyone will say that, "Oh, I will not take my child (there)."   [CH:110]

(114) nò   hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   nĩ̀   *regional minister=!á*   bí   *á!kɛ́*   *mɛ́ɛbà*
    that   sake=TOP   and   =DEF   ask   NMLZ   why
    "So the regional minister asked, "Why?"   [MM:192]

(115) nɛ̃́   è=wólé   è=hĩ́ŋmɛ́í=ɛ̀   nɔ̃́=!ɔ́   è=kɛ̀ɛ́
    when   3SG=lift-ITER   3SG=eye=DEF   top=DEF   3SG=say

    áà   *kr̀ístòfɔ́nyò*   *fèɛ́-mɔ̃̀*   *wà*   *ê*
    IJ   Christian   do-NOM   be.hard   IJ
    "When she lifted up her eyes, she said "Gosh! Being a Christian is really difficult!"
    [CH:319]

(116) kèkɛ́=!ɛ́   é=*command*   é=!fã̌   *kíŋ*   *tsò*
    then-TOP   3SG.PERF=   3SG.PERF=command   neem   tree

    nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́   fã̀-á   nɛ̃́   ɔ́=yá-bòtè   ŋshɔ́=ɔ̀   *mĩ̀ŋ*
    this   uproot.IMP   and   2SG.SBJV-ITIV-enter   sea=DEF   inside

    yè   *castle=ɛ́=ɛ̀*   *sɛ̀ɛ̀*

be.located   = DEF = DEF back

"…then he will command…he will command, "Neem tree, uproot and go and enter the sea behind the castle."   [CH:356]

Desiderative and modal predicates have in common the temporal property of futurity.

The semantics of the verbs in both classes select complements which refer to a state of affairs

that is temporally located posterior to the time reference of the CTP. Noonan (2007:102)

characterises such complements as having dependent time reference (DTR), because their time

reference is relative to the semantics of the CTP. Those complements whose time reference is

not dictated by the time reference of the CTP have independent time reference (ITR). In Gã,

complements with dependent time reference often have their predicates marked for the

subjunctive mood. There is a strong affinity of such complements (those with DTR) for the

nominalizer, *nĩ́* but in a few cases, *á!kɛ́* may also be used. Desiderative verbs for the most part

must be complemented by nominalizations marked by *nĩ́* whose predicates take subjunctive

marking. Examples (96a) and (92) above illustrate this complement type with the CTPs *tá!ɔ́*

'search' and *sùmɔ̀* 'like' respectively. Both CTPs occur in (117) below.

(117) nĩ́bĩ̀ɪ̀   kò-mɛ̃̀ɪ̃̀   yɛ́ = !ɛ́   ò = súmɔ́ɔ́ɔ́   ***nĩ́***   ***ó = !fɛ́ɛ́***
      things   INDEF-PL   exist = TOP   2SG = want.NEG   NMLZ 2SG.SBJV = do

tằmɔ̀	* òò=tá!ó*	*nĩ́*	*ó=le*	*nɔ́=!kó*
like	2SG.PROG=want	NMLZ	2SG.SBJV=know	thing=INDEF

"In some situations, you don't want to act like you want to know anything." (Lit: "Some things are there, you don't want to act like you want to know something.") [DT: 22;08]

In addition to *nĩ́*, *sùmɔ̀* 'want/like/love' also allows complements marked by *á!kɛ* (118) and also, *kónĩ́* (109), whose main function is marking of purpose adverbials.

(118)	shĩ́	gbé!kɛ́-nũ̃ṹ=!ɛ̃́	súmɔ́ɔ́ɔ́	*á!kɛ́*	*gbèé=!ɛ́*	*bàá-bó-!lɔ́*
	but	child-male=DEF	want.NEG	NMLZ	dog=DEF	FUT-shout-ITER

"But the boy didn't want the dog to bark." [SAM:107]

(119)	hèwɔ́=!ɔ́	mɛ̃́=sùmɔ̀	*kónĩ́*	*wɔ́=!ɔ́*	*ó=!bá*
	sake=TOP	1SG.FUT=like	NMLZ	tomorrow=TOP	2SG.SBJV=come

"So I'd like for you to come tomorrow." [YM:291]

The use of a purpose morpheme for marking a complement is attested in several languages (Schmidtke-Bode 2009). In addition, Palmer (1986:174) points out that purpose clauses and desiderative verbs have in common the desire to realise an intention or make a particular situation obtain at some later time. The possible historical relationship between purpose adverbials and complements will be explored in §6.8.

One exception to the requirement for subjunctive marking of *nĩ́*-marked complements of desiderative verbs is examples like (120) below, where the CTP has negative polarity and the predicate in the nominalization exhibits habitual aspect. For desiderative verbs, this habitual

marking of the verb in the nominalization is only possible when the desiderative verb is

negative.

(120)   nò   hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   è=shè-ɔ̀   bè   kò   kɍáá pó   nɍ́

        that   sake=TOP   3SG=reach-HAB   time   INDEF even even NMLZ

        wɔ̀=súmɔ̋ɔ̋ɔ̋   pó   *nɍ́*   *à=nà̀-à̀*   *wɔ̀* *á!kɛ́*

        1PL=want.NEG   even   NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS=see-HAB   1PL   as

        kristofo-i
        Christian-PL
        "So there even comes a time when we do not even want to be recognized as
        Christians."   [CH:279]

        Modal CTPs also have determined time reference and generally take complements with

subjunctive marking (121), (122), (123). However, when they display negative polarity, their

complements may be marked for habitual aspect (124). Both *nɍ́* and *á!kɛ́* may be used with

modal predicates.

(121)   shɍ́   è=sà   *nɍ́*   *ɛ́=yè*   *ànɔ̀kwálé*

        but   3SG=fit   NMLZ   3SG.SBJV=eat   truth

        "But he has to tell the truth."   [DT: 19;44]

(122)   è=sà   *á!kɛ́*   *í=yá-já*   *í=nyɔ̀ŋmɔ̀*

        3SG=fit   NMLZ   1SG.SBJV=ITIV-worship   1SG=God

        "I have to go and worship my God."   [CH:218]

(123)   è=hè   é-hɍ́áá   *nɍ́*   *ɔ́=mɔ̋*   *è=nà̀-jì̀*

        3SG=body   NEG-need.NEG   NMLZ   2SG.SBJV=hold   3SG=leg-PL

à-mɨ̀ŋ   *apart*

PERT-inside

"It is not necessary to hold his legs apart." [DT:7]

(124) é = !sááá   *á!kɛ́*   *è = bà-à*   *lè*

3SG.NEG = fit.NEG   NMLZ   3SG = come-HAB   3SG.OBJ

nɨ̀kɨ̀ɨ̀

like.that

"It shouldn't happen that way."   [CH:236]

With the CTP *nyɛ̃́* 'be able', there are peculiar interactions between its aspect and

presence or absence of *nɨ̃́*. When *nyɛ̃́* is in the future, it uncontroversially takes the nominalizer,

nɨ̃́, as well as subjunctive marking of the predicate in the complement (125b). It may also occur

without the nominalizer (125a).

(125a) nyɛ̃̀ = bàá-nyɛ̃́   *nyɛ̃́ = !hɔ́*   *jɛ̃́!mɛ̃́*

     3PL = FUT-be.able   3PL.SBJV = be.inserted   there

     "You can stay there."   [CH:259]

(125b) nyɛ̃̀ = bàá-nyɛ̃́   *nɨ̃́* *nyɛ̃́ = !hɔ́*   *jɛ̃́!mɛ̃́*

     3PL = FUT-be.able   NMLZ 3PL.SBJV = be.inserted   there

     "You can stay there."

But when *nyɛ̃́* 'be able' occurs unmarked or with habitual or perfect aspect, it requires the

predicate in the complement to be marked (or unmarked as the case may be) with the same

aspect as *nyɛ̃́* itself. The appearance of *nɨ̃́* is also strongly disfavoured for the bare and perfect

aspects (126b), (127b), but less so for the habitual (128).

(126a) mɪ́=lé   kɛ́!jí   è=nyɛ̃́   *è=kɔ̀*

       1SG=know.NEG   whether   3SG=be.able   3SG=climb

       "I don't know whether he was able to climb (it)."   [DEB:62]

(126b) ?mɪ́=lé   kɛ́!jí   è=nyɛ̃́   *nɪ́*   *è=kɔ̀*

       1SG=know.NEG   whether   3SG=be.able   NMLZ   3SG=climb

       "I don't know whether he was able to climb (it)."

(127a) é=!nyɛ̃́   *é=!gbélé*   *shɪ̃́nàã́=!ã́*

       3SG.PERF=be.able 3SG.PERF=open   door=DEF

       "S/he has been able to open the door."

(127b) ?é=!nyɛ̃́   *nɪ́*   *é=!gbélé*   *shɪ̃́nàã́=!ã́*

       3SG.PERF=be.able NMLZ   3SG.PERF=open   door=DEF

       "S/he has been able to open the door."

(128a) à=nyɛ̃́-ɔ̀   *à=mã̀-ã̀*   *jɛ́!mɛ́*

       3PL.IMPERS=be.able-HAB   3PL.IMPERS=be.situated-HAB   there

       nɪ̃̀   ò=fé-ɔ̀   yè   jɛ́!mɛ́ nɪ̃̀   è=hɪ̃̀-ɔ̀

       and   2SG=do-HAB   be.located   there and   3SG=be.good-HAB

       "It is possible to follow that path and do it there successfully."   [OYO:341]

(128b) à=nyɛ̃́-ɔ̀   *nɪ́*   *à=mã̀-ã̀*   *jɛ́!mɛ́*

       3PL.IMPERS=be.able-HAB   NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS=be.situated-HAB   there

       nɪ̃̀   ò=fé-ɔ̀   yè   jɛ́!mɛ́ nɪ̃̀   è=hɪ̃̀-ɔ̀

       and   2SG=do-HAB   be.located   there and   3SG=be.good-HAB

       "It is possible to follow that path and do it there successfully."

This behaviour is reminiscent of SVCs, which require concordant marking of TAM on all verbs

with the exception of future verbs in which only the initial verb takes future marking and the

rest are accorded subjunctive marking. The verbs in the *nyɛ̃́* construction also share a subject,

just as SVCs do. It is for this reason that some such as Noonan (2007:87) consider *nyɛ̃́* and its

complement as constituting a serial construction. This characterization is inaccurate because it

does not take into consideration other characteristics of SVCs which the *nyɛ̃́* construction does

not conform to. Chief among them is the acceptability of the nominalizer *nĩ́.* As discussed

extensively in chapter 5, SVCs in Gã bar a linker of any kind between the different verbs. The

hostility of the perfect, habitual and bare verb *nyɛ̃́* constructions to the hosting of *nĩ́* could

signal the beginnings of a transition toward serialization. However, the behaviour of the

construction when it is negated is telling: only *nyɛ̃́* can be negated, the predicate in the

nominalization must be marked affirmative subjunctive (129), (130). In SVCs, all the verbs

must be negated and there can be no nominalizer.

(129) wɔ̀=nyɛ̃́ɛ̃́ɛ̃́   *wɔ́=dã̀mɔ̀*   *shȉ*   *wɔ́=hã̃́*   *àn̄ɔ̀kwálé*
　　　 1PL=be.able.NEG   1PL.SBJV=stand   down   1PL.SBJV=give   truth
　　　 !lɛ́
　　　 DEF
　　　 "We cannot stand up for the truth."   [CH:280]

(130) ò=nyɛ̃́-ŋ́   *ó=!kɛ́ɛ́*   *á!kɛ́*   *kr̀ìstòfónyò*   *jí*
　　　 2SG=be.able-NEG.FUT   2SG.SBJV=say   NMLZ christian   COP
　　　 bò
　　　 2SG.OBJ
　　　 "You will not be able to say you are a Christian…"   [CH:207]

Synchronically, therefore, *nyɛ̃́* and its complement should not be analysed as SVCs. There is

indication, however, that it may be moving in that direction. This recaliberation will be

complete when *nyɛ́* in all instances disallows the nominalizer and requires concomitant marking

of negation on all verbs in the construction.

Most **cognition and emotion predicates** take only *á!ké* as markers of their complements.

An example is *ká!í* 'remember' in (131).

(131) í̵=káì-ɔ̀   *á!ké/*ní̵*   *bè*   *ní̵*   *wɔ̀=tsé*   *súkù*
       1SG=remember-HAB   NMLZ   time   NMLZ   1PL=tear   SUKU

       àsàfó *!lɛ́*   *màmí̵*   *!kó*   *ní̵*   *yɔ́ɔ̀*
       group DEF   mother   INDEF   NMLZ   be.located.HAB

       àsàfó=ɛ̀   *mlì*
       group=DEF   inside
       "I remember that when we started the SUKU fellowship, a certain woman who was in
       the group…" [CH:312]

The exceptions are *jwὲ̀ŋ* 'think' and *lè* 'know' which can take both *ní̵* (132) and *á!ké* (133),

(134).

(132) gbèé=ɛ̀   jwὲ̀ŋ *ní̵*   *wɔ̀-bí!í*   *nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́*   *é-fééé*   *!lɛ́*
       dog=DEF   think NMLZ honey-people this   NEG-do.NEG   3SG.OBJ

       nɔ̃́=!kó
       thing=INDEF
       "The dog thought that the bees would not do anything to him." [PAT:113]

(133) nῖ̀   è=lé   *á!ké*   *tsɔ̀*   *nῖ̀*
       and   3SG=know.NEG   NMLZ   tree   PRED.PRT
       "And he didn't know that it was a tree."   [MAV:72]

In addition, the complement of *lè* 'know' can be the conditional marker *kέ(!jí)* 'if, whether' when the complement contains information that the subject referent is unsure of, as in (134).

(134) mí=lé   kέ   ằmề̀=jwềŋ   *á!kέ*   *kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né=ề hɔ*
      1SG=know.NEG   if   3PL=think   NMLZ frog=DEF   be.inserted

      wò-bî̂=ề   *à-tsű̂=ề̀*   *mĩ̀ŋ*   *jí*   *ò*
      honey-people=DEF   PERT-house=DEF   inside be   IJ
      "I don't know whether they thought that the frog was in the beehive or what."
      [SAM:42]

In some discourse situations, *lè* which normally means 'know' is interpreted as 'think'. This semantic outcome is possible for complements marked by *á!kέ* but it is more common when *lè* 'know' occurs with a *nî́*-marked nominalization. The nominalization in such a construction is presented not as fact but rather as an opinion or idea, especially one whose veracity is in doubt. Compare (135) and (136). In (135) with *á!kέ,* the speaker is confident of the truth of the supposition contained in the nominalization. In (135) with *nî́* he is not.

(135) ì̀=lè   *á!kέ*   *bò*   *nî̀*   *ò=kɔ́*
      1SG=know   NMLZ   2SG.OBJ   FOC   2SG=take
      "I know that it was you who took (it)."

(136) ì̀=lè   *nî́*   *bò*   *nî̀*   *ò=kɔ́*
      1SG=know   NMLZ   2SG.OBJ   FOC   2SG=take
      "I thought that it was you who took (it)."

In (137) where the nominalizer is *á!kɛ́*, *lè* means 'think'. This interpretation is gleaned from the discourse. Therefore, while *lè* is always decoded as 'think' when in combination with a *nɪ́-* nominalization, it is much more difficult to determine its meaning when its complement is marked by *á!kɛ́*. In such situations, discourse context is crucial for resolving the ambiguity.

(137) è=lè   *á!kɛ́*   *tsɔ̀*   *nɪ̀̃*
  3SG=know   NMLZ   tree   PRED.PRT
  "He thought it was a tree."   [MAV:80]

Immediate perception verbs such as *nã̀* 'see' and *nũ̀* 'hear' take complements that may be marked either by *á!kɛ́* or *nɪ́*. The choice of nominalizer is dependent on the semantics of the event nominalization. *á!kɛ́* is the only nominalizer used when the verb in the nominalization is stative (138), (139).

(138) ô   ó=!nã́áã́   *á!kɛ́/*nɪ́*   *ɪ́=hɪ̃́ɛ̃̀*   *yɛ̀*   *fɛ́ô*
  IJ   2SG=see.NEG   NMLZ   1SG=face   have   beauty
  "Don't you see that I have a beautiful face?"   [MM:52]

(139) è=nã̀   *á!kɛ́/*nɪ́*   *kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né=!ɛ́*   *bɛ́*   *tɔ́=ɔ̀*   *mɪ̃̀ŋ̃*
  3SG=see   NMLZ   frog=DEF   exist.NEG   bottle=DEF   inside
  dɔ̃́ŋ̃ŋ̃
  anymore
  "He saw that the frog was not in the bottle anymore."   [TIN:8]

(140) ɪ̃̀=nũ̀   *á!kɛ́/*nɪ́*   *nyɛ̃́=gbè*   *nã̀ã̀*
  1SG=hear   NMLZ   2PL=kill   mouth
  "I heard that you were done."

Both *á!ké* and *nî* may be used when the verb is dynamic (141).

(141)   wɔ̀=nã̀   *á!ké/nî*   *mɔ̀=kò*   *ŋ̀-kɔ̀*   *tsó=!ɛ́*
        1PL=see   NMLZ   person=INDEF   PROG-climb tree=DEF
        "We saw that someone was climbing the tree."

With the CTP, *nũ̀* 'hear', both *nî* and *á!ké* are acceptable. The most common aspectual marking

for the predicate in this complement is progressive. When the event denoted by the complement

is not one that normally produces audible sounds, then *nũ̀* is interpreted as 'hear a rumour' and

á!ké is the only acceptable nominalizer (142). *nî* is not possible as a nominalizer for this

meaning.

(141)   ĩ̀=nũ̀   *nî/á!ké*   *èè=fó*
        1SG=hear   NMLZ   3SG.PROG=cry
        "I heard him crying."

(142)   ĩ̀=nũ̀   *á!ké/*nî*   *é=hɔ̀ɔ́*   *shî!ã́=!ã́*
        1SG=hear   NMLZ   3SG.PERF=sell   house=DEF
        "I heard that he had sold the house."

The event nominalization marked by *nî* may also occur as a second object in a

construction where it denotes the actions of the referent of the first object. The main predicate

in such a construction is an immediate perception verb, most commonly *nã̀* 'see'. The

nominalization depicts the circumstances or activities which the object referent is engaged in at

the time of the sighting i.e. the event coded by the main predicate and that coded by the

nominalization are simultaneous. (143) provides an illustration.

(143) wɔ̀=nằ   ákú   *nɪ́*   *èè=fó*
       1PL=see   Aku   NMLZ   3SG.PROG=cry
       "We saw Aku crying."

A nominalization marked by *á!kɛ́* cannot be used this way (144).

(144) *wɔ̀=nằ   ákú   *á!kɛ́*   *èè=fó*
       1PL=see   Aku   NMLZ   3SG.PROG=cry
       "We saw Aku crying."

The simultaneous event-depicting function of the *nɪ́*-marked nominalization is also

exploited for use with posture verbs. Here, the nominalization denotes an action performed by

the subject referent while in a particular posture or stance.

(145) ɪ̀=tá   !shɪ́   *nɪ́*   *mɪ́ɪ́=sɔ̀lè*
       1SG=sit   down   NMLZ   1SG.PROG=pray
       "I was sitting down, praying."

In (146), the stance verb *jwélé* 'lie down (of several small objects)' is used idiomatically to

convey the notion of several people busily indulging in an activity. The activity is coded by the

nɪ́-nominalization.

(146) wɔ́   bé   nɪ́   ò=bàá-!bá=!á   wɔ̀=jwélé   !nɔ́   *nɪ́*
       tomorrow   time   NMLZ 2SG=FUT-come=DEF   1PL=lie   top   NMLZ

       wɔ̀=ŋ̀-hòó   *nɪ́!ɪ́*
       1PL=PROG-cook   thing
       "By the time you come tomorrow, we'll be busily cooking."   [YM:292]

In one special context, a *nî́*-nominalization occurs as a complement to *ófáìnέ̃* 'please', a word whose lexical category is as difficult to determine as its English counterpart. The construction, exemplified in (147), has the illocutionary force of a statement, although its speech act is that of a request.

(147) mɑ́̂ɑ̀ ófáìnέ̃ *nî́*   *ó=wó*   *ó=gbèè*   *nɔ̀*   *ó=hɑ̂́*
     mother please NMLZ 2SG.SBJV=lift   2SG=voice top   2SG.SBJV-give

    !wɔ́   *fì!óó*
    1PL   little
    "Mother, can you please raise your voice a little for us?" [OYO:19]

It appears the syntax of this construction is built on an analogy with complement constructions with main verb, *kpá fâí* 'beg', which is semantically and functionally akin to *ófáìnέ̃* 'please' in that both are polite prefaces to requests. While *kpá fâí* 'beg' is a verb which takes *nî́*-complementation (148), *ófáìnέ̃* 'please' usually functions as a modifier to an imperative (149). (147) thus arises when *ófáìnέ̃* 'please' is semantically reanalyzed not only as a politeness marker for requests but also as an explicit performative in the same vein as *kpá fâí* 'beg' in (148). This then allows it to take the event nominalization complement.

(148) è=kpá   mì̂   fâí   *nî́*   *í̂=ká-yì*
     3SG=remove   2SG.OBJ   hat   NMLZ   1SG.SBJV=NEG.SBJV-beat

    lὲ
    3SG.OBJ
    "S/he begged me not to beat him/her."

(149) mɛ́ɛ̀ ófáìnɛ̃́ wó   ó=gbèè   nɔ̃̀   ó=hɛ́   !wɔ́   fĭ!óó
      mother please lift.IMP 2SG=voice top   2SG.SBJV=give 1PL   little
      "Mother, please speak up a little for us."

6.6.2 Adverbial modification

Event nominalizations are also utilized for modifying verb phrases or propositions. I will refer

to these event nominalizations as adverbials. The common parlance, "adverbial clauses" will be

avoided because the claim in this work is that they are nominalizations and not clauses. It

should be no surprise then, that the nominalizer, *nĩ́* once again figures prominently in adverbial

modification. The role of *á!kɛ́* here is much more diminished. Adverbials may qualify a

proposition in several ways: they may indicate the time of an event in relation to the time of

another event (time adverbials), they may indicate the reason for executing a particular action

(purpose adverbial). Others stipulate circumstances that must obtain in order for an event to

occur (conditionals). All these will be examined in the subsequent sections, beginning with

purpose adverbials.

6.6.2.1 Purpose adverbials

A purpose adverbial is an event nominalization which denotes a state of affairs that is posited

as the reason or intended result of another action. The main clause predicates the action which

constitutes the reason for the potential result coded by the purpose adverbial. In Gã, this clause

precedes the purpose adverbial. The purpose adverbial is morphologically identified by the

presence of the nominalizer *(kó)nî* at its initial boundary. While *nî* may stand alone in this

function, *kó* cannot. In (150), the main action (requesting leave) is found in line 1, uttered by

Dina. Sally's agreement in line 2 overlaps with Dina's turn in line 3, in which Dina expresses

the intended result or reason for requesting leave i.e. so Auntie Sally can finish her meal. This

reason is coded as a purpose adverbial marked by *kónî*.

(150) 1   Dina: *Auntie Sally*   wɔ̀=bàá-bí   gbɛ̀   mɔ́
              Auntie Sally   1PL=FUT-ask   way   then
              "Auntie Sally, we'll ask permission to leave then."

    2   Sally: [yòò]
              "Alright"

    3   Dina: *kónî*   *ó=!gbé*   *ó=ní!yéní!í=ɛ̀*   *nàã̀*
              NMLZ   2SG.SBJV=kill   2SG=food=DEF   mouth
              "So that you can finish your food."

(151) has two purpose adverbials. The first is marked by *nî* and the second by *kónî*. The first

purpose adverbial, *nî wɔ́bájá lɛ̀* 'to worship him' provides the reason for 'our coming' while the

second purpose adverbial gives the reason or desired consequence of worshipping him, which

is strengthening of faith.

(151) wɔ́=bà　　　　*nɪ́*　　　　*wɔ́=bá-já*　　　　　　*lè*
　　　1PL.PERF=come　　NMLZ　　1PL.SBJV=VENT-worship　3SG.OBJ

　　　kóní　　　*wɔ́=bá-wó*　　　　　*wɔ̀=hé-mɔ̀-kè-yé-lí*
　　　NMLZ　　　1PL.SBJV=VENT-lift　　1PL=buy-NOM-and-eat-NOM

　　　mlɪ̀　　*hèwàlè*
　　　inside　　strength
　　　"We have come to worship him, so that we may strengthen our faith."　[CH:9]

In (152) and (153), the purpose adverbials are marked by *nɪ́.*

(152) kɛ́　　wɔ̀=ŋ̀-yá=!á　　　　　mã́=hã́　　　　wɔ́=tsɔ́　　　　jé!ŋ́
　　　when　1PL=PROG-go=DEF　　1SG.FUT=give　1PL.SBJV-pass　　there

　　　nɪ́　　　　*ó=!lé*　　　*jé!ŋ́*
　　　NMLZ　　　2SG.SBJ=know　there
　　　"When we are going, I'll let us pass by there so you get to know there."　[FH:10]

(153) bè　　kò　　　nɪ́　　é-!hó=!ɛ́　　　　wɔ̀=tsɛ́　　!lɛ́　　　*nɪ́*
　　　time　INDEF　　NMLZ　PERF-pass=DEF　　1PL=call　3SG.OBJ　　NMLZ

　　　é=bá-féé　　　　　crusade　　*yè*　　　*wɔ̀=mã̀ŋ*　　Ghana　*néꜜɛ̀*
　　　3SG.SBJV=VENT-do　　　　　　be.located　1PL=country　Ghana　this
　　　mɪ̃̀ŋ
　　　inside
　　　"Sometime ago [lit: "a time that has passed…"], we invited him to come and lead a
　　　'crusade' here in our country Ghana."　　[CH:239]

As Schmidtke-Bode (2009:19) notes, the main conceptual properties of purpose are

intentionality, target directness, future orientation and a hypothetical result state. A person

performs an action with the aim of bringing about a particular result. This result must

necessarily take place after the action, hence the future orientation. The intended result may not

necessarily come to fruition and is only hypothethetical. Languages, therefore, tend to mark the

predicate in the purpose adverbial to reflect these semantic features. In Gã, the predicate in the

purposive is marked for the subjunctive, which is one of two morphemes (the other is the

future marker) used to signal irrealis situations.

The purpose adverbial must always have a subject. This subject may differ from the

subject of the main predicate, as is the case in (150), (152) and (153), but they may also be the

same, as in (151). Constructions where the main predicate is one of the basic motion verbs, *bà*

'come' or *yà* 'go' more often than not have co-referential purpose and main verb subject

arguments (154), (155), (156).

(154) nò   hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   ȁmɛ̏=ŋ̀-bà   ***nɛ́***   ***àmɛ́=bá-kà***   *lɛ*
      that   sake=TOP   3PL=PROG-come   NMLZ 3PL=VENT-tempt   3SG.OBJ
      "So they were coming to tempt him."   [CH:255]

(155) nò   hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   kɛ̀-jɛ̀   *four thirty*=!ɛ́   bɛ̀   ágbènɛ́=!ɛ́
      that   sake=TOP   take-come.from   =DEF   then   now=DEF

      à=bàá-wó-lé   fɛ́ɛ́   ***nɛ́***   ***á=!yá***   ***nɛ́***
      3PL.IMPERS=FUT-lift-ITER   all   NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS.SBJV=go   NMLZ

      á=!yá-tsí   ***á=!shwíê***
      3PL.IMPERS.SBJV=ITIV-push   3PL.IMPERS.SBJV=pour
      "So from four-thirty, they will carry them and go and pour them away." [OYO:39]

(156) è=sà   á!kɛ́   í=!yá   **nɛ́**   **í=yá-jíɛ́**
       3SG=fit   NMLZ   1SG.SBJV=go   NMLZ 1SG.SBJV=ITIV-remove
       è=yì
       3SG=head
       "I have to go and worship him."   [CH:219]

Constructions with a basic motion verb as the main predicate are also the only type of purpose

construction in which a nominalizer is not obligatory. This is shown in (157a) below. All others

must be marked by *kónɛ́, nɛ́* or *á!kɛ́.*

(157a) mɑ̃́=!bá   Ø   mɑ̃́=!bá-kè   nyɛ̀   nɔ̃́=!kó
       1SG.FUT=come   1SG.FUT=VENT-gift   2PL   something
       "I will come and gift you something."   [YM:114]

Despite, the structural resemblance of (157a) to a serial verb construction, its permissiveness of

the nominalizer between the two verb phrases in (157b) is proof that it is not.

 (157b) mɑ̃́=!bá   **nɛ́**   **mɑ̃́=!bá-kè**   **nyɛ̀**   **nɔ̃́=!kó**
       1SG.FUT=come   NMLZ 1SG.FUT=VENT-gift   2PL   something
       "I will come and gift you something."

In addition, it is negated by negating only the first verb (158), rather than all verbs in the

sentence as would be required of a serial construction. Doing so results in ungrammaticality

(159).

(158) **í̃=bá-!ń**   **í̃=bá-kè**   **nyɛ̀**   **nɔ̃́=!kó**
       1SG=come-NEG.FUT   1SG=VENT-gift   2PL   thing=INDEF
       "I will not come and gift you anything."

(159) *í̋=bá-!ŋ́   í̋=bá-ké-ŋ̀   nyɛ̀   nő=!kó
       1SG=come-NEG.FUT   1SG=VENT-gift-NEG.FUT 2PL   thing=INDEF
       "I will not come and gift you anything."

Another important morphological feature of *bà* 'come' and *yà* 'go' purpose constructions is that

the predicate of the purpose nominalization must be marked with the deictic auxiliary

corresponding to the main verb predicate. We see this with *bà* 'come' in (154) and (157a), and

with *yà* 'go' in (155) and (156). Even without an overt nominalizer the deictic auxiliaries in

conjunction with subjunctive or future marking on the purpose predicate point to the presence

of a purpose adverbial. The lack of one or both of these is what disqualifies the following

sentences as purpose constructions, although at first glance they both appear to fit the bill. In

(160), *èbàkwέ í̋yìsèè* 'he came and supported me' cannot be analysed as a purpose adverbial

complement of *èbà* 'he came' because the verb *kwέ* 'look' is a bare verb with past time

interpretation. A purpose adverbial would have future or subjunctive marking on *kwέ* 'look'.

Note that the first instance of *ní̋* in this example marks the modification function of an

argument nominalization (modifying *be* 'time); the second instance showcases a time adverbial.

Time adverbials will be discussed later in this chapter.

(160) bé   ní̋   í̋=bí-ì=ɛ̀   gbó-!í   ní̋   è=bà
       time   NMLZ 1SG=child-PL=DEF   die-DISTRIB NMLZ 3SG=come

è = bà-kwɛ́   í᷄ = yìsèɛ́ = !ɛ́
3SG = VENT-look   1SG = back.of.head = DEF
"When my children died and he came and supported me…"   [FH:111]

(161) does not have a purpose adverbial either, despite the presence of *ní᷄*. *ní᷄* here is a

coordinator - 'and'. One clue for this finding is that if the construction marked by *ní᷄* were a

purpose adverbial, its verb, *sɔ̀lè* 'pray' would have the itive prefix *yà-* to agree with the main

predicate, *yà* 'go'. In this case it does not. This could be because *yà* 'go' in this example does

not code translational motion or a change in location, but rather a change in posture. We shall

see in the following section that *ní᷄* is poly-functional and may also mark clausal coordination,

which I argue is its function in (161).

(161) wɔ̀ = bàá-yà   wɔ̀ = nã̀kútse-i   à-nã̀ã̀   ***ní᷄***
      1PL = FUT-go   1PL = knee-PL   PERT-mouth and
      wɔ́ = sɔ̀lè
      1PL.SBJV = pray
      "We will go on our knees and pray."   [CH:387]

The fact that purpose constructions with main verb *bà* 'come' or *yà* 'go' are the only

ones capable of doing away with the nominalizer is no accident. The conceptual link between

motion, generally, and purpose is very strong indeed, as reported by Schmidtke-Bode

(2009:97). She observes that in many languages, 'motion-cum-purpose' clauses, as she calls

them, contain less morphological material (e.g. no purpose markers, no purpose clause

subjects), suggesting a much tighter semantic bond than in non-motion purpose types. The

reduction in form comes about as a result of high predictability, which is a consequence of the

cognitive link that humans make between movement from one location to another and the

accomplishment of goals. Schmidtke-Bode writes that even from childhood we associate

change of location with a need to get something done at the new location. It is the ubiquity of

this cognitive association that makes purpose markers and purpose subject arguments

redundant; afterall, it is normally the case that the one who moves is the one who has a goal to

achieve by moving. Indeed, there are several languages for which purpose adverbials can only

occur with motion main verbs (Smidtke-Bode 2009:94). In Gã, the 'motion-cum-purpose'

construction has even grammaticalized to mark prospective aspect. This is limited to the verb,

bà 'come' when it is in the progressive.

(162) kpã̀ã́=ã̀   ŋ̀-bà   é=bá-tsé
       rope=DEF   PROG-come   3SG.SBJV=come-break
       "The rope is about to break."

Purpose adverbials marked by á!kɛ́

Apart from *ní̄* and *kónî̄,* purpose nominalizations may also be marked by *á!kɛ́.* The use of a

quotative marker grammaticalized from the verb 'say' as a purpose marker is found in

neighbouring Akan and according to Schmidtke-Bode (2009), is also attested in other unrelated

languages e.g. Kannada and Lezgian. Schmidtke-Bode (2009:192) calls such constructions

verbalized self-suggestions because they probably arose from situations where an actor asserts

an action and verbalizes the intended result as direct speech. The action and result are linked by

the verb 'say'. Using (163) as an example, this will translate to: "And we will show it to God,

saying "Bless these herbs".

(163) nǐ   wɔ̀=kɛ̀-bàá-tsɔ́ɔ́   àtàá   nǎá   nyɔ̀ŋmɔ̀   *á!kɛ́*
       and   1PL=take-FUT-show   father   mother   God   NMLZ

       é=jɔ́ɔ́   bàà   nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́   nɔ̀
       3SG.SBJV=bless   leaf   this   top
       "We will show it to God, so that he blesses these herbs."   [YM:78]

Purpose adverbials marked by *á!kɛ́,* unlike those marked by *nǐ,* do not have to have irrealis

marking on the purpose predicate. In (164), the purpose predicate is marked progressive. The

semantics of *á!kɛ́*-purpose adverbials is nevertheless very similar to the *nǐ*-purpose adverbials.

It denotes an event which is viewed as the desired result or the reason for the action in the main

clause. For example, in (163), the purpose of showing 'it' to God is so that he blesses it and in

(164), the subject turns around in order to go/leave.

(164) òbl̀á-nǔǔ=ɛ̃̀   fɔ̀   è=hɛ̀   *á!kɛ́*   èè=yà
       life-male=DEF   cut   3SG=body   NMLZ   3SG.PROG=go
       "The young man turned around in order to go."   [NAT:13]

In (165), the first instance of *á!kɛ́* marks a complement of the CTP, *fèé* 'do' which in this

context is used idiomatically (together with an object NP) to mean 'think'. The second token of

á!kɛ́ introduces a purpose adverbial.

(165) é=fééé　　　　　!mí　á!ké　mɔ̃̀=kò　　　　yè　　　　bí!ɛ́　nɛ́!ɛ́
　　　3SG.NEG=do.NEG　1SG　NMLZ person=INDEF　be.located　here　this

　　　ní̋　　　　　á=gbàlà　　　　　　　lɛ̀　　　*by force*　　á!kɛ́
　　　NMLZ　　　3PL.IMPERS.PERF=pull　3SG.OBJ　　　　　　　　that

　　　é=bà　　　　　*sɔ̀lè-mɔ̃̀*
　　　3SG.SBJV=come　pray-NOM
　　　"I don't think there is anyone here who has been brought here against his will to attend
　　　church."　　[CH:215]

The *á!kɛ́*-purpose adverbial is also the structure of choice when the speaker wants to convey

that the intended result constitutes a mere attempt on the part of the subject referent to see

whether that result is attainable. Such purpose adverbials frequently contain epistemic adverbs

such as *àléénɔ̃́* 'maybe, perhaps'. This semantic nuance is missing from *ní̋*-purpose adverbials,

where there is more confidence in the stated outcome.

(166) nì̋　è=tũ̀　　　*á!kɛ́*　*è=bàá-shè*　　ɛ̃̀ɛ̃̀　　*wò-bî=è*
　　　and　3SG=jump　NMLZ 3SG=FUT-reach　IJ　　　honey-people=DEF

　　　à-tsű̋=ɛ̃́　　　hè　　ló
　　　PERT-house=DEF　body　QP
　　　"And he jumped to see whether he would reach…errm…the beehive."　　[MA:40]

(167) ãmɛ̃̀=fɛ̃́ɛ́　　ãmɛ̃̀=bɔ̃́!í　　bó-!lɔ̀-mɔ̃̀　　　*á!kɛ́*　*àléénɔ̃́*　　*kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né=è*
　　　3PL=all　　　3PL=start　　shout-ITER-NOM　NMLZ perhaps　　frog=DEF

　　　bàá-nũ̀　　*ãmɛ̃̀=gbèè*
　　　FUT-hear　　3PL=voice
　　　"They all started shouting so that perhaps the frog would hear their voices."　[NAR:39]

Negative purposives

Negative purposives, also known as lest or avertive purposives, also denote the result of an

action but in this case, the action in the main clause is being prohibited. In other words, the

main clause encodes the action that is being prohibited and the purpose adverbial denotes what

adverse consequences will happen if the action *is* carried out. In Gã, the verb in the negative

purposive nominalization is unmarked for aspect. The nominalizer is always *nî.́*

(168) kà-á-fó   *nî*́   *ó=yítsò*   *bà-gbá*   *bò*
       NEG.SBJV-SBJV-cry   NMLZ   2SG=head   VENT-split   2SG.OBJ
       "Don't cry and give yourself a headache." [FH:178]

6.6.2.2 (kó)nî́ as a coordinator

In this chapter, it has been shown how nominalizations marked by *nî*́ are co-opted for various

functions, from relativization to verb complementation and purposive adverbial modification.

kónî́ and especially *nî*́ may also function as clausal coordinators for non-realis situations. That

is, if one wishes to conjoin a series of clauses depicting events which have not occurred yet,

then one would likely use *nî*́ rather than the standard clausal connector *nî̀,* the only difference

between the two being tone. *kónî*́ may also be used for the conjoining of potential or

hypothetical events, although *nî*́ is much more common. In (169), *kónî*́ appears twice and in the

first instance, at least, it appears to have no purposive function. The first *kónî*́ connects the

imperatives *bí óhấ nyɛ̀bàà nɛ́!ɛ́* "ask it of these herbs" and *òkè é!kó áfɔ́ ónầjî àhè* "use some to

wash your legs." As imperatives, the two conjuncts have irrealis semantics since they are situations that are yet to come to pass. Washing one's feet is not the intended consequence of praying via the ritual herbs so *kónɪ́'s* function is more connective than purposive. The second token of *kónɪ́* is ambiguous between a coordinate or purposive relationship. God's intercession may be viewed as the intended result of performing the rituals of making supplications through the herbs and washing one's feet. But it could also be viewed as just the third in a list of commands.

(169) nɔ́-fíã́-nɔ́   nɪ́   ò=táò-ɔ̀-ɔ́-!ɔ́   bí   á=hã́
       thing-all-thing NMLZ 2SG=want-HAB=DEF=DEF   ask.IMP   SBJV=give

       nyɛ̃̀=bàà   nɛ̃́=!ɛ̃́   bí
       3PL=leaf   this=DEF   ask
       "Anything that you want, ask it of these herbs. Ask."

       kónɪ́   ò=kɛ̀   é!kó   á-fɔ́   ó=nã̀-jɪ̃̀   à-hè
       and   2SG=take   some   SBJV-wash   2SG=leg-PL PERT-body
       "*And* use some (of the herbal infusion) to wash your legs."

       kónɪ́   ó=kwɛ́   kɛ̀-jè   áfɪ̃́   nɛ̃́!ɛ́
       NMLZ 2SG.SBJV=watch   take-come.from   year   this

       kɛ̀-yà-shí   wɔ́-sɛ̀ɛ̀   áfɪ̃́
       take-ITIV-hit tomorrow-back   year
       "*And* watch, from this year until next year"

       kɛ́   ó=bí   kò   nɪ̃̀   ò=táò-ɔ̀   nɪ́
       if   2SG=child   INDEF   FOC   2SG=search-HAB   NMLZ

é=fɔ́		hã̀ã̂jǐ=!ɛ́	nyɔ̀ŋmɔ̌	bàá-dã̀mɔ̌	mĩ̀ŋ
3SG.SBJV=give.birth		twins=DEF	God	FUT-stand	inside

é=hɑ̃́	bò
3SG.SBJV=give	2SG.OBJ

"If you have a child whom you want to give birth to twins, God will intervene for you." [OYO:103]

In the following example, a hypothetical situation is presented consisting of a conditional clause marked initially by *kɛ́.* The conditional clause is composed of three propositions all conjoined by *nɛ̃́.*

(170)	è=kɛ̀ɛ́	kɛ́	wɔ̀=fèé	é!shá	pó	***nɛ̃́***	wɔ̀=bà	yè
	3SG=say	if	1PL=do	sin	even	and	1PL=come	be.located

	àn ɔ̀kwálé	mlì̃	***nɛ̃́***	wɔ̀=bà-jàjé		wɔ̀=hè	éshà-í
	truth	inside	and	1PL=VENT-straighten		1PL=body	sin-PL

	!lɛ́	è=kɛ̀ɛ́	è=kɛ̀	fɛ̃́ɛ̃́	bàá-kè	wɔ̀
	TOP	3SG=say	3SG=take	all	FUT-gift	1PL

"He said even if we sin ***and*** we come in truth ***and*** we confess our sins…he said he will forgive it all." [CH:378]

It should be noted that when the non-initial conjunct(s) is/are marked for the subjunctive, only *nɛ̃́* or *kónɛ̃́* can be used as a coordinator. So for instance, while *nɛ̀* can replace *nɛ̃́* in (170), it cannot replace it in (169). In other words, the standard coordinator, *nɛ̀,* may be used for realis as well as irrealis situations (such as conditionals and future propositions), as long as those irrealis situations do not take subjunctive marking. *nɛ̃́,* on the other hand, is strictly restricted to

conjoining irrealis situations, be they marked subjunctive or otherwise. The exception to this is

if all the conjuncts are marked for future. In that case, *nǐ* must be used.

In the following sentence, *ní* is rightfully used to conjoin the subjunctive-marked

clauses. *nǐ* would be ungrammatical in this role (171b).

(171a) wɔ̀=bàá-!yé   ***ní***   wɔ́=!nṹ   ***ní***   wɔ́=!jó
       1PL=FUT-eat   and   1PL.SBJV=eat   and   1PL.SBJV=dance
       "We will eat ***and*** drink ***and*** dance."

(171b) *wɔ̀=bàá-!yé   ***nǐ***   wɔ́=!nṹ   ***nǐ***   wɔ́=!jó
       1PL=FUT-eat   and   1PL.SBJV=eat   and   1PL.SBJV=dance
       "We will eat and drink and dance."

nǐ may be used if the non-initial conjuncts take future instead of subjunctive marking (172a).

However, *ní* may not be used in this same situation (172b).

(172a) wɔ̀=bàá-!yé   ***nǐ***   wɔ́=bàá-!nṹ   ***nǐ***   wɔ́=bàá-!jó
       1PL=FUT-eat   and   1PL=FUT-eat   and   1PL=FUT-dance
       "We will eat and drink and dance."

(172b) *wɔ̀=bàá-!yé   ***ní***   wɔ́=bàá-!nṹ   ***ní***   wɔ́=bàá-!jó
       1PL=FUT-eat   and   1PL=FUT-eat   and   1PL=FUT-dance
       "We will eat and drink and dance."

In some languages, there is evidence of a coordinate marker developing into a marker of

temporal, conditional and causal subordinate clauses (Heine and Kuteva 2007:43). This

suggests that there is a pathway for the development of a coordinator to a marker of purpose, as

has been suggested, for instance, by Schmidtke-Bode (2009:197). However, postulating the

opposite path of development is the best way to account for the Gã data. I propose that the

coordinator used for irrealis events, *ní,* developed from the purpose marker *(kó)ní.* Recall that

the standard coordinator, *nì* (capable of conjoining all clauses that are not marked subjunctive)

always occurs with low tone. In addition, it never occurs with *kó* to form *kóni.* Therefore, it is

less likely to have been derived from the purposive marker, *(kó)ní* which has high tone. Even if

one were to explain the tone alteration as a matter of iconicity and the desire for differentiating

realis coordination from irrealis coordination (a semantico-syntactic specialization that is not

attested cross-linguistically), one would be hard-pressed to explain how *kóní* (with all high

tones), a morpheme otherwise seen only in purposives, is also able to function as a coordinator

for realis events. An alternative and simpler hypothesis, then, is that the purpose marker *(kó)ní*

came to be used to conjoin clauses which have the same temporal and modal semantics as those

found in purpose nominalizations marked by *(kó)ní.* The leap from purposive to coordinate

semantics is not a huge one. Both constructions have some elements in common. Actions and

results always follow one another in a temporally linear fashion: action first, then result, or in

the case of the purposive, intended result. Coordinated actions on the other hand, need not be

sequential, but often, a pragmatic inference is made and listeners assume that the first action

precedes the second. In employing *(kó)ní* as a connector of clauses with no purposive relation

but with irrealis semantics, speakers are focusing solely on the concatenative semantic element

of *(kó)nꜝí* while remaining faithful to its mood requirements. Another semantic nuance develops

when use of *kónꜝí* strongly implies that the events will occur in the order stated, while use of *nꜝí*

carries a weaker implication.

6.6.2.3 Reason adverbials

Event nominalizations marked by *nꜝí* alone or by both *nꜝí* and *áꜝké* may also function as reason

adverbials. Here, the event nominalization occurs as the dependent nominal in a possessive NP

whose head is *hèwɔ̀* 'sake'. The nominalization gives the reason for the situation coded by the

main clause. The following sentences exemplify this:

(173) *áꜝké   nꜝí   ŋòò   yè   éꜝŋmɔ́mꜝí   mꜞìŋ*   hèwɔ́=ꜝɔ́
       NMLZ NMLZ salt   be.located   okro   inside sake=TOP

     à=kɛ̀   ŋòò   wóóó   kpékpĺé=ɛ̀   mꜞìŋ   dɔ́ŋ́ŋ́
     3PL.IMPERS=take   salt   put.NEG   *kpekple*=DEF   inside anymore
     "Because there is salt in the okro, no additional salt is put in the *kpekple*." [YM:267]

(174) *áꜝké   nꜝí   nyɔ̀ŋmɔ̀   hꜞ̃ɛ̃   kꜛ̃á   gbéꜝkꜞ̃ɛ́-bíì=ɛ̀   à-hè*
       NMLZ NMLZ God   face   lie   child-PL=DEF   PERT-body

     hèwɔ́=ꜝɔ́   è=hꜞ̃ɛ̃   gbéꜝkɛ̃́=ɛ̃̀   mꜞìŋ   è=kwɛ́   è=nɔ̃̀
     sake=TOP   3SG=hold   child=DEF   inside 3SG=watch 3SG=top

     ààhû̃
     continuously
     "Because God was was looking out for the children, he supported the child and looked
     after him."   [PAT:171]

The reason nominalization occupies the same syntactic slot that a noun would occupy, as we

see with *Aku* in (175):

(175) **ákú** hèwɔ́=!ɔ́ í=!yááá nítsűmɔ́ è=bɛ́ hèwàlè
Aku sake=TOP 1SG.NEG=go.NEG work 3SG=have.NEG strength
"Because of Aku, I did not go to work. She is ill."

6.6.2.4 *á!kɛ́ as a comparative preposition*

á!kɛ́ can also function as a preposition where its object is equated with or compared with the

object of the verbal predicate. For example, in (176), *lè,* the third singular objective pronoun is

being equated with water. In (177), *ní!í!ɛ́* 'the thing' (referring to the performance of a ritual) is

equated with the property of goodwill.

(176) nɔ́ ní ò=nã̀-ã̀ lè **á!kɛ́** **nũ̀**
NM NMLZ 2SG=see-HAB 3SG.OBJ as water

lóó **nɔ́=!kó=!ɛ́** jééé nũ̀ ê
or thing=INDEF=DEF NEG water IJ
"What you see as water or something, it's not water!" [OYO:293]

(177) ãm̀ɛ̃=nã̀ ní!í=!ɛ̃́ **á!kɛ́.shí** **òmã̀nyé**
3PL=see thing=DEF as goodwill
"They saw it as goodwill." [OYO:71]

The comparative sense of *á!kɛ́* is also on display in the following example.

(177) jééé hé-mɔ̃̀-kè-yé-lí fá-lè jí nɔ́ ní
NEG buy-NOM-and-eat-NOM be.plenty-NOM COP NM NMLZ

hè hĩ̌ã-ã̀ tsɔ́ **á!kɛ́** **hé-mɔ̃̀-kè-yé-lí** **ní**
body need-HAB too.much as buy-NOM-and-eat-NOM NMLZ

é = !mɔ́		*shì*	*ɔ̀jɔ̀gbã̀ŋ̀ŋ̀*	*yè*	*kr̀ístò*	*ml̀ì*
3SG.PERF = catch		down	well	be.located	Christ	inside

"Having a lot of faith is not as important as having firm faith rooted in Christ."
(Lit: "It is not plenty of faith which is needed so much as a firm faith rooted in
Christ.")   [CH:332]

6.6.2.5 Time adverbials

Time adverbials denote the time at which an event unfolded by relating it to the time of another

event. This adverbial may then be used to modify a clause by indicating the time of the event in

that clause. The basic time adverbial is marked by *nî* when the event is in the past and when the

speaker is referring to a specific event. *ké* is the marker of choice when the event is in the

future or is hypothetical or when it is non-specific and refers to past habitual events. *ké* also

doubles as a marker of conditionality, resulting in ambiguity in many contexts. Structurally, the

Gã time adverbial is a verb-based nominalization, hence its marking by *nî*. The nominalization

could function alone as a time adverbial or it could modify the noun *bè* 'time' thereby

constituting a relative construction. But this relative construction differs from typical relative

constructions discussed above because it does not denote an argument, but a temporal

adverbial. The use of relative constructions with head noun,'time' or some other temporal noun

is well-attested crosslinguistically and is found in for example, Hausa, Mandarin, Swahili,

Korean and Turkish (Thompson et al 2007:247). Time adverbials are usually modified finally

by the definite article, *lè* or its allomorphs. Since the construction is a nominalization, this is

not unexpected. In (178) and (179), the time adverbials consist of nominalizations modifying *bè* 'time'.

(178) í̄=káì-ɔ̀   á!kɛ́   *bè*   *nɛ̄*   *wɔ̀=tsɛ́*   *súkù*
      1SG=remember-HAB   NMLZ   time   NMLZ   1PL=tear   SUKU

      àsàfó=!lɛ́   màmɛ̄   !kó   nɛ̄   yɔ́ɔ̀
      group=DEF   mother   INDEF   NMLZ   be.located.HAB

      àsàfó=ɛ̀   ml�̄ì̃
      group=DEF   inside
      "I remember that when we started the SUKU fellowship, a certain woman who was in the group…"   [CH:312]

(179) *bè*   *nɛ̄*   *í̄=bɛ́*   *wù*   *díɛ̀ŋtsɛ́=!ɛ́*   kɛ́
      time   NMLZ   1SG=have.NEG   husband   even=DEF   when

      è=fèɛ́=!ɛ́   í̄=kwɛ́-ɔ̀   ó=hí̃ɛ̃̀
      3SG=do=DEF   1SG=look-HAB   2SG=face
      "Even when I didn't have a husband, every once in a while, I would make a pass at you." [MM:54]

In (179), *kɛ́ èfèɛ́!ɛ́* is an idiomatic phrase meaning "once in a while".

In the following examples, the time adverbial comprises only the nominalization marked by *nɛ̄*.

(180) *nɛ̄*   *ì̄=hɛ́*   *shìká=!á*   nì̃   ì̄=síísì
      NMLZ 1SG=take   money=DEF   and   1SG=seize
      "When/After I took the money I seized it."   [MM:71]

(181) shì̃   *nɛ̄*   *è=bà*   *è=bà-shè*   *wɔ̀*   *wɔ̀=nɔ́=!ɔ́*
      but   NMLZ 3SG=come   3SG=VENT-reach   1PL   1PL=top=DEF

wɔ́=!ɔ́	wɔ̀=fɔ́-ɔ̀	lɛ̀	ényɔ̌	ényɔ̌
1PL=TOP	1PL=give.birth-HAB	3SG.OBJ	two	two

"But when it got to us (our generation), as for us, we give birth to twins." [OYO:404]

(182)

ò=nyɛ̃́-!ŋ́	ó=bó!té	jɛ̃́!mɛ̃́	**nɪ̃́**
2SG=be.able-NEG.FUT	2SG.SBJV=enter	there	NMLZ

ò=jú-kò	**ó=!hɛ́**
2SG=bathe-NEG.PERF	2SG=body

"You cannot enter there when you have not bathed."

As the translation in (180) demonstrates, the construction may be ambiguous between a 'when' and an 'after' meaning. There is no special adverb or marker for conveying a situation where an event takes place temporally posterior to another. An 'after' interpretation is not available when the main event predicate is marked for the perfect (183) or progressive (184). This is because the 'after' interpretation requires that the main event should have a beginning point that does not overlap with the adverbial event. That is, the entirety of the main event should occur after the entirety of the adverbial event has been completed. When the main event is marked progressive, however, the interpretation is that the action began prior to the action in the adverbial event and is still ongoing. Similarly, perfect-marked verbs predicate actions that have already taken place.

(183)

nɪ̃́	**wɔ̀=shɛ̀**	**shɪ̃́!ɛ̃́=!ɛ̃́**	é=wɔ̀
NMLZ	1PL=reach	house=DEF	3SG.PERF=sleep

"When/*After we got home, she was asleep."

(184)   *nɪ́*   *wɔ̀=shè*   *shɪ́!á̃=! á̃*   èè=wɔ̀
       NMLZ   1PL=reach   house=DEF   3SG.PROG=sleep
       "When/*After we got home, she was sleeping."

A time adverbial that denotes an event slated to occur in the future and which contains

the future marker *bàá-* must be expressed by a relative construction with the head noun, *bè*

'time', as in (185). Rather than a 'when' interpretation, such sentences have a 'by the time'

interpretation; the event in the main clause is predicted to occur prior to that in the adverbial.

(185)   *bè*   *nɪ́*   *ò=bàá-tè*   *shɪ̀*   *lèé!bɪ́=!ɛ́*   àyɛ́   !kó
       time   NMLZ 2SG=FUT-rise   down   morning=DEF   witch   INDEF

       é=bà-gbèé   shɪ̀   yɛ̀   ó=tsʉ̃́=ɛ̃̀   mɪ̃̀ŋ
       3SG.PERF=VENT-fall   down   be.located   2SG=room=DEF   top

       yɛ̀   ó=sàà-tsó=ɛ̀   nɔ̃̀
       be.located   2SG=bed-wood=DEF   top
       "By the time you wake up in the morning, a witch would have fallen down into your
       room, onto your bed." [CH:264]

(186)   wɔ́   *bé*   *nɪ́*   *ò=bàá-!bá=!á*   wɔ̀=jwélé   !nɔ̃́   nɪ́
       tomorrow   time   NMLZ 2SG=FUT-come=DEF   1PL=lie   top   NMLZ

       wɔ̀=ŋ̀-hɔ̀ó   nɪ́!ɪ́
       1PL=PROG-cook   thing
       "By the time you come tomorrow, we'll be busily cooking."   [YM:292]

Expressing the adverbial as an argument nominalization alone without the head *bè* 'time'

results in ungrammaticality.

(187) ***nǐ***   ***ò=bàá-tè***   ***shǐ***   ***lèé!bí=!ɛ́***   àyɛ́   !kó
       NMLZ   2SG-FUT=rise   down morning=DEF   witch INDEF

       é=bà-gbèé   shǐ   yè   ó=tsű=ɛ̃̀   mɩ̃̀ŋ
       3SG.PERF=VENT-fall   down be.located   2SG=room=DEF   top

       yè   ó=sàà-tsó=ɛ̀   nɔ̃̀
       be.located   2SG=bed-wood=DEF   top
       "By the time you wake up in the morning, a witch would have fallen down into your
       room, onto your bed."

Multiple time adverbials may follow each other in succession. They are usually

connected to the main clause by the coordinator, *nǐ* 'and/then'. In (188), two adverbials

marked by *nǐ* occur successively, followed by the coordinator, *nǐ* and then the main assertion.

(188) ***nǐ***   ***à=bà***   ***nǐ***   ***à=wìé***
       NMLZ   3PL.IMPERS=come NMLZ   3PL.IMPERS-talk

       ààhű=!ɛ́   nǐ   è=tè   shǐ   nǐ   è=wìé
       continuously=DEF   and   3SG=rise   down and   3SG=talk
       "When they came and they talked continuously (tried to make their case/reason with
       them), she got up and spoke."   [MM:185]

To denote a time that is in the future, or one that is hypothetical, or one that refers to a

past habitual event, a completely different nominalizer, *kɛ́* is employed. The same construction

may also convey conditional meaning. The following are some examples of constructions

marked by *kɛ́*. (189) and (190) refer to future events while (191) and (192a) refer to

hypothetical events. (192b) refers to a past event, but a non-specific one, a sort of past habitual

occurrence.

(189) *ké*   *àà=yá=!á*   nyǐɛ̃́-mɔ̃́   sɛ̀ɛ̀
     when   3PL.IMPERS.PROG=go=DEF   walk-IMP   back
     "When they are going, follow them."   [YM:206]

(190) *ké*   *ò=bá=!á*   mɛ̃́nǐ   ò=bàá-!yé
     when   2SG=come=DEF   what   2SG=FUT-eat
     "When you come, what will you eat?"   [DT:11;10]

(191) bí!ántɔ̀ɔ̀nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́   wɔ́=!nɑ̃́   *sixty years*   kè   sɛ̀ɛ̀   shǐ   *ké*
     now   1PL.PERF=get   and   back   but   when

     nɔ̃́=kò   *bá=!á*   wɔ̀=hè   kpókpò-ɔ̀   tɑ̃̀mɔ̃̀   gbèé
     thing=INDEF   come=DEF   1PL=body   shiver-HAB   like   dog

     nɛ̃́   é=dɔ̀   è=lèé
     NMLZ   3SG.PERF=bend   3SG=tail
     "Now we are over sixty years old but when something happens we tremble like a dog
     which has bent its tail [i.e. a dog in fear]."   [CH:272]

(192a) é!kólɛ́=!ɛ̀   *ké*   *ǐ=nɑ̃̀*   *è=m̀fɔ̀nírí=!ɛ́*   mɑ̃́=!nɑ̃́
     maybe=TOP   if/when   1SG=see   3SG=photo=DEF   1SG.FUT=see
     "Maybe when I see a photo of her I will recognize her."   [DF:48]

(192b) nò   mɪ̀ɲ=!ɛ̃́   *ké*   *ǐ=ŋɑ̃́*   *lɛ́=!ɛ́*   é=!fóóó
     that   inside=TOP   when   1SG=greet   3SG.OBJ=DEF   3SG.NEG=cut.NEG
     ɛ̃́=dáà
     1SG=mouth
     "At that time, whenever I greeted her/him, s/he would not respond."

As, Thompson et al (2007:258) note, the difference between 'if' and 'when' is a matter of degree of expectability. In other words, if one is confident of the occurrence of an event, then a 'when' interpretation is warranted. If one is less confident, then 'if' is preferred. It is not always possible to gauge accurately a speaker's confidence in the materialization of an event. (189) and (190) are glossed 'when' because I was privy to background information pertinent to the discourse. For example, that in (189) people were going to go on a procession as part of a yearly ritual and in (190) I was aware that the speaker was looking forward to a visit from the addressee and travel tickets had already been bought. Without this type of information, it may be difficult to gloss *ké* with certainty, and it is for this reason that (192a) remains ambiguous.

i) Simultaneous time adverbials

A 'while' meaning is obtained when the verb in the adverbial is progressive (193), (194).

(193) nò   mĩ̀ŋ = !ɛ́   ***nĩ́***   ***mĩ́ĩ́ = !bá-!á***   èè = bí
       that   inside = TOP   NMLZ 1SG.PROG = come-DEF   3SG.PROG = ask

       !mĩ́   á!kɛ́   nɛ̃́gbè jí   sùá!lábà
       1SG.OBJ   NMLZ   where COP   Sualaba
       "While I was coming, she was asking me where Sualaba was." [FH:44]

(194) ***nĩ́***   ***àà = tsṹ***   ***nĩ́!ĩ́ = !ɛ́***   é = tèè
       NMLZ   3PL.IMPERS.PROG = work thing = DEF   3SG.PERF = go.PST
       é = yà-wɔ̀
       3SG.PERF = ITIV-sleep
       "While work is being done, he has gone to bed."

When the verb in the adverbial is progressive and the main clause specifies a temporal

duration, then the adverbial indicates an activity whose duration spans the duration indicated by

the temporal noun in the main clause. That is, the adverbial takes on a 'during which'

interpretation, as in (195) and (196).

(195) nĩ̀   è=yè   *four days*   kɛ̀   ní!í   **ní**   **àà--**   **ɛ̀ɛ̀**
     and   3SG-eat   and   things NMLZ   3PL--   IJ

    àà=bɔ̀   **mɔ́dɛ́ŋ**   **á!kɛ́**   **à=bàá-**revive
    3PL.PROG=create   strength   NMLZ   3PL.IMPERS=FUT-
    lè
    3SG.OBJ
    "And he was there for for about four days, during which they were trying to revive
    him."   [FH:139]

(196) è=nyɛ́-ɔ̀   è=yè-ɔ̀   áfí-ì   òhá-!í   ékpàà **ní**
     3SG=able.to-HAB   3SG=eat-HAB   year-PL   hundred-PL six   NMLZ

    èè=kwɛ̀   **è=fã̀-jĩ̀**   **ŋ̀-bó!té**   **sú=è**   **mĩ̀**
    3SG=germinate   3SG=root-PL   PROG-enter   soil=DEF   inside
    "It can take six hundred years during which it is germinating, its roots are entering the
    soil." [CH:343]

'Before' time adverbial

To express that an event occurred anterior to the time of another event, two different

nominalizers differing in the tone on the last syllable are used. They are *dã́ní* and *dã́nì*. There

are two factors that determine the choice between them. These are whether or not the adverbial

precedes the main clause and whether it has subjunctive marking. When the time adverbial

precedes the main clause, *dā́nī́* is used (197). When the adverbial follows the main clause, *dā́nī̀*

is used (198), (199), except when the adverbial predicate is subjunctive, then *dā́nī́* is used (200).

So *dā́nī́* is employed when the adverbial precedes the main clause or when it contains a

subjunctive morpheme, regardless of its position, while *dā́nī̀* is used for adverbials that follow

the main clause and do not have a subjunctive morpheme. The resemblance in form between

these markers and the more prevalent *nī́* and *nī̀* cannot be missed, although their diachronic

relationship remains elusive due to lack of records.

(197) **dā́nī́**   **à=bàá-yè**   **hɔ̀mɔ̀wɔ́=!ɔ́**   à=yè-ɔ̀
      before 3PL.IMPERS-FUT-eat   Homowo=DEF   3PL.IMPERS=eat-HAB

yèèyé!yé
Yeyeye
"Before Homowo (festival) is celebrated, Yeyeye (festival) is celebrated."
[YM:35]

(198) è=tɔ̀   bò   **dā́nī̀**   **ò=nyɛ̃́**   **ò=fɔ́**
      3SG=toil   2SG.OBJ   before 2SG=be.able 2SG=give.birth

nà̀kà̀ì̀ **gbé!kɛ̃́=!ɛ̃́**
 that   child=DEF
"You toiled before you were able to give birth to that child."   [CH:38]

(199) hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   àmɛ̃̀=bó!té   nṹ=ɛ̃̀   ŋshì̀   **dā́nī̀**   **gbé!kɛ̃́=ɛ̃̀**   bɔ̀
      sake=DEF   3PL=enter   water=DEF   under   before child=DEF   create

mɔ́dɛ́ŋ	nɨ̀	è=jè	kpò
strength	and	3SG=exit	compound

"So they were submerged underwater before/and then the child made some effort and got out." [MA:85]

(200)

shá	ó=dáà	*dã́nɨ́*	ó=!jú	ó=!hé
scrub	2SG=mouth	before	2SG.SBJV=bathe	2SG=body

"Brush your teeth before you take a bath."

dã́nɨ̀ has another syntactic function as a time adverb when it occurs in sentence-final position. It is then realised as *dã́ŋ*. An example is given in (201).

(201)

ɨ̃̀=kɛ̀ɛ́	ɨ̃́=!nã́-kò	*dã́ŋ*
1SG=say	1SG.NEG=see-NEG.PERF	before

"I said "I haven't seen (it) before."   [MM:67]

Substitutive adverbial

A substitutive adverbial meaning comes about when the subject referents of the adverbial and the main clause are coreferential and the adverbial predicate is marked for the future or subjunctive.

(202)

nɨ́	òkó	bàá-tsɯ̃́	nɨ̃́ɨ́=!ɛ̃́	èè=wɔ̀
NMLZ	Oko	FUT-work	thing=DEF	3SG.PROG=sleep

"Instead of Oko working, he is sleeping."

(203)

nɨ́	*ò=bàá-wá*	*mɨ́=!ɛ̃́*	ò=tá	shɨ̃̀
NMLZ	2SG=FUT-help	1SG.OBJ=DEF	2SG=sit	down

òò=kwɛ́	mɨ̃̀	mòŋ́
2SG.PROG=watch	1SG.OBJ	rather

"Instead of helping me, you are rather sitting down watching me."

6.6.2.5 Conditional adverbials

Conditionals have been introduced briefly above in the discussion of time adverbials because some time adverbials use the same marker, *ké,* as conditionals. A conditional construction presents a condition (the protasis or traditionally, the 'if' clause) and the consequence of that condition pertaining (the apodosis or 'then' clause). It therefore codes a hypothetical event. It is this semantic commonality with future and hypothetical time adverbials that allows these functions to be accomplished by the same construction. As noted earlier, a 'when' interpretation is warranted when the speaker is reasonably sure of the manifestation of the event, while an 'if' interpretation is triggered by less confidence in the realization of the event denoted in the protasis (Thompson et al. 2007:258). *ké* is therefore a nominalizer that is specialized mainly for marking the time of a future/hypothetical event (coded in the apodosis) as coinciding with the time of the event characterized in the protasis. When there is doubt about the event in the protasis unfolding, a conditional meaning is born, because such a construction highlights even more greatly the dependence of the manifestation of the event in the apodosis on the manifestation of that in the protasis.

In Gã, the protasis or conditional event is compulsorily marked by *ké* and the apodosis is optionally marked by *bè* 'then'. The protasis is often modified finally by the definite article,

just as time adverbials nominalized by *nî́* are also modified by the definite article. In (204) and

(205), both markers are present. In (206) and (207), the apodosis has no marker.

(204) *kɛ́*   wɔ̀=yɛ̀   hé-mɔ̃̀-kɛ̀-yé-li   yɛ̀   křístò mĺí̀ !lɛ́
      if   1PL=have   buy-NOM-and-eat-NOM   be.located   Christ inside DEF

      bɛ́=!ɛ́   nɔ̃́   nî́   è=wìé   !lɛ́   wɔ̀=bàá-hé   !nɔ̃́
      then=TOP   NM   NMLZ   3SG=say   DEF   1PL=FUT-take   top

      wɔ́=!yé
      1PL.SBJV=eat
      "If we have faith in Christ, then what he has said, we will trust in it."   [CH:365]

(205) ɛ̀kɛ́=!ɛ́   *kɛ́*   ò=tèè   ó=hî̂ɛ̃   fí!óó=!ɛ́   *bɛ́=!ɛ́*
      then=TOP   if   2SG=go.PST 2SG=face   little=DEF   then=TOP

      mã̀ŋtsɛ̀   àgbónã̀ã̀
      Mantse   Agbonaa
      "And then if you go straight ahead for a bit, then (you'll be in) *Mantsɛ Agbonaa*."
                   [FH:98]

(206) *kɛ́*   nyɛ̃̀=yɛ̀   nyɛ̃̀=búà   mî́=!ɛ́   wɔ́   sɛ̀ɛ̀
      if   2PL=eat   2PL=help   1SG.OBJ=DEF   tomorrow   back

      àfî́=!ɛ́   mã́=!bá   mã́=!bá-kè   nyɛ̃̀   nɔ̃́=!kó
      year=DEF   1SG.FUT=come   1SG.FUT=VENT-gift   2PL   thing=INDEF
      "If you help me, next year I will come and gift you something."   [YM:115]

(207) *kɛ́*   nũ̀ũ̀   jí   bó=!ɛ́   ò=fé-ɔ̀   yɛ̀
      if   male   COP   2SG.OBJ=DEF   2SG=do-HAB   be.located

ó = tsɛ̀-mɛ̃̀ɪ̃   à-wɛ̀

2SG = father-PL   PERT-family.house

"If you are a man, you do it in your father's family house."   [OYO:336]

Sometimes *kɛ́* is followed by the copula, *jí* and together they form a compounded grammatical marker.

(208)   *kɛ́!jí*   à = wò   bàà   nɛ́!ɛ́ ɛ̀ɛ̀

        if   3PL.IMPERS = prepare   leaf   this   IJ

        gbé!kɛ̃́-bí!í-!ɛ́   ɛ̀ɛ̀   à-sùsùmɛ̃́   hɪ̀-ɔ̃   bàà   nɛ́!ɛ́ mɪ̃̀ŋ

        child-PL = DEF   IJ   PERT-spirit live-HAB   leaf   this   inside

        "If/when the herbs are prepared, the children's spirit reside in it."   [OYO:21]

i. Counterfactuals

The examples showing conditional adverbials above involve either habitual or generic situations (204), (205), (207), (208) or a prediction/hypothetical situation (206). Conditionals which denote events that did not or cannot happen are known as counterfactuals and in Gã they receive special marking. The counterfactual is marked initially by *àjí* and finally by *kṹ!lɛ́* (often realized as *kṹ!ɛ́*)*,* which is a compound of *kṹ* and the definite article. It is possible that *àjí* is a coalescence of some marker, *à* which is no longer independent, and the copula *jí.* This situation would mirror that of *kɛ́!jí* discussed above as well as *kṹ!lɛ́,* since *kṹ* cannot occur independently either. In the following example, the unattainable condition, the fact of the addressee being 'here', is marked by *àjí* and *kṹ!ɛ́.*

(209) nì̃   *àjí*   ò=yὲ   bíὲ-ŋ   ***kṹ!ɛ́*** mɔ̃̀   nɛ́
       and   if   2SG=be.located   here-FOC   CTF   person   NMLZ

bàá-télé=!ɛ́   ò=bàá-!nɛ̃́
FUT-carry.on.head=DEF   2SG=FUT-see
"And if you were here you would be able to see the one who would carry it."
[YM:193]

(210) *àjí*   ó=jù   ó=hὲ-ŋ   ***kṹ!ɛ̃́*** ì̃=kὲ
       if   2SG.PERF=bathe   2SG=body-PRED.PRT   CTF   1SG=take

bò   bàá-!yá
2SG.OBJ   FUT-go
"If you had bathed, I would have taken you with me."

One striking phonological characteristic of the constructions in (209) and (210) is that

there is always a velar nasal with low tone immediately before *kṹ!ɛ̃́.* So in (209) and (210) *bí!ɛ́*

'here' and *hὲ* 'body' are followed by a velar nasal sound. This nasal is probably a phonological

reduction of some morpheme, and based on its phonological shape, tone and the semantics of

the construction, I suggest that this morpheme was the predicative particle, *nì̃.* In modern Gã,

when *nì̃* occurs as the only predicate in a clause, it always has a nominal subject. The

counterfactual supposition could be a noun (211) and it probably historically was restricted

only to nouns. With time this was expanded to include larger propositional units - event

nominalizations - such as (209) and (210). Comparing (210) and (211), it is clear that the

counterfactual nominalization in (210) occupies the same slot as the noun, *mì̀* '1SG.OBJ', in

(211).

(211)   *àjí*   *mì̀-ŋ̀*   kű!ɛ́   ĩ̀=kɛ̀   bò
         if   1SG.OBJ-PRED.PRT CTF   1SG=take   2SG.OBJ

         bàá-!yá
         FUT-go
         "If it were me, I would go with you."

kű!ɛ́ occurs without *àjí,* as a counterfactual adverb. When it occurs in this function it

indicates that the predicate it modifies describes a situation that could have obtained but

did/will not.

(212)   *kű!ɛ́*   wɔ̀=ŋ̀-bà   wɔ́=bá   sĺá   bò
         CTF   1PL=PROG-come   1PL.SBJV=come   visit   2SG.OBJ
         "We were coming to visit you." [But are no longer going to.]

(213)   lɛ̀   nĩ̀   *kű!ɛ́*   èè=bà   é=bá-kwé
         3SG.OBJ   FOC   CTF   3SG.PROG=come   3SG.SBJV=VENT-watch

         gbé!kɛ̃́=!ɛ̃́
         child=DEF
         "It is s/he who was coming to watch the child." [But is no longer going to.]

(214)   ɛ̃́ɛ̃́!ɛ̃́   hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   é=!sááá   nĩ́   *kű!ɛ́*
         yes   so=TOP   3SG.PERF=fit.NEG   NMLZ   CTF

         à=tà-à   è=hè
         3PL.IMPERS=touch-HAB   3SG=body
         "Yes, so they shouldn't have touched him." [But they did] [FH:146]

ii. Negative conditionals

This is expressed by the adverb, *jà* 'unless'. The conditional may then be linked to the main

clause by *dãnĩ̀* 'before'. Oftentimes, *jà* 'unless' is preceded by *bɛ̀* 'then' but this is by no means

compulsory.

(215) bɛ̀   ***jà***   ó=hé-mɔ̃̀-kɛ̀-yé-lí   dà   ***dãnĩ̀***   ò=bàá-nyɛ̃́
      then   unless 2SG=buy-NOM-and-eat-NOM   be.big before 2SG=FUT-able

      ó=yè   nɔ̃̀
      2SG.SBJV=eat   top
      "Your faith must be strong before you can abide by it."
      Lit: "Unless your faith is strong before you can abide by it."   [CH:329]

jà 'unless' could also function as a preposition, as in (216), where its object is the NP *áfĩ́ pɛ́*

'only one year'.

(216) ***jà***   áfĩ́   pɛ́   ***dãnĩ̀***   à=kɛ̀   nɛ̃̀kɛ̃́   bàà   nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́
      unless year   only   before 3PL.IMPERS=take this   leaf   this

      bà-à
      come-HAB
      "They bring these herbs only once a year."
      Lit: "Unless one year (comes) before they bring these herbs."   [OYO:292]

6.7 Causal adverbials

The causal adverbial in Gã is a clause and not a grammatical nominalization. It is marked by

é!jáá!kɛ́, whose etymology can arguably be traced to the phrase *è=jè á!kɛ́* [3SG=come.from

NMLZ] 'it comes from that…' It is not considered a nominalization because its distribution

within the sentence does not correspond to the distribution of nominals. In addition, it is not

modified by a final article. The causal clause always follows the main clause which expresses

the result. Examples of causal adverbial clauses are:

(217) nîí̋=ɛ̀̃   dɔ̀   gbé!kɛ̃́-nǔ̋ǔ̋=!ɛ̃́   *éjáá!kɛ́*   *è=shwɛ́ɛ́ɛ́*
       thing=DEF   hurt   child-male=DEF   because   3SG=play.NEG

       è=kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né=è   hè   kwɾ́áá
       3SG=frog=DEF   body   at.all
       "The thing hurt the boy because he loved his frog very much." (Lit:…because he wasn't
       playful at all about his frog i.e. he cherished their relationship)   [PAT:26]

(218) bè   ní̋   shɔ̀̃mɛ̀̃   ŋ̀-yá=!á   è=kɛ̀ɛ́   mí̋   á!kɛ́
       time   NMLZ Shormey   PROG-go=DEF   3SG=tell   1SG.OBJ   NMLZ

       è=bàá-féé   lè   bl̀ɛ̀ɔ̀ɔ̀ *éjáá!kɛ́*   *ã̀mɛ̀̃=wòlò*   yè
       3SG=FUT-do   3SG.OBJ   gently because   3PL=paper   be.located

       è=dè
       3SG=hand
       "When Shormey was going, she told me that she would handle it gently because their
       documents were with him."   [DT:21;44]

6.8 Possible historical relationships between nominalizations marked by *ní̋* and *á!kɛ́*

In this section, the diachronic development of the various functions of *ní̋-* and *á!kɛ́-*marked

nominalizations will be examined. At this juncture, it is incumbent on me to recite the usual

refrain - that without any historical records, this venture is mostly speculative. But it is

nevertheless worthwhile to do so, using comparative data from languages which have a long-

studied history, as well as knowledge regarding human cognition and communicative function.

With these tools, it is possible to draw up a tentative map of relations between the various

functions and their hypothetical line of historical development. Before getting to that, it will be

useful to list the various functions performed by each type of nominalization.

nǐ-nominalization:

relativization, complementation, purpose adverbial modification, time adverbial modification,

reason adverbial modification, substitutive adverbial modification, simultaneous adverbial

Other uses of *nǐ:* coordination

á!ké-nominalization:- complementation, purpose adverbial, reason adverbial (co-occurring with

nǐ)

Other uses of *á!ké:* comparative preposition

     There is cross-linguistic evidence that relative clause and complement clause markers

develop from discourse-deictic markers, especially demonstratives. Hopper and Traugott

(2003:191) have shown this to be the case for English 'that', which develops from a pronoun

into a discourse deictic and then a complementizer. For Gã, one possible source for the

nominalizer, *nǐ* is the predicative particle, *nì,* first discussed in §3.5.2. This is a discourse

deictic predicative particle which points to an entity in the previous discourse or in the

discourse environment. Example: *ákú !ní* 'It is Aku'. It is my contention that this particle also

developed into a focus particle and then a marker of relativization. This may have happened via

a paratactic construction such as (219). Since the subjects of the two sentences are

coreferential, the second subject could easily be eliminated, resulting in (220), which is a

typical focus construction.

(219) yòó = ɛ̀   nì̃.   è = jù   shìká = !á
      woman = DEF   PRED.PRT   3SG = steal   money = DEF
      "It is the woman. She stole the money."

(220) yòó = ɛ̀   nì̃   jù   shìká = !á
      woman = DEF   FOC/NMLZ   steal   money = DEF
      "It is the woman who stole the money."

The focus construction is an equational construction, equating the focused NP with an argument

nominalization referring to that NP. The focus construction thus illustrates NP use of an

argument nominalization. This construction could then be reanalyzed as an NP + modifier

construction, which would enable it to be used as a subject or object in a sentence, giving us a

relative construction, such as (221). The major difference here is that the tone on *nì̃* has gone

from low in the predicative particle and focus construction to high in the relative construction.

This could be a strategy for differentiating the two functions.

(221) yòó = ɛ̀   ní̃   jù   shìká = !á   é = !gbó
      woman = DEF   NMLZ /REL   steal   money = DEF   3SG.PERF = die
      "The woman who stole the money is dead."

What allows such argument nominalizations to be used in focus constructions as well as relative constructions is the fact that they contain presuppositions about the involvement of some entity in an activity. The activity is presupposed and so naturally, the identity of the entities partaking in the activity will be sought. The function of focus constructions is to supply this missing information. In (220), it is presupposed in the argument nominalization that some money was stolen and the identity of the thief is supplied by the focused argument. As was shown in §3.6.2, content questions also make use of focus structures and hence grammatical nominalizations. In questions, the identity of the referent which has crucial relevance in the event presupposed in the grammatical nominalization is not known, and is being explicitly sought. This is done by putting a question word in subject position. In relative constructions, the presupposition in the grammatical nominalization is meant to aid the addressee to identify the referent of the head nominal. So again, in (221), there is a presupposition that some money was stolen. This information is given information and it is used to delimit the potential pool of referents of *yòó!ɛ́* 'the woman' in order to make it more identifiable to the addressee. This is the modificational function. The new information is contained in the predicate - the fact of the woman having died. So what makes grammatical argument nominalizations a good vehicle for the expression of focus (and by extension content questions) and relativization is the presuppositions contained within them that demand the revelation of any missing actors

involved in the presupposed event. This connection was first reported by Shibatani and bin

Makhashen (2009:23-24).

With *nî́* established as a marker of grammatical argument nominalizations, it could then

be co-opted for marking event nominalizations which refer to whole events rather than just

arguments. Thus was born the complementation function of *nî́.* The time adverbial

nominalization, as discussed earlier, developed out of the relative construction with *bè* 'time' as

head noun. The head noun dropped out of use (while being maintained in some syntactico-

semantic contexts) and this gave us the modern day time adverbial marked by only *nî́.* The use

of a *nî́*-marked nominalization as a time adverbial i.e. to modify a verb or proposition, paved

the way for its extension to other semantic types of adverbial modification. For purpose

adverbial modification, an additional marker, *kó* was added (optionally), another attempt

perhaps to set purpose modification apart from the other uses. The same motivation may lie

behind use of *dắnî́* as the marker of 'before' adverbials. The coordinator function of *(kó)nî́,*

reserved for future and irrealis clausal conjuncts, arises from the close temporal association

between the event predicated in the main clause (which always comes first) and the intended

result of the adverbial which always follows it. The implication is that no other event

intervenes and so in addition to the purpose function of *(kó)nî́,* a coordinate semantic element is

also ascribed to it. *(kó)nî́* is then able to be used to conjoin events that do not have a purposive semantic element.

á!ké, as previously mentioned, is likely grammaticalized from the verb *kὲê* 'say' and came to be used to mark complements of utterance verbs, a pathway that is well documented in many languages. Its development for purpose adverbial modification probably followed a trajectory similar to what Haspelmath (1993:393) describes for the 'say' purpose marker in Kannada, where a subject referent performs an action during which they verbalize the intended consequence of the action. He formulates this as "A does B, saying: May C do D". This develops into "A does B in order for C to do D". It is this very template that is seen in Gã in examples such as (163)-(165). *á!ké's* use as a marker of comparison or similarity is probably independent of the complementation/purpose route. This path of development is not unique to Gã; it is attested in other languages e.g. Vai and Tamil, that 'say' grammaticalized into a preposition introducing a comparative NP (Heine and Kuteva 2007:269).

The proposed historical pathways of grammaticalization of *nî́* and *á!ké* can be summarized by the diagrams below. The crucial stage of development for *nî́* is when the construction in which it appears is analysed as a nominalization (the focus construction) and it starts being used to denote a variety of situations thus allowing it to occur in NP slots (complementation) and modifier slots (relativization).

nĩ́:

NP-use ("headless" relativization, focus)

modification use (relativization)

time adverbial → other adverbial

predicative particle constr. →grammatical arg. NMLZN → grammatical event NMLZN

complementation

purpose adverbial

á!kέ:

purpose adverbial

verb *kὲέ* 'say' → complementation → reason adverbial

comparative preposition
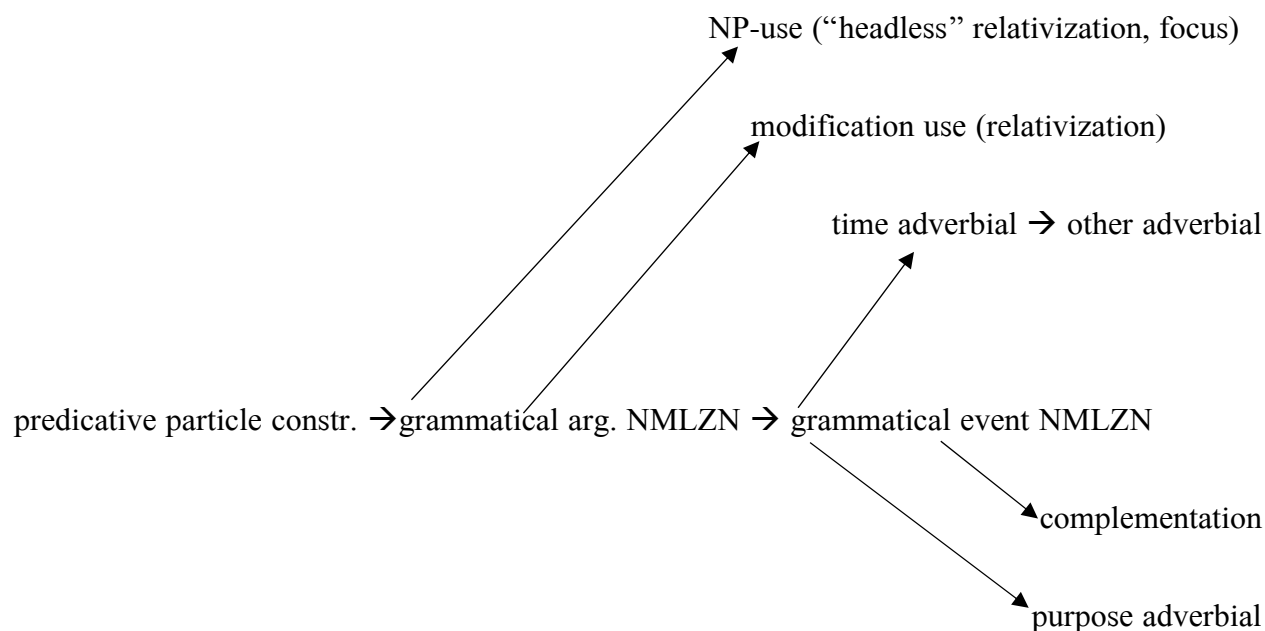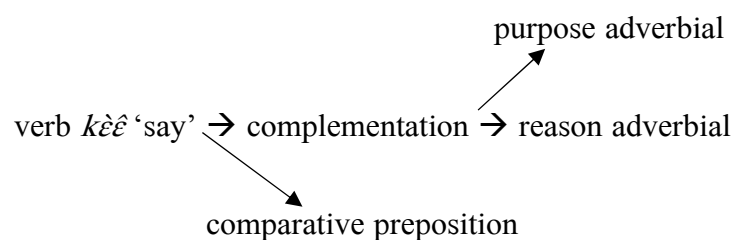
6.9 Summary

This chapter has taken an in-depth look at nominalizations in Gã. Lexical nominalizations were

examined first in §6.1. Lexical nominalization is the means by which a non-noun is made into a

lexical noun. In Gã, this is achieved mainly by affixation and zero-derivation. The

nominalization of inherent complement verbs and serial verbs was discussed in §6.1.3 and 6.1.4

respectively. A phenomenon whereby whole sentences are used as lexical nouns was looked at

in §6.1.5. The rest of the chapter was dedicated to grammatical nominalizations, whereby

entitites are denoted in terms of the events or situation surrounding them or the events relevant

to them or the activities in which they are involved. In §6.2 two types of grammatical

nominalizations were put forth: grammatical argument nominalizations and grammatical event

nominalizations. It was shown (§6.4) that what have previously been described as relative

clauses were actually grammatical argument nominalizations being used to modify nouns. In

§6.5 evidence was presented for the reanalysis of headless genitives as noun-based argument

nominalizations in NP use. Event nominalizations were then examined. They were found to

have several functions in the language, most notably complementation (§6.6.1) and adverbial

modification (6.6.2). Various types of adverbial functions were discussed. The common

morphological elements that threaded many of these nominalizations together were the particles

nĩ and *á!kɛ́,* so in §6.8 an attempt was made to lay out possible diachronic relationships

between the various uses of nominalization in Gã.

Chapter 7: Focus and topic

7.0 Introduction

This chapter examines the ways in which information is presented by speakers so as to give

prominence to certain bits of information or to background them. Two concepts that embody

this area of linguistics are focus and topic, and they will be the focus of the chapter.

Unfortunately, as observed by several writers, example Givón (2001b:220); Payne (1998:262)

and Gundel (1999:293), these two terms have been used by different writers to mean different

things. Payne (1997:262) even notes that in some traditions focus and topic are synonyms while

in others they are antonyms.

In this work, the view of focus that will be adopted is the one where focus is an overtly

marked pragmatic function of some constituent of the sentence. Not all sentences, therefore,

have focus, and sentences that have focus are pragmatically-marked i.e. they deviate from the

standard morpho-syntactic formula for the formation of sentences in the language. This

conception of focus is known as marked focus (Payne 1997:268). According to Payne, the

scope of focus may be either the truth value of the clause or one constituent of the clause. He

also outlines several types of constituent focus, but only one type is relevant to Gã and this is

contrastive focus or counter-presuppositional focus. This type of focus is deployed when the

speaker assumes that the hearer holds a belief that is contrary to the speaker's belief. The

speaker thus asserts the "correct" information by bringing it into focus. The focused constituent

may be marked phonologically (by intonation or tone) or morpho-syntactically. It will be

shown that in Gã, focus is utilized not only for showing contrast but also for emphasis.

Topicality, as alluded to earlier, is also a term that is fraught with controversy and

ambiguity. Payne (1997:270) notes that some writers equate topic with left- and right-dislocated

clause constituents, with the forms that mark them encoding "topicalization." He remarks that

since topic is basically a pragmatic notion, it is unhelpful to conflate it with formal devices.

The topic of a discourse basically refers to the referent that is the fulcrum of the discourse,

whose actions move the discourse forward or around which the discourse develops. It is

typically a property of nominals. For Givón (2001b:254), topic is not a clause-level

phenomenon but a discourse dependent one which can best be identified when one examines

entire paragraphs or narratives and tracks the frequency with which certain discourse

participants recur. Topical referents, because they represent a central element of the discourse,

are repeated throughout the discourse, and they typically display formal properties associated

with topicality such as special intonation, definite marking and dedicated topic marking.

Certain constructions are also recognized as marked topic constructions, because

according to Givón (2001b:254), they code referents of relatively low accessibility. The

property of low accessibility is attributed to new referents, referents that are being reintroduced

after a gap in mention as well as referents that are being contrasted with other referents.

Examples of such constructions are left dislocation, right dislocation and Y-movement. It will

be shown that in Gã, left dislocation coupled with morphological marking of the topic is the

main vehicle for marked topicalization.

7.1 Syntax of focus constructions

In Gã, the focus construction is marked by a particle, *nì,* the focus particle, which follows the

focused element. The focused element is often a nominal or noun phrase, but it may also be an

adverb. In §6.8 it was argued that the focus construction evolved from a paratactic construction

involving the predicative particle, *nì.* The focus construction was essentially an equational

construction equating the focused element with a grammatical nominalization. It is this

grammatical nominalization that is used in relativization, with the only difference being a high-

toned, *ní* marking the relative construction. The grammatical nominalization contains a

presupposition about an action, and the involvement of an entity in that action. The focused

nominal provides the identity of that entity. In a sign of the nominalization of the

presupposition, it may be modified finally by the definite article. Unlike relativization, the

definite article is not obligatory. In the examples given below, the focused constituent is bolded

and italicized.

In (1), the focused constituent is a conjoined NP, *ầmẽ̀màmí kè ầmẽ̀pàpámẽ̃ì* 'their

mother [sic] and fathers'. In (2), it is the NP, *óbí kò* 'a child of yours'.

(1) nǐ   ófáìnẽ́ hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   hầâjĩ̌=!ẽ́   ***ầmẽ̀=màmí   kè***
     and   please sake=TOP   twins=DEF   3PL=mother and

     ầmẽ̀=pàpá-mẽ̃ì   nǐ   Ø   bàá-féé   énẽ̀   àmẽ́-- àmẽ́=hấ   ầmẽ̀
     3PL=father-PL   FOC   FUT-do   this   3PL-- 3PL=give   3PL
      "And please, so the twins, it is their mothers and fathers who will do this for them."
     [OYO:316]

(2) kɛ́   ***ó=bí***   ***kò***   nǐ   ò=táò-ɔ̀   nǐ
     if   2SG=child   INDEF   FOC   2SG=want-HAB   NMLZ

     é=fɔ́   hầâjĩ̌=!ẽ́   nyɔ̃ŋmɔ̀   bàá-dầmɔ̀   mĩ̀ŋ
     3SG.SBJV=give.birth   twins=DEF God   FUT-stand   inside

     é=hấ   bò
     3SG.SBJV=give   2SG.OBJ
     "If it is a child of yours whom you want to give birth to twins, God will intervene for
     you."   [OYO:106]

In (3), the focused constituent is a grammatical nominalization - a verb-based argument

nominalization being used as an NP.

(3) ***nɔ̃́***   ***nĩ́***   ***bò***   ***ò=bàá-tsɔ̃́ɔ̃́=!ɔ̃́***   nĩ̀
     NM   NMLZ   2SG.OBJ   2SG=FUT-show=DEF   FOC

     à=bàá-féè   Ø
     3PL.IMPERS=FUT-do
     "What you will decide is what will be done."   [OYO:13]

The grammatical role of the focused constituent in the presupposition is indicated by a gap if it is subject or object, but this applies to full NP focused constituents only. Focused pronouns behave differently and will be discussed shortly. In (1), the focused constituent is the subject and is indicated by a gap in the pre-verbal subject position. In (2), the focused constituent is neither the subject nor the object of the clause; it is the subject of the complement of *tá!ó* 'want' and as such it is represented pronominally. In (3), the focused nominalization is the object in the presupposition and is gapped, although it is difficult to be certain with this example because the nominalization refers to an inanimate entity, and inanimates are pronominalized with a null pronoun. In the following example, the item in focus is human and is the object. It is also represented by a gap which proves that indeed gapping is the appropriate strategy for objects. If pronominalization was the intended strategy then one would expect to see the third singular objective pronoun, *lὲ* instead of a gap.

(4)   ***ákú***   nĩ̀   wɔ̀=nã̀   Ø   yὲ   sɔ̀ɔ̀mɔ́=!ɔ́
       Aku   FOC   1PL=see   be.located   church=DEF
       "It is Aku that we saw at church."

There are some speakers who would accept the pronoun, *lɛ* in place of the gap but this is considered non-standard by many. Pronominalization may occur when the focused constituent is a full NP and it has subject role in the presupposition, but this is only marginally acceptable and is outright ungrammatical to some speakers.

(5)   ?**òkó**   nĩ̀   è꞊ŋmã̀   wòló꞊!ɛ́
       Oko   FOC 3SG꞊write   book꞊DEF
       "It is Oko who wrote the book."

If the focused constituent is a pronoun, and the subject in the presupposition is co-referential with the focused pronoun, then the focus particle must be followed by a pronoun which refers back to the focused element (6). Omission of this resumptive pronoun renders the construction ungrammatical (7).

(6)   **ã̀mɛ̃̀**   nĩ̀   ã̀mɛ̃̀꞊bàá-yà-tsɔ̃́ɔ̃́   nɛ̀kɛ́   níyèní!í   nɛ́!ɛ́
       3PL   FOC   3PL꞊FUT-ITIV-show   this   food   this
       "It is they who will go and choose this food." [OYO:49]

(7)   *ã̀mɛ̃̀   nĩ̀   bàá-yà-tsɔ̃́ɔ̃́   nɛ̀kɛ́   níyèní!í   nɛ́!ɛ́
       3PL   FOC   FUT-ITIV-show   this   food   this
       "It is they who will go and choose this food."

The focused pronoun in Gã must be in the objective case. This is evident when the focused pronoun is first, second or third singular, since these are the only pronouns (indeed only nouns) that have different forms for their objective cases. An example is provided in (8). Observe that the focused constituent is in the objective case *(lɛ)* but the resumptive pronoun must be a subject pronoun *(è)*.

(8)   **lɛ̀**   nĩ̀   è꞊jù   shìká꞊!á
       3SG.OBJ   FOC   3SG꞊steal   money꞊DEF
       "It is s/he who stole the money."
       "S/he is the one who stole the money."

When the focused constituent is a pronoun, its position in the presupposition is gapped if it is

an object (9), (10).

(9) *mḭ̀*   nḭ̀   à=kὲɛ̂   Ø
     1SG.OBJ   FOC   3PL.IMPERS=tell
     "It was I who was told (of it)."
     "I was the one who was told (of it)"

(10) *bò*   nḭ̀   wɔ̀=nã̰̀   Ø   yὲ   sɔ̀ɔ̀mɔ́=!ɔ́
      2SG.OBJ   FOC   1PL=see   be.located   church=DEF
      "It was you that we saw at church."

It is possible for the focus construction to occur without an overt focus particle i.e. for

nḭ̀ to be absent from the construction. Upon closer inspection, however, it is clear that it is only

the sound segments that can be gotten rid of; the supra-segmental low tone on the particle

persists and combines with the tone of the previous syllable. If the tone of the previous syllable

is also low, then there is no phonetic remnant of the focus particle, but if it is high, then it

combines with the floating low tone of the focus particle to form a falling tone. This is seen in

(11), where *nḭ̀* is absent but its tone combines with the high tone on *mòɲ́* 'rather' to obtain a

falling tone (resulting in *mòɲ̂*).

(11) *bò*   *mòɲ̂*   ò=wíé-ɔ̀   bl̀ɔfó   yὲ
      2SG.OBJ   rather.FOC   2SG=speak-HAB   English   be.located

      jɛ̃́!mɛ̃́=!ɛ̃́
      there=DEF
      "It is rather you who is speaking English over there."   [DT:10;55]

In (12), the name *òkó* is in focus but because the focus particle is deleted, its low tone docks on

the last syllable of *òkó* to realise a final falling tone.

(12a) *òkô*   kɛ̀ɛ́   !mí̄
      Oko.FOC   tell   1SG.OBJ
      "It was Oko who told me."

The pragmatically neutral or non-focused version of (12a) would be:

(12b) òkó   kɛ̀ɛ́   mì̄
      Oko   tell   1SG.OBJ
      "Oko told me."

In (13), the last syllable of the focused constituent has a low tone, so there is no phonetic trace

of the deleted focus particle.

(13)   *bò*   ò=wíé-ɔ̀   bÌ̀ɔfó   yɛ̀   jɛ̃́!mɛ̃́=!ɛ̃́
      2SG.OBJ   2SG=speak-HAB   English   be.located   there=DEF
      "It is you who is speaking English over there."
      "You are the one who is speaking English over there."

The omission of the focus particle is not feasible in all syntactic environments. One of

these is when the focused constituent ends in a low-tone syllable but the omission of the focus

particle will result in a sentence with neutral pragmatic status i.e. the focus meaning will be

lost. This commonly occurs when such a focused constituent is a full NP, rather than a

pronoun, and the focused NP is also the agent of the clause. The pair of sentences in (14)

illustrates this point. (14a) can only be interpreted as a pragmatically-neutral sentence and not a

focused one with an omitted focus marker. Constructions such as (14) where the focused NP ends in a low tone and that NP is also the agent or executor of the action must obligatorily feature the focus marker in order to be considered a focus construction.

(14a) àtɛ̀   jù   gbé!kɛ́=ɛ̀̃   hɛ̀
      Atɛ   bathe child=DEF   body
      "Atteh bathed the child."
      *"It was Atteh who bathed the child."

(14b) **àtɛ̀**   nĩ̀   jù   gbé!kɛ́=ɛ̀̃   hɛ̀
      Atɛ   FOC   bathe child=DEF   body
      "It was Atteh who bathed the child."

No such problem would exist if the focused constituent were not the subject of the presupposition, as in (15). Both (15a) and (15b) are focus constructions with the same focused NP as (14). (15a) has no focus marker.

(15a) **àtɛ̀**   wɔ̀=nã̀   yɛ̀   gbɛ́=ɛ̀   hé=!ɛ́
      Atteh   1PL=see   be.located road=DEF body=DEF
      "It was Atteh we saw by the roadside."

(15a) **àtɛ̀**   nĩ̀   wɔ̀=nã̀   yɛ̀   gbɛ́=ɛ̀   hé=!ɛ́
      Atteh   FOC   1PL=see   be.located road=DEF body=DEF
      "It was Atteh we saw by the roadside."

When the focused constituent is a pronoun ending with a low tone syllable and the focus particle is omitted, the resumptive subject pronoun that follows the focused constituent is a

secondary feature that clues one to the fact that the construction is a focus construction, as in

(13).

Also, when the focused constituent is a grammatical nominalization in NP use (a so-

called headless relative clause), the omission of the focus particle is strongly discouraged. For

instance, (3) above has a grammatical nominalization in focus as well as an overt focus particle,

but when rendered without the focus particle as in (16) below, it is not quite as acceptable to

speakers.

(16)   *ʔnɔ́*   *nɪ́*   *bò*   *ò＝bàá-tsɔ́ɔ́＝!ɔ́*
        NM   NMLZ   2SG.OBJ   2SG＝FUT-show＝DEF

        à＝bàá-féè
        3PL.IMPERS＝FUT-do
        "What you will decide is what will be done."   [OYO:13]

Similarly, (17a) with a grammatical nominalization in focus and an overt focus marker is

acceptable, but (17b) without the focus marker is less acceptable.

(17a)   hèwɔ̀   *nɔ́*   *nɪ́*   *yɔ́ɔ̀*   *bò-díɛ̃̀ɲtsè*   *ó＝tsùí*
       sake   NM   NMLZ   be.located.HAB   2SG.OBJ-INTENS   2SG＝heart

       mĩ̀ɲ＝!ɛ́   nĩ̀   ò＝bàá-bà   nĩ̀   ò＝kɛ̀-bàá-!bá-hɔ́   ã̀mɛ̃̀
       inside＝DEF   FOC   2SG＝FUT-come   and   2SG＝take-FUT-VENT-give   3PL
       "So whatever your heart desires is what you will come and give them."   [OYO:118]

(17b)   ?hèwɔ̀   *nɔ́*   *nɪ́*   *yɔ́ɔ̀*   *bò-díɛ̃̀ɲtsè*   *ó＝tsùí*
       sake   NM   NMLZ   be.located.HAB   2SG.OBJ-INTENS   2SG＝heart

mɨ̀ŋ̀=!ɛ́	ò=bàá-bà	nɨ̃	ò=kɛ̀-bàá-!bá-hɑ́	ɑ̃mɛ̃̀
inside=DEF	2SG=FUT-come	and	2SG=take-FUT-VENT-give	3PL

"So whatever your heart desires is what you will come and give them."

Examples (16) and (17b) are not ungrammatical as they are; they are ungrammatical only if

they are meant to be focus constructions. As they are, they are perfectly acceptable if one

inserts a notable pause between the grammatical nominalizations and the presupposition. The

pause coupled with the definite article at the final boundary of the nominalization makes the

construction a left-dislocated construction, a subject that will be treated in §7.3 below.

Apart from nominals, adverbs may also occur in focus position. In (18), *fɛ̃́ɛ̃́* 'all' is

focused, while in (19), an adage, *fɪ̀òfɪ́!ó* 'gradually' is focused. One could argue, however, that

fɛ̃́ɛ̃́ 'all' in (18) is a noun.

(18) | ɑ̃hɑ̃́ɑ̃̀ | *fɛ̃́ɛ̃́* | nɨ̃ | à=kɛ̀-fé-ɔ̀ |
|---|---|---|---|
| IJ | all | FOC | 3PL.IMPERS=take-do-HAB |

"Exactly! It is all (of them) that are used."   [OYO:262]

(19) | *fɪ̀òfɪ̀ò* | nɨ̃ | àdìdɔ̃̀ŋ | fèé | nɨ̃ | è=kɛ̀-kpé | gbèé | tòí |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| gradually | FOC | fly | do | and | 3SG=take-chew | dog | ear |

"Gradually, the fly chewed the dog's ear."
Meaning: It is through patience and determination that one accomplishes a goal.

7.2 Semantics of focus constructions
According to Givón (2001b:223), when speakers make an assertion, they make presumptions

about the degree of knowledge that the hearer has about the asserted information. On one

extreme, the hearer is assumed to be totally ignorant of the information; on the other extreme, they are assumed to hold a belief contrary to that stated in the assertion. And in-between those points, theoretically, are various shades of the assumed ignorance of the hearer or the strength of his contrary belief. Contrastive focus constructions are grammatical devices that are meant to capture the one extreme in which the hearer is assumed to hold an opposing belief, hence the need for the speaker to correct him/her. But focus constructions need not always set up an explicit contrast. In Gã, the focus construction may be used contrastively, where the speaker "corrects" the wrong belief, or it may simply be used to introduce information, normally a noun, which the speaker believes is unavailable to the hearer, and which could potentially be confused with a host of other nouns of the same semantic class. This type of focus thus solves the ignorance problem. So here, we find one and the same construction capable of being employed for opposing points of the assumed hearer-knowledge continuum. In cases where the focus construction is not used to make a corrective contrast, the pragmatic difference between such a construction and one with a neutral pragmatic status is that the focus construction provides additional stress or emphasis on the focused nominal and enjoins the addressee to pay particular attention to that chunk of information. In any case, the focused constituent provides new information to the addressee.

The marking of new information by the focus particle is a function so fundamental that the focus particle often accompanies question words in content questions i.e. the question word or WH-word (if it is not in situ) is followed by *nì*. Even if *nì* does not occur with the question word, the answer may be accompanied by *nì*. This can be illustrated with the question words, *nã̂mɔ̀* 'who' and *mɛ̃́nì*[25] *hèwɔ̀* [what sake] 'why' since syntactically the answers to these questions can remain in situ, simply replacing the question words. See §3.6 for more on questions.

(20a) **nã̂mɔ̀**   (nì)   bà   bí!ɛ́
    who   (FOC) come here
    "Who came here?"

(20b) ** òkó**   nì   bà   bí!ɛ́
    Oko   FOC   come here
    "Oko came here."

Answering (20a) with (20c), without a focus marker, is not felicitous, although the sentence is perfectly grammatical.

(20c) òkó   bà   bí!ɛ́
    Oko   come   here
    "Oko came here."

---

[25] *mɛ̃́nì* 'what' in current Gã is a coalescence of old Gã *mɛ̃́* 'what' and the focus particle, *nì*. In Zimmerman's (1859) dictionary, *mɛ̃́* is given its own entry and translated as 'what'. It is however, not used at all in modern Gã without *nì*.

Questions inherently convey presuppositions. In (20a), the speaker presupposes that the hearer knows that someone came here. This part of the construction constitutes old information. The speaker seeks the new information which is the identity of the visitor, and the use of the focus particle with the answer confirms that it is new information and so demands extra attention. There is also some implicit sense of contrast since inquiring about the identity of a referent suggests that there are multiple possibilities, of which only one is appropriate in the particular situation. In (20c), lack of focus marking indicates that all the information contained therein is new information that the speaker assumes the hearer does not have. Therefore, while (20c) can function as an introductory statement in a discourse, (20b) cannot. This is because the presence of the focus particle implies the existence of previous discourse regarding uncertainty about the identity of the visitor (here the previous discourse is an explicit question).

In sum, focus constructions in Gã are used for contrast and emphasis on new information, but there are various extents to which it can be said that a contrast is being made, and this can be deduced from the prior discourse. In the following excerpt, line 5 is a focus construction where *àmɛ̀* '3PL' is focused. There is no "corrective" contrast here because no one in the discourse had suggested that anyone apart from the twins would choose the food. However, the speaker uses the focus construction to make it abundantly clear that it is the twins and only the twins who make the decision about what food to eat. Earlier in the discourse,

Yoomo had explained that the yam festival was a time for eating food specially made for twins,

so the activity coded by the predicate is already known to the hearer.

(21) Yoomo: 1 à＝bàá-!hé   yèlè
                  3PL.IMPERS＝FUT-buy   yam
                  "Yam will be bought."

            2 à＝bàá-!yá-tsɛ́   hã̀ã́ã̀jĩ̌＝!ɛ́   ã̀mɛ̀   sùsùmá
               3PL＝FUT-ITIV-call twin＝DEF   3PL   spirit
               "The spirit of the twins will be summoned."

            3 *spiritually*

      Akua 4 m̀m̀
               IJ
               "Okay"

      Yoomo 5 nì̃   ***ã̀mɛ̀***   ã̀mɛ̃̀＝bàá-tsɔ́ɔ̀   nɔ́   nĩ́
               and   3PL   3PL＝FUT-show   NM   NMLZ
               ã̀mɛ̃̀＝bàá-!yé
               3PL＝FUT-eat
               "And it is they who will decide what they will eat."

In the following example as well, there is no corrective contrast. The prior discourse has

revolved around another speaker detailing the rituals performed for the twins, so it is already

established that rites are performed for them. The new information here is who performs those

rites and it is this information that is put in focus. The sentence is produced as a statement

which is soliciting confirmation or denial.

(22) nὶ̀   ófáìnɛ́ hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   hȁȁjȉ̃=!ɛ́̃   *ȁ̀mȅ̃=mȁ̀mɪ́   kὲ*
     and   please sake=TOP   twins=DEF   3PL=mother   and

     ȁ̀mȅ̃=pàpá-mȅ̃ȉ̃   nὶ̀   bàá-féé   énȅ̃   àmɛ́̃-- àmɛ́̃=hɑ́̃   ȁ̀mȅ̃
     3PL=father-PL   FOC   FUT-do   this   3PL--   3PL-give   3PL
     "And please, so the twins, it is their mothers and fathers who will do this for them."
     [OYO:316]

The following two examples showcase corrective contrastive focus, where the speaker uses the focus construction to provide new information that is contrary to what is presumed the hearer believes. In (23), the speaker is narrating a story. At one point in the story he reports that the protagonist, a boy, has held on to something which looks like a stick, leading listeners to believe that it was indeed a stick. A few lines later (line 3), he corrects this statement because it is actually the horns of a reindeer that the boy has held on to, not a stick. In issuing the correction, a focus construction is employed.

(23) 1   nɪ́̃   è=kɔ́=!ɔ́   è=nȁ̃   nɔ́̃=kò   yὲ
          NMLZ 3SG=climb=DEF   3SG=see   thing=INDEF   be.located

          jɛ́̃!ŋ́   tàmɔ̀̃   tsò   nὶ̀   è=mɔ́̃   mȉ̀
          there like   stick and   3SG=hold   inside
          "When he climbed it, he saw something there like a stick and he held on to it."

          several lines omitted

     2   nɔ́̃   nɪ́̃   é=yà-mɔ́̃   mȉ́=!ɛ́̃   àsòmòɑ́!ŋ́   kòòlòò
          NM   NMLZ 3SG.PERF=ITIV-hold   inside=DEF   not.knowing animal

nǐ

PRED.PRT

"Apparently, what he had held on to was an animal."

3 *dáá* *áfí-kòŋ-kòmé kìòǹtò*[26] nǐ é = tèè

everyday year-horn-one horn   FOC 3SG = go.PST

é = yà-mɔ́   mìí = !ɛ́

3SG = ITIV-catch inside = DEF

"It was a reindeer's horns (= antlers) that he had held on to." [SAM:81]

In (24), the focus construction conveys not exactly a correction but an observation of a state of affairs that is contrary to what the hearer perceived. At the beginning of the conversation (a phone call), Deborah had told Tess to speak only Gã since the conversation would be recorded for the purposes of analysis of the Gã language. Tess agreed. At some point in the conversation, however, Deborah switches to English to quote an English proverb. It is in response to this apparent violation by Deborah of her own rule that prompts Tess to utter the focus construction in order to point out the irony.

(24) Deborah: à = kèé   *no news is good news*

       3PL.IMPERS = say

       "They say, "No news is good news.""

  Tess: ã̀ã̀ã̀ *bò*   *mòŋ*   ò = wíé-ɔ̀   bìɔ̀fó

       IJ 2SG.OBJ rather.FOC 2SG = speak-HAB English

---

[26] *dáá áfíkòŋkòmé* is a descriptive name for reindeer based on the fact that reindeer antlers are shed and regrown each year. *kìòǹtò* is a synonym for *kòŋ*. Both mean 'horn'.

yὲ   jɛ́!mɛ̃́=!ɛ̃́
be.located   there=DEF
"Ah! It is rather you who is speaking English over there." [DT:1;2]

There is a type of focus construction in which the focused constituent is a nominalized verb and the main predicate is the verbal counterpart of the focused constituent. When this construction is presented as an interrogative, it gives the semantic effect of mild disbelief or disappointment on the speaker's part that the agent is involved in the activity described by the predicate.

(25)   hὲwɔ́=!ɔ́   *yà-à*   (nĩ̀)   ò=yà-à=á=à
       sake=TOP   go-NOM   (FOC)   2SG=go-HAB=DEF=DEF
       "So, are you really going?" (Lit: "So is it going that you are going?")

(26)   *wɔ̀-ɔ̀*   (nĩ̀)   ò=wɔ̀-ɔ̀=ɔ́=ɔ̀
       sleep-NOM   (FOC)   2SG=sleep-HAB=DEF=DEF
       "Are you really sleeping?" (Lit: "Is it sleeping that you are sleeping?")

As statements, the semantic nuance in this construction type is more difficult to tease out. When the verb in question is *yà,* the construction is simply a flowery turn of phrase for announcing that one is taking leave. The focus particle is often omitted.

(27)   yà-à   ĩ́=yà-à=á=!á
       go-NOM   1SG=go-HAB=DEF=DEF
       "I'm leaving/going." (Lit: "It is going that I am going.")

The focused constituent may be modified by the adjective *kɛ̀kɛ̀* 'just' with the effect that the speaker wishes to emphasize that they only partook in the activity designated by the verb and nothing else.

(28) *shwɛ́-mɔ̀*   *kɛ̀kɛ̀*   (nĩ̀)   ĩ̀=kɛ̀   bò   shwɛ́-ɔ̀
      play-NOM   just   FOC   1SG=take   2SG.OBJ   play-HAB
      "I am only playing/joking with you." (Lit: "It is only playing that I am playing with you.")

7.3 Topic constructions

Topic is a pragmatic notion which pertains to nouns. The topic of a discourse is what the discourse is about. As mentioned earlier, it is viewed as a phenomenon of an entire discourse, rather than a clause or sentence. The topic of a discourse tends to recur throughout the discourse, as more information or comments are given about it. Topics therefore tend to be definite, since once introduced the speaker assumes it can be identified by the hearer.

In many cases, there is no special syntactic marking to identify topics. However, some languages have what are called marked topic constructions that readily mark a discourse participant as topical. Givón (2001b:254) characterises such topics as being of low accessibility. This is in comparison to pronouns and zero anaphora, which code continuous referents. Topics, on the other hand, are referents that are totally new or that are re-mentioned

after they have been out of the focus of attention for a period of time. They are therefore not as easily accessible as pronouns and zero anaphora since they code discontinuous referents.

The marked topic construction most relevant to Gã is left dislocation, or simply L-dislocation. In this construction type, the topical noun is fronted or left-dislocated and in many cases modified by *lɛ,* which apart from its common function as a definite marker, also functions as a topic marker. The topic is followed by a pause, and then a clause which provides a comment on the topic. Such a clause must include a pronoun in subject or object position which refers anaphorically to the topic. A few examples of L-dislocated constructions are provided below.

(29) è=kɛɛ́   **blèmà̃**   **bí!í=!ɛ́**   bɔ̀nĩ́   ã̀mɛ̃̀=bà-nĩ́nã̀   lɛ̀
      3SG=say   olden.days   people=DEF how   3PL=VENT-meet   3SG.OBJ

      jí   nò
      COP   that
      "She said that, the old people, that is how they came and met it."   [OYO:69]

(30) shĩ̀   **kathy=!ɛ́**   wɔ́=lé *[sic]*[27]   ké!jí   è=yɛ̀
      but   Kathy=TOP   1PL=know.NEG   whether   3SG=be.located

---

[27] This speaker employed an unusual tone pattern for this verbal complex. The tone on *wɔ* '1PL' should be low, not high. I have not heard this word produced in this manner before and I cannot tell whether this is simply a slip of tongue, an idiosyncratic pronunciation or something else.

wàlà   mĩ̀ŋ   lóó   è=bɛ́   wàlà   mĩ̀ŋ

life   inside   or   3SG=be.located.NEG   life   inside

"But as for Kathy, we don't know whether she is alive or she is not alive." [DF:229]

(31)   *mì̃*   í=!yááá   hé=!kó

       1SG.OBJ   1SG=go.NEG   place=INDEF

       "Me, I don't go anywhere." [FH:213]

(32)   *è=shĩ̀wò-í*   *!lɛ́*   *fɛ́ɛ̃́* wɔ́=!mɔ̃́   mĩ̀

       3SG=promise-PL   DEF   all   1PL.PERF=hold   inside

       "All his promises, we have accepted them."   [CH:176]

(33)   *àmɛ̃́=!ɛ́*   jééé   ã̀mɛ̃̀=hè   sã̀né

       3PL=TOP   NEG   3PL=body   matter

       "As for them, it is not their concern." i.e. They don't care.

(34)   *òkó*   è=súmɔ̃́ɔ̃́ɔ̃́   í=sã̀nè

       Oko   3SG=like.NEG   1SG=matter

       "Oko, he doesn't like me."

As (31) shows, when the dislocated topic is a pronoun, it must be in the objective case. The resumptive pronoun referring to the topic however must be in the subjective case if it is the subject of the sentence.

L-dislocated constructions are very prevalent in the language. The topic in such a construction is often old or given information, having been mentioned previously. This could partially account for why it is normally modified by the definite article, which indicates that the referent is expected to be identifiable by the hearer. It doesn't explain, however, the occurrence of the definite article with proper names and pronouns, as in (30) and (33) respectively, since

these two types of nouns are inherently definite. This hints at the possibility that there is more

to the function of *lɛ* than just definiteness marking. It is evident from (31) and (34), that

pronouns and proper nouns may be topicalized without the definite article. Indefinite, generic

nouns may also be topicalized (35) as well as indefinite, specific nouns (36a). Neither of these

topics may be marked by *lɛ* (36b). If the topic in (35) were modified by *lɛ,* it would no longer

be a generic NP referring to the class of cats and dogs, but would be referential, pointing to

some identifiable cats and dogs.

(35)   *álɔ̀ŋté-ì*   *kè*   *gbèé-!í*   í=súmɔ́ɔ́ɔ́   ằmɛ̃̀=sằnè   kẃráá
        cat-PL   and   dog-PL   1SG=like.NEG   3PL=matter   at.all
        "Cats and dogs, I don't like them at all."

(36a)   *nǜǘmó*   *!kó*   è=kɛ̀ɛ́   à=tsɛ́-ɔ̀   lɛ̀
        old.man   INDEF   3SG=say   3PL.IMPERS=call-HAB   3SG.OBJ

        kwèí   è=bà   è=bà-táò   bò
        Kwei   3SG=come   3SG=VENT-search   2SG.OBJ
        "A certain old man, he said his name is Kwei. He came looking for you."

(36b)   **nǜǘmó*   *!kó=!ɛ́*   è=kɛ̀ɛ́   à=tsɛ́-ɔ̀   lɛ̀
        old.man   INDEF=DEF 3SG=say   3PL.IMPERS=call-HAB   3SG.OBJ

        kwèí   è=bà   è=bà-táò   bò
        Kwei   3SG=come   3SG=VENT-search   2SG.OBJ
        "A certain old man, he said his name is Kwei. He came looking for you."

Indefinite nouns can also be topicalized, without *lɛ*-modification. (37) has two indefinite NP

topics, *tòkòtá* 'slippers' and *nɔ́ʃɛ̃́nɔ́* 'everything'.

(37)   *tòkòtá*   *nɔ́fɪ̃ã́nɔ̃́*   è＝hé-ɔ̀   è＝bà-hɑ́-ɑ̃̀

      slippers   everything   3SG＝buy-HAB   3SG＝VENT-give-HAB

      lɛ̀

      3SG.OBJ

      "Slippers, everything, he buys and comes to give it to her."   [FH:187]

The outstanding question from these observations is why proper names and pronouns

allow modification by the definite article when topicalized. The answer is that the definite

article also functions as a marker of topicalization, pointing out that a referent has been

previously mentioned and indicating that it is going to be the main topic or theme of what

follows. It stresses that the topic is old information, whereas without it one cannot be certain,

especially with regard to proper nouns. It revives an old topic or promotes an old non-topical

noun to topic. In the following excerpt, there are several examples of topicalization of proper

nouns. The discourse centres around Sally updating her niece, Dina on family members who

have died.

(38)   Sally: 1   nò   hèwɔ̀＝!ɔ́   àrákú   é-!gbó

                that   sake＝DEF   Araku   PERF-die

                "So Araku is dead."

           2   nɪ̃̀   *veterinary doctor*   é-!gbó

                and   PERF-die

                "And the veterinary doctor is dead."

3 é = shwɛ̀   áfúá
 3SG.PERF = remain Afua
 "It's left with Afua."

4 ***áfúá = !á*** è = kɛ̀ è = *husband* yɛ̀   dɔ̀ŋ́
 Afua = TOP 3SG = take 3SG- be.located Dome
 "Afua, she lives with her husband in Dome."

Dina: 5 ɛ̀ɛ́ɛ̀
 IJ
 Is that so?

Sally: 6 ɛ̀hɛ́ɛ̀
 Precisely

several lines omitted

7 nɨ̀ ɛ̀ɛ̀ ***kòfì*** ***hṹ = !ɛ́*** lɛ̀   ***hṹ*** mɛ̀ɨ̀
 and IJ Kofi too = TOP 3SG.OBJ too people
 ényɔ̀ é-!gbó
 two PERF-die
 "And errm…also with regards to Kofi, two (of his children) are dead."

8 é = shwɛ̀   kathy
 3SG.PERF = remain Kathy
 "It's left with Kathy."

9 shɨ̀ ***kathy = !ɛ́*** wɔ́ = lé [sic] kɛ́!jí
 but Kathy = TOP 1PL = know.NEG whether

 è = yɛ̀   wàlà mɨ̀ŋ lóó è = bɛ́
 3SG = be.located life inside or 3SG = be.located.NEG

wàlà   mî̀ŋ

life   inside

"But as for Kathy, we don't know whether she is alive or she is not alive."

[DF:229]

Sally starts off by noting that two of a family of three siblings have died, that is, Araku and the veterinary doctor. The only living sibling is Afua. Afua then briefly becomes the main topic of the discourse, indicated by its topicalization with *lɛ*. The comment is that she lives with her husband in Dome. After several lines of talk, another topic, Kofi, which had been mentioned previously, is resumed. Again, to indicate that it is old information that is now going to be the topic of the following discourse, it is marked by the topicalizer, *lɛ*. Sally notes that two of Kofi's children have died and only Kathy remains. After Kathy has been introduced, she is now old information and so in the next line Kathy is topicalized and additional comments are made about her whereabouts, or lack of knowledge of her whereabouts.

Topicalizing a noun may also hint at the speaker's wish to contrast it with some previously mentioned entities, though this element of contrast does not apply in all cases. It is primarily the juxtaposition of the L-dislocated construction with contrasting information in the previous discourse that invites this inference. In (38), the presence of *shî*'but' in the last line contributes to the contrast being drawn between Kathy and her siblings. In all the examples of topicalization in (38), doing away with the topicalizer will result in non-felicitous sentences, or at the very least pragmatically aberrant sentences.

One difference between pronominal topics and other topics is that, very frequently the

pronominal topic and its comment may be produced under one intonational contour, as in (39).

Here, the speaker seeks to contrast her stance and attitude to her homeland with that of her

siblings.

(39) í̃=nyɛ̀mí-mɛ̀í̃=!ɛ̃́   fɛ́ɛ̃́   é-tèè   àblòtsírí   **mí̃=!ɛ̃́**   *Ghana*
      1SG=sibling-PL=DEF   all   PERF-go.PST abroad   1SG=TOP   Ghana

      ŋɔ̀ɔ̃́   í̃=nàã̀   hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   ì̃=yè   bí!ɛ́
      be.sweet   1SG=mouth sake=TOP   1SG=be.located here
      "All my siblings have gone abroad. As for me, I enjoy Ghana so I am here."

In (40), the pronominal topic was produced under a different intonational contour.

(40) nì̃   stíítì kò   kɛ̃́   bí!ɛ́
      and   street INDEF   lie   here
      "And there's a street here."

      lɛ́=!ɛ́   è=*lead*-ɔ́   *to*   kɔ̀ɔ̀lé=ɛ̀   nàã̀
      3SG.OBJ=TOP   3SG- -HAB   Korle=DEF   mouth
      "As for it, it leads to the mouth of the Korle Lagoon."   [FH:59]

The topic in a left-dislocated construction could also be a more complex nominal than a

simple lexical noun. In (41), the topic comprises the noun, *mí̃ nyɔ̀ŋmɔ̃́!ɔ̃́* 'my God' and its

modifier, the verb-based grammatical argument nominalization (relative clause) - *ní̃ míjáà lɛ́!ɛ́*

'whom I worship'. Since such nominalizations are always modified by the definite article, the

only evidence of L-dislocation are the fronting of the nominal, the resumptive pronoun *è* '3SG'

referring to the topic and the pause between the topic and the comment.

(41) nò   hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   *mí̵*   *nyɔ̀ŋmɔ̵́=!ɔ́*   *ní̵*   *mí̵=já-à*
      that   sake=TOP   1SG   God=DEF   NMLZ   1SG=worship

      lɛ̵́=!ɛ̵́   è=bàá-nyɛ́   é=tsá   mí̵=bí   !lɛ́
      3SG.OBJ=DEF   3SG=FUT-able   3SG.SBJV=heal   1SG=child   DEF
      "So the God that I worship, he can heal my child." [CH:102]

The topic could also be found as part of a nominalization. In (42), it is a constituent within the

nominalized complement of the CTP (complement-taking predicate), *nã̀* 'see'.

(42) nì̵   mɔ̀-fɛ́ɛ̵́-mɔ̀   ŋ̀-nã̀   á!ké   ágbènɛ̵́=!ɛ̵́   *gbé!kɛ̵́=!ɛ̵́*
      and   person-all-person   PROG-see   NMLZ   now=DEF   child=DEF

      èè=jè   ó=dɛ̀ŋ
      3SG.PROG=exit   2SG=palm
      "And everyone can see that now the child, he is dying."   [CH:49]

7.3.1 Contrastive topicalization

There is another type of L-dislocated construction in which the fronted topic is qualified by not

just one definite article but two. Dakubu's (1992) analysis of such nominals is that the first *lɛ*

marks the noun as definite while the second marks it as contrastively contextualized i.e. the

speaker contrasts the topical referent with a set of similar referents. It is this same function that

I term contrastive topicalization. Indeed, Dakubu is of the view that contrast is one function of

all topical nouns marked by *lɛ* (Dakubu 1992:8). My view differs in that it is not all topics

marked by *lɛ* that involve contrast, while some that do not receive *lɛ*-marking do involve

contrast. For example, (29), (32), line 7 in (38), (41) and (42) all have topics marked by *lɛ* but

do not involve any overt or subtle contrast between these topics and any relevant set of

comparable nouns. In (31) on the other hand, which does not have its topic modified by *lɛ,* it

can be argued, based on the previous discourse, that the speaker seeks to contrast herself with

others. Earlier in the conversation this speaker was told that she was not expected to be home

that day since it was a Thursday and many older people go to funerals on Thursdays. As her

visitors are taking leave, the speaker asks them to come back and visit anytime and this is when

she utters (31). In topicalizing the first singular pronoun, she wishes to emphasize that in

contrast to many others in her social circle, she does not go out. Of course, some topics marked

by *lɛ* do involve a contrast with other entities, such as (39). My contention is that the presence

of *lɛ* does not guarantee the existence of a contrastive semantic element.

The existence of a second *lɛ,* on the other hand, is a more reliable indicator that there is

some contrastive work going on. In the following excerpt from a sermon, the priest utters the

final line in which *nyɔ̀ŋmɔ̀* 'God' is modified by two definite articles. Like Dakubu (1992), I

analyse the first as a marker of definiteness and the second as a marker of contrastive

topicalization (contrastive contextualization in Dakubu's terms). The contrast is obvious from

the prior discourse. The priest gives an anecdote about how when people go to events they are

given flimsy chairs to sit on. As a result, they do not trust that those chairs will not break and

are careful when sitting on them. He says that God can be likened to a strong chair that one sits

on comfortably and without worry or hesitation. The relevant line containing the topicalization

thus metaphorically contrasts God with the flimsy chairs, noting that he is not like them. He

can be trusted.

(43) kɛ́   ò=yà-sɨ̀á   mɔ̃̀=kò   nɛ́   à=yàá-hɛ̃́
      when   2SG=go-visit person=INDEF   and   3PL.IMPERS=PROS-give
      bò   sɛ̃̀ɨ́
      2SG.OBJ   chair
      "When you go and visit somebody and you are about to be given a chair"

      nɛ́   à=hɛ̃́   bò   *plastic chairs*   nɛ́   kɛ́
      and   3PL.IMPERS=give   2SG.OBJ   and   if
      è=fèé=!ɛ́   wɔ̀=kɛ-hɛ̃́-ɛ̀   gbɔ̀-i   yɛ̀   yàlà
      3SG=do=DEF   1PL=take-give-HAB   guest-PL   be.located   funeral
      shɨ̀shɨ̃̀   kɛ̀   hé-!í
      under   and   place-PL
      "And you are given the type of plastic chairs that we sometimes give to guests at funerals and
      other places."

      nɨ̃̀   é!kó   é-fèé   !bó   dáŋ=!ɛ̃́
      and   some   PERF-do   2SG.OBJ   before=TOP
      "And if you have had such an experience before."

      kɛ́   à=hɛ̃́   bò   sɛ̃̀ɨ́=!ɛ̃́   kɛ́   ò=bàá-tá
      when   3PL.IMPERS=give   2SG.OBJ   chair=DEF   when   2SG=FUT-sit
      shɨ́=!ɛ̃́
      down=DEF
      "When you are given the chair and you are about to sit down."

      ò=bàá-kwɛ́   sɛ̃̀ɨ́=!ɛ̃́   é!kóŋ́ŋ́   á!kɛ́   ò=bàá-*weigh* lè
      2SG=FUT-look   chair=DEF   again   NMLZ   2SG=FUT-   3SG.OBJ

nɪ́	ó=kwɛ́		á!kɛ́	è=yè	hèwàlè	ló
NMLZ	2SG.SBJV=see		NMLZ	3SG=have	strength	QP

"You will check out the chair again…you will size it up to see whether it is durable."

nɪ̃	bè-ì	pìì	kɛ́	ò=bàá-tá	!shɪ́	pó=!ɛ́
and	time-PL	many	when	2SG=FUT-sit	down	even=DEF

ò=bàá-tá	!nɔ̃́	fɑ̃́	kè	fɑ̃́	nɪ́	ó=!fee	*sure*	á!kɛ́
2SG=FUT-sit	top	half	and	half	NMLZ	3SG.SBJV=do		NMLZ

è=nɑ̀-jɪ̆=ɛ̃̀	yè	hèwàlè	dɑ̃́nɪ̃̀	ò=kè
3SG=leg-PL=DEF	have	strength	before	2SG=take

ó=gbɑ̃́mɔ̃̀tsò=!ɛ́		fɛ̃́ɛ̃́	ó=*weight*=ɛ́=!ɛ́	fɛ̃́ɛ̃́	bàá-fɔ̃	nɔ̃̀
2SG=human-stick=DEF		all	2SG= =DEF=DEF	all	FUT-put	top

"And many times when you want to sit you will sit gingerly to check if the chair is strong, before you put your whole body, your whole weight on it."

é!jáá!kɛ́	nɑ̃̀kɑ̃̀ɪ̃̀	*plastic chairs*=ɛ́=!ɛ́	*we don't trust them*
because	that	=DEF=DEF	

"Because those plastic chairs, we don't trust them."

nò	hèwɔ́=!ɔ́	kɛ́	ò=kèɛ́	ò=kè	ó=hè	mɪ̃̀ɪ̃̀=fɔ̃
that	sake=TOP	if	2SG=say	2SG=take	2SG=body	PROG=put

nyɔ̃̀ŋmɔ̃̀	nɔ́=!ɔ́
God	top=TOP

"So if you say that you are going to depend on God."

bè	nɔ́	nɪ́	òò=kèɛ̂	ji	á!kɛ́
then	NM	NMLZ	2SG.PROG=say	COP	NMLZ

nyɔ̃̀ŋmɔ̃́=!ɔ́	*lɛ́*	è=bɛ́	tɑ̃mɔ̃̀	nɑ̃̀kɑ̃̀ɪ̃̀	*plastic chairs*=ɛ́=!ɛ́
God=DEF	TOP	2SG=be.NEG	like	that	=DEF=DEF

"Then what you are saying is that as for God, he is not like those plastic chairs." [CH:186]

In the final line of the following example, *Té!shî house* 'Teshie house', is topicalized and

marked twice by *lɛ*. The first marks definiteness and the second marks contrastive

topicalization. In this exchange Dina tells Sally that her daughter was asking her where Sualaba

was (line1). Sally starts to answer but stops because Dina's speech overlaps with hers (line 4).

Here and in the following two lines Dina appears to be asking about another neighbourhood,

Teshie House. Sally starts to respond to this apparent inquiry in line 7 with the L-dislocated

construction and the doubly marked topic where she tries to describe the location of Teshie

House. The use of the contrastive topic is to set Teshie House apart from the other suburbs that

had been mentioned, most recently Sualaba, since originally Dina had been asking about where

Sualaba was. From line 8 we see that Dina's inquiry was misunderstood because she was

asking for the name of the neighbourhood in front of Teshie House and not the location of

Teshie House itself.

(44) 1 Dina: nò mĩ̀ŋ = !ɛ̃́ nĩ́ mĩ́ĩ = !bá = !á
that inside = TOP NMLZ 1SG.PROG = come = DEF
èè = bí !mĩ́ á!kɛ́ nɛ̃́gbɛ̀ jí sùá!lábà
3SG.PROG = ask 1SG.OBJ NMLZ where COP Sualaba
"When I was coming, she was asking me where Sualaba was."

2 Sally: ɛ̃̀ɛ́!ɛ̃́
Yes
"Yes"

3 Sally: [è＝yὲ   [hɔ́--]
        3SG＝be.located
        "It's located--"

4 Dina: [nῐ̀ té!shῐ́ *house*]
        and Teshie
        "And Teshie house."

5   té!shῐ́ *house*
        "Teshie house"

6   [té!shῐ́ *house* hῐ̃̀ɛ̀ gbέ＝!έ   bíὲ gbέ＝!έ]
        Teshie   face road＝DEF here road＝DEF
        "In front of Teshie house and around here"

7 Sally: [*té!shῐ́* *house＝έ＝!έ*   *lέ* è＝yὲ   gbέ＝ὲ--]
        Teshie   ＝DEF＝DEF TOP 3SG＝be.located   road＝DEF
        "As for Teshie house, it is--"

8 Dina: mɛ̃́nì à＝tsέ-!ɔ́   jɛ̃́!mɛ̃́
        what 3PL.IMPERS＝call-HAB there
        "What is that place called?"   [FH:44]

Another interesting observation regarding the definite article is that, when it modifies a non-Gã word, usually an English word, which ends in a consonant sound, it is produced twice.

So that when an English word is being marked as contrastively topicalized, it is marked with three definite articles, as we see in line 7 in (44) above. If the English word ends in a vowel (e.g. *cherry*) or a vowel is added to the word as a way of nativizing it (e.g. *báàgì* 'bag'), then only one definite article is required: *cherry＝!έ* [cherry＝DEF] 'the cherry' and *báàgí＝!έ* [bag＝DEF] 'the bag'. It could be that the first iteration of *lɛ* (which is mostly realized as one

of the vowel allomorphs) is simply a means of getting these borrowed words to conform to Gã

phonotactics i.e. getting rid of a final closed syllable, which is disallowed, and replacing it with

an open one. And what better choice for a vowel than one that anticipatorily harmonises with

the following definite article.

To sum up so far, it has been shown that topicalization in Gã is achieved mainly by L-

dislocated constructions, which involve fronting of the topic followed by a comment on the

topic in which a resumptive pronoun refers anaphorically to the topic. Definite NP topics are

marked by the definite article, *lε*. Indefinite, non-specific NP topics are unmarked. Indefinite,

specific topics are marked by the indefinite article, *ko.* However, pronouns and proper nouns

when topicalized may also be marked by *lε.*

7.3.2 Non-prototypical hosts of lε

Throughout this dissertation, the reader may have noticed that the definite article is capable of

being attached to just about every constituent imaginable, from adverbials to discourse markers

to so-called relative clauses and conditional clauses. Many of these discourse units are often

mandatorily bounded finally by the definite article. Since adverbs and clauses, for example,

cannot exhibit definiteness, there must be some other work being done by the definite article.

In the next few sections I identify some units of discourse that are not lexical nouns but which

may be marked by *lε* and I attempt to pin-point the function of *lε* in these contexts.

a. Verb-based argument nominalizations (headed and headless relative clauses)

Examples are given below. (45) and (46) exemplify the modification function of argument nominalizaions (headed relatives). Such nominalizations in the vast majority of cases are modified by the definite article because the heads they modify are also modified by the definite article. As discussed in §6.4, the argument nominalization refers to the head and so if the head is definite the argument nominalization is also definite. Therefore, in the case of the modification used of argument nominalizations, *lɛ* is maintaining its original function of marking definiteness.

(45)   hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   ófáìné   bàá=!á   **nɪ́**   **ó=fèé**   **yè**
        sake=TOP   please leaf=DEF   NMLZ   2SG.PERF=do   be.located

        jɛ́!mɛ́=!ɛ́   mɛ́nĩ̀   à-   mɛ́nĩ̀   pòtɛ̃̀ɛ̃̀   à=kɛ̀-fé-ɔ̀
        there=DEF   what   --   what   exactly   3PL.IMPERS=take-do-HAB
        "So, please, the herbal infusion that you've made over there, what-- what exactly is it
        made from?"   [YM:158]

(46)   nĩ̀   ĩ̀=kɛ̀ɛ́   !lɛ́   á!ké   shìká=!á   **nɪ́**   **à=kɛ̀**
       and   1SG-tell   3SG.OBJ   NMLZ money=DEF NMLZ 3SG.IMPERS=take

       hɛ́   **!lɛ́=!ɛ́**   è=kɛ́-!bá
       give   3SG.OBJ=DEF   3SG=take.SBJV-come
       "And I told him that, the money that he has been given, he should bring (it)."
       [MM:109]

When the argument nominalization is used as an NP, *lε* may or may not occur. When the nominalization occurs sentence-initially and is modified by *lε*, then the article is displaying its topicalization function.

(47)   *mɔ́*   *nɪ́*   *hǐɛ̌*   *shìká=!á*   è=hé-ɔ̀   *six crates*
           NM   NMLZ   hold   money=DEF 3SG=buy-HAB
           "The one with a lot of money, s/he buys six crates (of eggs)."   [YM:172]

In (47), it is clear the definite article is a topicalizer rather than a marker of definiteness because *shìká* 'money' in this context is indefinite. There has not been any talk in the prior discourse about money so this referent is not expected to be identifiable to the listener. Also the resumptive pronoun, *è* which is co-referential with the referent of the nominalization is another indicator that we are dealing with a L-dislocated topic construction. In (48) however, since the nominalization is not fronted, it can safely be assumed that *lε* marks the identifiability of the referent of the nominalization i.e. it marks definiteness.

(47)   shɪ́   kòfí   bî   jí   nyɛ̌-sὲὲ   *mɔ̌*   *nɪ́*   *gbó=!ɛ́*
           but   Kofi   child   COP   yesterday-back   NM   NMLZ   die=DEF
           "But Kofi's child is the one who died the other day."   [DF:187]

b. Adverbials

As we saw in chapter 6, many adverbial clauses are in fact event nominalizations. It is no surprise then, that they are modified by *lε*. Time adverbials, conditional adverbials and reason adverbials which are marked by *nɪ́, á!kέ (shɪ́), á!kέ !nɪ́* and *kέ* are all capable of being marked

finally by the definite article. Again, given our knowledge of the varying functions of this article, one cannot assume that its role in these constructions is that of marking definiteness.

Most time adverbials, whether they occur initially before the main assertion or finally, after the main assertion, must be followed by the definite article, *lɛ*. When the adverbial occurs sentence-initially, *lɛ* is required. So while (49a) with a sentence-initial time adverbial followed by the definite article is grammatical, (49b) without the definite article is not.

(49a) shǐ   *ní*   *è=bà*   *è=bà-shè*   wɔ̀   *wɔ̀=nɔ́=!ɔ́*
but   NMLZ   3SG=come   3SG=VENT-reach   1PL   1PL=top=DEF

wɔ́=!ɔ́   wɔ̀=fɔ́-ɔ̀   lɛ̀   ényɔ̃̀   ényɔ̃̀
1PL=TOP   1PL=give.birth-HAB   3SG.OBJ   two   two
"But when it was our turn (our generation), as for us, we give birth to twins."
[OYO:404]

(49b) *shǐ   *ní*   *è=bà*   *è=bà-shè*   wɔ̀   *wɔ̀=nɔ̃̀*
but   NMLZ   3SG=come   3SG=VENT-reach   1PL   1PL=top

wɔ́=!ɔ́   wɔ̀=fɔ́-ɔ̀   lɛ̀   ényɔ̃̀   ényɔ̃̀
1PL=TOP   1PL=give.birth-HAB   3SG.OBJ   two   two
"But when it was our turn (our generation), as for us, we give birth to twins."

If the adverbial occurs *after* the main assertion i.e. not in initial position, it may or may not be marked by *lɛ*. Most time adverbials that occur in this position often take the article (50).

(50)   ãmɛ̃̀=shí   *ní*   *nyɛ̃̀=bá=!á*
3PL=leave   NMLZ   2PL=come=DEF
"They left when you came."

However, time adverbials whose main semantic import is conditional i.e. they express a

condition that must be met in order to fulfil an aim, cannot take the definite article. Such

clauses are necessarily irrealis, as in (51a). (51b) with the definite article is therefore

ungrammatical.

(51a) ò=nyɛ̃́-!ŋ́   ó=bó!té   jɛ̃́!mɛ̃́   ***nɛ̃́***
      2SG=be.able-NEG.FUT   2SG.SBJV=enter   there   NMLZ

      ò=jú-kò   ***ó=!hɛ́***
      2SG=bathe-NEG.PERF   2SG=body
      "You cannot enter there when you have not bathed."

(51b) *ò=nyɛ̃́-!ŋ́   ó=bó!té   jɛ̃́!mɛ̃́   ***nɛ̃́***
      2SG=be.able-NEG.FUT   2SG.SBJV=enter   there   NMLZ

      ò=jú-kò   ***ó=!hɛ́=!ɛ́***
      2SG=bathe-NEG.PERF   2SG=body=DEF
      "You cannot enter there when you have not bathed."

Conditional adverbials (protasis) that occur initially (before the apodosis) are often marked by

lɛ (52a), although they may occur without one (52b).

(52a) ***kɛ́***   ***nyɛ̃̀=yè***   ***nyɛ̃̀=búà***   ***mɛ̃́=!ɛ̃́***   wɔ́   sɛ̀ɛ̀
      if   2PL=eat   2PL=help   1SG.OBJ=DEF   tomorrow   back

      àfĩ́=!ɛ́   mɛ̃́=!bá   mɛ̃́=!bá-kè   nyɛ̃̀
      year=DEF   1SG.FUT=come   1SG.FUT=VENT-gift   2SG.OBJ

      nɔ̃́=!kó
      thing=INDEF
      "If you help me, next year I will come and gift you something." [YM:114]

(52b) mɛ̃̀ĩ̀ kòmɛ̃̀ĩ̀ kɛ́-!ɔ́   á!kɛ́ *ké*   *à=kèɛ́*   *bò*

       people some   say-HAB   NMLZ if   3PL.IMPERS=tell 2SG.OBJ

       nằkằĩ̀ pɛ́   bè   è=tsɔ́!ɔ́   á!kɛ́   *go home and die*

       that   immediately then 3SG=show   NMLZ

       "Some people say if they tell you that, it means "Go home and die."   [CH:57]

When the protasis occurs after the apodosis, the definite article is not required. Most often,

speakers do not end such conditionals in the article (53a), although its presence is not

ungrammatical (53b).

(53a) jàtá   bàá-gbè   kpĩ̀ŋ *ké*   *è=mɔ́*   *lè*

       lion   FUT-kill   deer   if   3SG=catch 3SG.OBJ

       "Lion will kill Deer if he catches him."

(53b) jàtá   bàá-gbè   kpĩ̀ŋ *ké*   *è=mɔ́*   *lè=!ɛ́*

       lion   FUT-kill   deer   if   3SG=catch 3SG.OBJ=DEF

       "Lion will kill Deer if he catches him."

The modification of time and conditional adverbials by the definite article seems to be a

relic of the parent construction from which these adverbials were spawned, and that is the

construction in which a nominalization marked by *nĩ́* modifies *bè* 'time'. This nominalization is

structurally akin to a relative construction, therefore it takes a final definite article. The

difference is that while the relative construction denotes an argument, the time adverbial

denotes a temporal concept. As hypothesized earlier, a different nominalizer, *ké* was used for

future and hypothetical events as well as conditional events. The definite article was maintained

in this new construction.

Although, originally a marker of definiteness in adverbials, *lɛ* appears to have evolved a new role as a marker of topic. This would explain why it occurs more with clause-initial adverbials than clause-final ones. The presence of *lɛ* seems almost arbitrary. If we view the work of *lɛ* in adverbials through the lens of its topicalization function, however, its presence does not appear so random. This has been done by Dakubu (1992) with the conclusion that *lɛ* marks the adverbial (a subordinate clause in her work) as one in a set of contrasting events, much as *lɛ* attached to an NP also functions contrastively. Fronting of the adverbial (without *lɛ* modification) serves to highlight that the clause is background information that is needed for the understanding of the following text. For time adverbials, for example, it gives the listener a time frame within which the action in the main clause can be situated. In Dakubu's words, "the principal clause makes a comment on the condition or situation stated in the subordinate clause (Dakubu 1992:9)." This is how it relates to the topicalization function.

I agree with Dakubu that the modification of adverbials by *lɛ* bears a functional relation to the topicalization of NPs by *lɛ*. When an NP is topicalized by *lɛ*, the speaker is entreating the hearer to register the NP as an important subject to which the subsequent information is highly pertinent. So too the marking of adverbials by *lɛ* alerts the hearer that the situation expressed by the adverbial is an important context necessary for the contextualization of the main assertion. My view and Dakubu's diverge when it comes to the contrastive effect of *lɛ* in

adverbials. The evidence for Dakubu's assertion that the subordinate clauses marked by *lɛ* are being contrasted with a set of other possible events is not convincing. A study of the discourse data does not back up this claim. And this makes sense in light of the fact that even with NP-topicalization, *lɛ* does not always imply contrast. It is only when there is double *lɛ*-marking that there is contrastive work being done. The preference of *lɛ*-marking for initial adverbials (especially with conditionals) is explained by Dakubu (1992:9) in terms of markedness. In Gã, the default position for adverbials is clause-final. Therefore, when adverbials occur initially they receive marking whereas clause-final adverbials are unmarked and need no special marking. The facts are not as neat and tidy in Gã, however. Time adverbials marked by *nɛ́* receive *lɛ*-marking whether they occur initially or finally. For initial adverbials, this marking is mandatory, however. There is also an exception for final time adverbials which are essentially conditional in semantic character. Initial conditional adverbials also receive mandatory *lɛ*-marking while final conditional adverbials receive optional marking. It is possible, then, that Gã may at some point in the past have had a strict separation between initial and final adverbials when it came to *lɛ*-marking, but these rules have been relaxed over time to the current situation.

The phenomenon whereby adverbials and other subordinate clauses are marked by the definite article is not limited to Gã. Ameka (1991a) describes a situation in Ewe that is almost

exactly parallel to Gã, where the definite particle *la,* occurs after fronted NPs and initial

adverbial clauses. Its function, he writes, is to "mark a unit of discourse as the domain of

referentiality within which the rest of the utterance should be understood or about which the

rest of the utterance provides, or requests information or directs the addressee to act (Ameka

1991a:149)." Thus, he provides a unified account of the modification of both fronted NPs and

subordinate clauses by *la,* a particle which also functions as a definite article.

c. Clausal connectors and discourse markers

Another functional similarity between Gã *lɛ* and Ewe *la* is that they both occur with clausal

connectors and discourse markers. In Gã, these are connectors such as *bὲ* 'then', *kὲkὲ* 'then',

(nò) hὲwɔ̀ [(that) sake] 'so' and *mɔ̀ŋ́* 'rather'. Adverbs such as *nò mìŋ̀* 'at that time, by then',

ágbὲnɛ̃́ 'now' and *wɔ́* 'tomorrow' also take *lɛ* when they occur clause-initially. Examples are

given in (54) and (55) with *kὲkὲ* 'then' and *bὲ* 'so then' respectively.

(54)   **kὲkɛ́=!ɛ́**   wɔ́   nɛ̃́   !jí   è=nɔ̀   jè-tsélè-mɔ̃́=!ɔ̃́
        then=TOP   tomorrow   NMLZ COP   3SG=top   world-rise-NOM=DEF

        wɔ̀=bàá-hóó   hɔ̃mɔ̃̀wɔ́   nɛ̃́!í
        1PL=FUT-cook   Homowo   thing
        "Then, tomorrow which is the following morning, we will cook *Homowo* food."
        [OYO:41]

(55)   **bɛ́=!ɛ́**   nɔ̃́   nɛ̃́   wɔ̀=ŋ̀-kὲɛ́   wɔ̀=hè   jí   á!kɛ́
        so.then=TOP NM   NMLZ 1PL=PROG-tell   1PL=body   COP   NMLZ

nɔ́-fɛ́ɛ́-nɔ́	nǐ	nyɔ̀ŋmɔ̀	é-kèɛ́	yè	wɔ̀=hè
thing-all-thing	NMLZ	God	PERF-say	be.located	1PL=body

nɔ́-fɛ́ɛ́-nɔ́	nǐ	nyɔ̀ŋmɔ̀	é-wìé=!ɛ́	è=yè	mlɪ̀
thing-all-thing	NMLZ	God	PERF-said=DEF	3SG=be.located	inside

"So then, what we are telling ourselves is that, everything that God has said about us, everything that he has said, is true." [CH:200]

In (56), the adverb, *lólóóló* 'still' takes the topical marker. In (57), three units of discourse are topicalized in succession: the discourse marker, *hèwɔ̀* 'sake, so', the time adverb *bíânɛ́* 'now' and the noun, *hɔ̀mɔ̀* 'hunger'.

(56) shɪ̃́   ***lólóóló=!ɛ́***   gbékɛ̃́=!ɛ̃́   èè=yà
      but   still=TOP   child=DEF   3SG.PROG=go
      "But still, the child, he is dying."   [CH:67]

(57) ***hèwɔ́=!ɔ́***   ***bíânɛ́=!ɛ́***   hɔ̀mɔ́=!ɔ́   wɔ̀=ŋ̀-wá   è=yì
      sake=TOP   now=TOP   hunger=DEF   1PL=PROG-jeer   3SG=head
      "So now, the hunger, we are jeering at it." [YM:283]

The function of *lɛ* when it occurs with adverbs and discourse connectors is similar to its occurrence with nominalized adverbials. In the case of time and place adverbs, it signals the addressee to register the adverb as pertinent information for the processing of the following discourse. It provides the spatial and temporal orientation needed to understand the following utterance. It is much more difficult to establish a link between the topical-orientational function of *lɛ* and its use with discourse connectors such as *kèkè* 'then' and *hèwɔ̀* 'so'. The discourse connectors themselves link the preceding talk to the following one, either temporally or

causally and as (58) shows, some e.g. *kὲkὲ* 'then' can occur without *lɛ.* As adverbs themselves,

one can surmise that since these connectors also serve to alert the hearer about something that

is important for understanding the following utterance (in this case, the previous utterance

rather than a time or place), then they also merit *lɛ*-marking.

(58) *nò*   *mìŋ́=!έ̃*   á=yè   ní!í̃=!έ̃   fέέ̃
      that   inside=TOP   3PL.IMPERS.PERF=eat   thing-DEF   all

      á=tã̀
      3PL.IMPERS.PERF=finish
      "By that time, they would have finished eating."

      kὲkὲ   á=yà-tsí   á=shwìê
      then   3PL.IMPERS.PERF=ITIV-push   3PL.IMPERS=pour
      "Then they'll go and throw it away."   [YM:147]

7.4 Right dislocation

Right dislocation (R-dislocation) is another marked topic construction that occurs in Gã. It is

however, not very common. In this construction, the topic is coded first as a pronoun, followed

by a comment on the pronoun referent. This is then followed by an intonational pause and then

a full NP which is co-referential with the pronoun. The only example in my corpus is given

below in (59). Here, *mã́mã̀ Angela-mὲ̃ì* 'Mama Angela and company' is right-dislocated and

had previously been referred to by the impersonal third plural pronoun, *á.* There is a notable

pause immediately preceding *mã́mã̀ Angela-mὲ̃ì* 'Mama Angela and company'.

(59) á = fèé   é!kó   ààhû̃   *mámã̀ Angela-mɛ̀ĩ̀*
      3PL.IMPERS.PERF = do   some   constantly   Mama Angela-ASSOC.PL

é = !hĩ́ĩ̃ĩ̃
3SG.NEG = be.good.NEG
 "They have tried to do a lot (to help), Mama Angela and her colleagues. It did not get
better"   [CH:42]

Because there are so few examples of R-dislocation in the corpus, it cannot be

ascertained with certainty what discourse role this construction type plays in the language, apart

from the long-held view, according to Givón (2001b:267), that they are an afterthought or

repair device. That certainly seems to be the function the construction is playing in (59). In the

discourse preceding this utterance, the speaker was narrating a story about a seriously ill child

whose disease could not be cured, even though her parents had tried everything. It is with this

background that he utters (59), using the impersonal pronoun. He then appears to change his

mind and decides to be more specific by revealing the identity of the referent of the pronoun -

Mama Angela and her colleagues. Presumably Mama Angela is a doctor or nurse.

7.5 Summary

This chapter has looked at the ways in which the information structure of Gã may be

manipulated for pragmatic purposes. Focus constructions and topic constructions are the two

major syntactic means used to accomplish this. In Gã, the only semantic type of focus

construction is the contrastive focus construction (§7.1). This construction features new

information as the focused constituent and attempts to correct an assumed false belief on the part of the addressee. Focus constructions may also be used for emphasis. Topic constructions (§7.3) may take the form of left-dislocated or right-dislocated constructions. Left-dislocated constructions are used to reintroduce an old topic in order to provide new information about them. The definite marker, *lɛ,* also functions as a topic marker but whether contrast is being expressed can only be determined by examining the discourse as a whole. When the left-dislocated topic is marked by two instantiations of *lɛ,* however, the construction almost certainly contains a contrast.

8.0 Conclusion

This dissertation has striven to describe as many facets of the morphology and syntax of Gã as time, space and my own linguistic knowledge would permit. Not every topic has been covered, or covered intricately enough to suit every need. Nevertheless, for the first comprehensive grammar of the language since Zimmerman (1858), it is my hope that it serves as a valuable reference for grammarians, especially those interested in African languages, as well as areal and genetic typologists and syntacticians of every theoretical persuasion.

The grammar has built on the good works of previous linguists on Gã, and has uncovered some innovations in the language, in addition to presenting old topics in a new

perspective, in hopes of furthering our understanding of them and placing them in a broader

theoretical context. Highlights of notable findings will be summarized here. In the chapter on

words and word classes, it was shown that the vast majority of property concepts in Gã are

expressed via nouns. Such nominal property words were found to exhibit many, though not all,

of the morphological and syntactic properties of ordinary nouns. Many of them were also

ideophones. A survey of the class of interjections found them to be a crucial and pervasive

resource for attitudinal, cognitive and emotive expression, a fact that is not reflected in the

dearth of attention that has been given to this word class.

In the discussion on verbs and verbal morphology in chapter three, it was shown that

Gã, a heavily aspectual language, was developing a nascent future tense marker in *bàá-* and that

the old future marker, *àá-* had become restricted to modal expression as well as future

expression in very formal registers. Various meanings of the perfect were also looked at, with

the most interesting being the use of the perfect for the narration of sequential, ordered or

formulaic events. This was termed the narrative perfect. In chapter four on serial verb

constructions, I proposed, following, Osam (1994) that Gã has two types of serial verb

constructions: integrated SVCs and chained SVCs. However, I contended that chained SVCs in

Gã differed fundamentally from integrated SVCs in being mono-clausal but multi-predicational.

Chained SVCs were therefore a non-prototypical type of serial construction, since serial

constructions are generally defined as mono-clausal and mono-predicational. Voice categories in Gã was one area that was fertile for research, as little had been said about it before. It was shown in chapter five that all the major voice categories were manifested in Gã by periphrastic means and that serial verb constructions were a prominent tool for the realization of causative, benefactive and applicative voices.

Chapter 6 showed that nominalizations are an often overlooked construction that are utilized for the execution of a wide range of functions. Grammatical nominalizations were shown to be the main vehicle for relativization, complementation and adverbial expression. It was stressed that grammatical nominalizations and nominals in general be so-identified by their functions and external syntax, rather than concentrating on internal (verbal) features that might lead to a different conclusion. When this is done, even entire sentences, in certain contexts, could function nominally. The final chapter touched on focus and topic constructions. Focus constructions were found to be diachronically related to relative constructions, the common thread being nominalization. Topic constructions consisted almost entirely of left-dislocated constructions modified by the definite article.

References

1976. *Ga Nileegbɛ* 3B. Bureau of Ghana Languages: Accra

2006. *Baiblo aloo ŋmalɛ krɔŋkrɔŋ lɛ.* The Bible Society of Ghana: Accra

2013. *2010 Population and housing census: National analytic report.* Ghana Statistical Service

Ablorh-Odjidja, J. R. 1961. *Ga wiemɔ lɛ hesusumɔ (Thinking about Ga).* London: MacMillan

Ablorh-Odjidja, J. R. 1968. *Ga for beginners.* Accra: Waterville

Aboh, Enoch O. 2005. Deriving factive and relative clauses in Kwa. In Brugè L, Giusti G, Mynaro N, Schweikert W, Turano G (eds.), *Contributions to the thirtieth di Grammatica Generativa.* Libreria Editrice Cafoscarina, Cafoscarina, Venezia, pp. 265-285.

Aboh, Enoch O. and Essegbey, James 2010. General properties of the clause. In Enoch O. Aboh and James Essegbey (eds.), *Topics in Kwa syntax.* Dordrecht: Springer.

Aboh, Enoch O. 2010. The morphosyntax of the noun phrase. In Enoch. O Aboh and James Essegbey (eds.), *Topics in Kwa syntax.* Springer: Dordrecht.

Adjei, Emmanuel Nii Adjetey. 1999. *An aspect of the syntax and semantics of Ga: serial verb constructions.* MPhil thesis, University of Ghana

Agyei-Owusu, Akua A. 2007. *Nativisation of Akan loan words in Ga.* BA Long essay, University of Ghana

Aikhenvald, Alexandra Y. 2006. Serial verb constructions in typological perspective. In Alexandra Aikhenvald and R.M.W Dixon (eds.), *Serial Verb Constructions: A Cross-linguistic Typology.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Allotey, Seth Nii Moi. 2004. *Emergence of dialects on the periphery of Accra.* MA Thesis, University of Ghana.

Amartey, A. A. 1970. *Ga kasemɔ vii.* Accra-Tema: BGL

Andrews, Avery. 2007. Relative clauses. In Timothy Shopen (ed.), *Language Typology and Syntactic Description.* Vol. 2. (Second edition). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 206-236.

Amartey, A.A 1970. *Ga kasemɔ vii.* Accra-Tema: BGL

Ameka, Felix Kofi 1991a. How discourse particles mean: The case of the Ewe "terminal" particles. *Journal of African Languages and Linguistics* pp. 143-170

Ameka, Felix Kofi 1991b. *Ewe: It's grammatical constructions and illocutionary devices.* PhD thesis: Australian National University

Ameka, Felix 1992. Interjections: The universal yet neglected part of speech. *Journal of pragmatics* 18. pp. 101-118

Ameka, Felix K. 2001. Ideophones and the nature of the adjective word class in Ewe. In F.K. Erhard Voeltz and Christa Kilian-Hatz (eds.), *Ideophones.* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins 25-48

Ankrah, E.A Nee-Adjabeng 1966. *Agwase wiemɔi kɛ abɛi komɛi.* Accra: Bureau of Ghana Languages.

Anteh, E.A.A 1953. *Ga ŋamɔi, salutations of the Ga people.* London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd.

Aristar, Anthony 1991. On diachronic sources and linguistic pattern: An investigation into the origin of linguistic universals. *Language* 67 (1), 1-33

Badan, Linda 2013. Verb object constructions in Mandarin: A comparison with Ewe. *The linguistic review* 30 (3) 373-422

Baker, Brett and Harvey, Mark. 2010. Complex predicate formation. In Mengistu Amberber, Brett Baker and Mark Harvey (eds.) *Complex predicates: cross-linguistic perspectives on event structure.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bannerman, 1948. *Ga grammar of function.* Cape Coast

Berry, Jack 1951. *The pronunciation of Ga.* Cambridge: Heffer

Berry, Jack and Nii Amon Kotei 1969. *An introductory course in Ga.* U.S Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Bibiebome, Eric Ziem 2011. *Language shift and maintenance among the Ga.* MPhil Thesis, University of Ghana.

Blench, Roger M. 2010. The sensory world: ideophones in Africa and elsewhere. In: Ann Storch (ed.), *Perception of the Invisible: Religion, Historical Semantics and the Role of Perceptive Verbs* Rüdiger Köppe Verlag: Köln

Bodomo, Adams 2006. The structure of ideophones in African and Asian languuages: The case of Dagaare and Cantonese. In John Mugane et. al. (ed.), *Selected proceedings of the 35th annual conference of African linguistics.* Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project. 203-13

Bowdich, T.E 1819. *Mission from Cape Coast to Ashantee.* London

Bruce, Les. 1988. Serialization: From syntax to lexicon. *Studies in Language,* 12.1:19-49.

Bybee, Joan; Perkins, Revere and William Pagliuca 1994. *The Evolution of Grammar. Tense, Aspect and Modality in the Languages of the World.* Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Campbell, Akua 2014. Motion expression in Gã narratives. *Journal of West African languages.* 40 (2) pp. 69-101

Clements, George M. 1986. Compensatory lengthening and consonant gemination in LuGanda. In Leo Wetzels and Engin Sezer (eds.), *Studies in compensatory lengthening*, Dordrecht: Foris Publications, pp. 37-77

Comrie, Bernard 1976. *Aspect.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Comrie, Bernard 1985. *Tense.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Comrie, Bernard and Thompson, Sandra A. 2007. Lexical nominalization. In Timothy Shopen (ed.), *Language typology and syntactic description, Vol. 3.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Cooreman, Anne 1994. A functional typology of antipassives. In: Paul Hopper and Barbara Fox (eds.), *Voice: form and function.* pp. 179-230 Amsterdam: John Benjamins

Croft, William 2000. Parts of speech as typological universals and as language particular categories. In: Petra Maria Vogel and Bernard Comrie (eds.), *Approaches to the typology of word classes,* 65-102. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Dahl, Osten 1985. *Tense and aspect systems.* Basil: Blackwell

Dakubu, Mary Esther Kropp n.d. *The 18th century: Protten and his legacy.* Unpublished manuscript

Dakubu, Mary Esther Kropp 1970. The categories of the Ga verbal group. *Journal of African languages* 9 (2) 70-76

Dakubu, Mary Esther Kropp 1981. On the characterization of stress in West African tone languages. *Afrika und Übersee*, Vol. 64. 227-236

Dakubu, Mary Esther Kropp 1988. *The Languages of Ghana.* KPI Ltd. London

Dakubu, Mary Esther Kropp. 1992. Contrast and context: topic, focus and definiteness in Ga. *Journal of West African languages* 22 (2) 3-16

Dakubu, M.E. Kropp 1996a. Explaining Ga plurals. *Journal of African languages and linguistics.* 17 (2), 153-181

Dakubu, Mary Esther Kropp 1996b. *Language and Community: the view from Accra.* Legon: Ghana University Press.

Dakubu, Mary Esther Kropp 1998. Ideophones in Dangme and their place in linguistic semantics. *Papers in Ghanaian linguistics.* No. 11 1-17

Dakubu, Mary Esther Kropp 2002. *Ga phonology.* Language monograph no.6, Institute of African Studies: University of Ghana

Dakubu, Mary Esther Kropp 2004a. Ga clauses without syntactic subjects. *Journal of African languages and linguistics* 25 pp. 1-40

Dakubu, Mary Esther Kropp. 2004b. The Ga pre-verb auxiliary *kɛ* revisited. In M.E Kropp Dakubu and E.K Osam (eds.), *Studies in the languages of the Volta basin: Proceedings of the annual colloquium of the Legon-Trondheim Linguistics project.* Legon: University of Ghana. pp. 113-134

Dakubu, Mary Esther Kropp 2005. Role restriction and marginalization in an urban context: the fate of Gã in Accra. In, Nigel Crawhall and Nicholas Ostler (eds.), *Creating outsiders: endangered languages, migration and marginalisation. Proceedings of the ninth FEL conference.* Bath: The Foundation for Endangered Languages

Dakubu, Mary Esther Kropp 2008a. Ga verb features. In: M.E Kropp Dakubu and Felix K. Ameka (eds.), *Aspect and modality in Kwa languages.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins

Dakubu, Mary Esther Kropp. 2008b. *Ga-English dictionary, with English-Ga index.* 2nd edition. Accra: Black Mask

Daniel, Michael and Moravcsik, Edith. 2013. The Associative Plural. In: Dryer, Matthew S. & Haspelmath, Martin (eds.) *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online.* Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology. (Available online at http://wals.info/chapter/36, Accessed on 2016-01-20.)

Delancey, Scott 1986. *Relativization as nominalization in Tibetan and Newari.* Ms. 19th ICSTLL.

Dingemanse, Mark 2012. Advances in the cross-linguistic study of ideophones. *Language and Linguistics Compass* 6 (10) 654-672

Dixon, R.M.W. 1991. *A new approach to English grammar, on semantic principles.* Oxford: Oxford University Press

Dixon, R.M.W 2010. *Basic linguistic theory. Volume 2: Grammatical topics.* Oxford: Oxford University Press

Dixon, R.M.W and Aikhenvald, Alexandra 2000. Introduction. In R.M.W Dixon and Alexandra A. Aikhenvald (eds.), *Changing Valency: Case Studies in Transitivity.* Cambridge: CUP pp. 1-29

Dixon, R.M.W and Aikhenvald, Alexandra 2002. *Word: A cross-linguistic typology.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Doke, Clement M. 1935. *Bantu linguistic terminology.* London: Longmans, Green and Co.

Downing, Laura J. 2005. On the ambiguous segmental status of nasals in homorganic NC sequences. In Marc van Oostendorp and Jeroen van de Weijer (eds.), *The internal organization of phonological segments.* New York: Mouton de Gruyter, pp. 183–216.

Du Bois, John W., Stephan Schuetze-Coburn, Susanna Cumming and Danae Paolino 1993. Outline of discourse transcription. In Jane A. Edwards & Martin D. Lampert, eds.,

Talking data: Transcription and coding in discourse research. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, pp. 45-89

Durie, Mark. 1997. Grammatical structures in verb serialization. In A. Alsina, J. Bresnan, and P. Sells (eds.), *Complex Predicates.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Enfield, N. J. 2002. Cultural logic and syntactic productivity: Associated posture constructions in Lao. In N. Enfield (ed.), *Ethnosyntax: Explorations in culture and grammar.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Epps, Patience 2012. Between headed and headless relative clauses. In Bernard Comrie and Zarina Estrada-Fernández (eds.), *Relative clauses in languages of the Americas: A typological overview.* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins

Essegbey, James 1999. *Inherent complement verbs revisited: Towards an understanding of argument structure in Ewe.* MPI Dissertation series. Wageningen: Ponsen and Looijen bv

Evans, Nicholas 2010. Insubordination. In Irina Nikolaeva (ed.), *Finiteness: Theoretical and empirical foundations.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Field, Margaret 1961. *Religion and medicine of the Gã people*. London: Oxford University Press

Foley, William A. 2010. Events and serial verb constructions. In Mengistu Amberber, Brett Baker and Mark Harvey (eds.) *Complex predicates: cross-linguistic perspectives on event structure.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Francez, Itamar and Koontz-Garboden, Andrew 2015. Semantic variation and the grammar of property concepts. *Language* 91 (3). 533-563

Frajzyngier, Zygmunt 1995. A functional theory of complementizers. In Joan Bybee and Suzanne Fleischman (eds.), *Modality in grammar and discourse.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins

Givón, Talmy 1979. *On understanding grammar*. Orlando: Academic press

Givón, Talmy 1991. Some substantive issues concerning verb serialization: grammatical vs. cognitive packaging. In C. Lefebvre (ed.), *Serial Verbs, Grammatical, Comparative, and Cognitive Approaches.* Philadelphia: John Benjamins. 137-184.

Givón, Talmy 2001a. *Syntax: A functional-typological introduction*. Volume 1. Amsterdam: John Benjamins

Givón, Talmy 2001b. *Syntax: A functional-typological introduction*. Volume 2. Amsterdam: John Benjamins

Givón, Talmy 2009. *The genesis of syntactic complexity: diachrony, ontology, neuro-cognition and evolution*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Greenberg, Joseph. 1963. *The languages of Africa.* Bloomington: Indiana University Centre in Anthropology, Folklore and Linguistics and The Hague: Mouton

Greenberg, Joseph. 1983. Some areal characteristics of African languages. In I. R Dihoff (ed.), *Current approaches to African linguistics.* Dordrecht: Foris Publications pp 3-21

Gundel, Jeanette, Nancy, Hedberg, Ron, Zacharski, 1993. Cognitive status and the form of referring expressions in discourse. *Language* 69, 274–307.

Gundel, Jeanette 1999. On different kinds of focus. In Peter Bosch and Rob van der Sandt (eds.), *Focus: Linguistic, cognitive and computational perspectives.* Cambridge:Cambridge University Press. pp. 293-305.

Haegeman, Liliane 1989. Be going to and will: A pragmatic account. *Journal of linguistics,* 25 (2). pp. 291-317

Hajek, John. 2006. Serial verbs in Tetun Dili. In Alexandra Aikhenvald and R.M.W Dixon (eds.), *Serial Verb Constructions: A Cross-linguistic Typology.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Haspelmath, Martin 1993. *A grammar of Lezgian.* Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter

Haspelmath, Martin 2002. *Understanding morphology.* London: Arnold

Haspelmath, Martin 2011. The indeterminacy of word segmentation and the nature of morphology and syntax. *Folia linguistics* 45 (1). 31-80

Haspelmath, Martin 2012. How to compare major word-classes across the world's languages. *UCLA Working Papers in Linguistics, Theories of Everything.* Volume 17, Article 16. 109-130

Heine, Bernd and Reh, Methchild 1984. *Grammaticalization and reanalysis in African languages.* Buske

Heine, Bernd, Ulrike Claudi, and Friederike Hünnemeyer. 1991.*Grammaticalization: A conceptual framework.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Heine, Bernd and Kuteva, Tania 2004. *World lexicon of grammaticalization.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Heine, Bernd and Kuteva, Tania. 2005. *Language contact and grammatical change.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Heine, Bernd and Kuteva, Tania 2007. *The genesis of grammar: A reconstruction.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hellwig, Birgit. 2006. Serial verb constructions in Goemai. In Alexandra Aikhenvald and R.M.W Dixon (eds.), *Serial Verb Constructions: A Cross-linguistic Typology.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Henderson-Quartey David K. 2001. *The Ga of Ghana; History and culture of a West African People.* London: Book-in-Hand Ltd.

Hendery, Rachel 2012. *Relative clauses in time and space.* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins

Hengeveld, Kees 1992. *Non-verbal predication: theory, typology, diachrony.* Berlin: Mouton

Hopper, Paul and Traugott, Elizabeth Closs 2003. *Grammaticalization.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Horie, Kaoru, Pardeshi, Prashant and Guy Paul 2008. Transparency versus economy: How does Adioukrou resolve the conflict? In Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk (ed.), *Asymmetric events.* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Imbert, Caroline 2005. *The Grammaticalization of Relator Nouns in Turkish: Turkish Postpositions Revisited.* CNRS/Universite Lyon.

Kemmer, Suzanne 1993. *The middle voice.* Typological studies in language, vol. 23. Amsterdam: John Benjamins

Kemmer, Suzanne 1994. Middle voice, transitivity and the elaboration of events. In: Paul Hopper and Barbara Fox (eds.), *Voice: form and function.* pp. 179-230 Amsterdam: John Benjamins

Killian-Hatz, Christa. 2006. Serial verb constructions in Khwe (Central Khoisan). In Alexandra Aikhenvald and R.M.W Dixon (eds.), *Serial Verb Constructions: A Cross-linguistic Typology.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Korsah, Sampson 2011. *Transitivity and inherent complementation in Gã.* MPhil thesis: University of Ghana

Korsah, Sampson 2014. On inherent complement verbs in Kwa. *Topics at Infl., Linguistische Arbeits Berichte* 92 pp. 397-422

Kroeger Paul A. 2004. *Analysing Syntax. A Lexical-functional approach.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Kropp, Mary Esther. 1968. *A comparative study of Ga and Adangme, with special reference to the verb.* PhD thesis, University of London (SOAS)

Kuno, Susumo 1975. Three perspectives in the functional approach to syntax. In Robin E. Grossman, L. James San and Timothy Vance (eds.), *Papers from the parasession on functionalism.* Chicago: Chicago Linguistics Society

Langacker, Ronald 1991. *Foundations of cognitive grammar.* Vol 2. Stanford: Stanford University Press

Lehmann, Christian 1986. On the typology of relative clauses. *Linguistics* 24 pp. 663-680.

Longacre, Robert 2007. Sentences as combinations of clauses. In Timothy Shopen (ed.) *Language typology and syntactic description,* vol. 2: Complex constructions. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press pp. 235-298

Lord, Carol. 1993. *Historical Change in Serial Verb Constructions.* Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Lord, Carol, Foong Ha Yap, and Shoichi Iwasaki. 2002. Grammaticalization of 'give': African and Asian perspectives. In Ilse Wischer and Gabrielle Diewald (eds.) *New Reflections on Grammaticalization.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 217-236.

Luraghi, Silvia 2001. Some remarks on Instrument, Comitative, and Agent in Indo-European. *Sprachtypologie und Universalienforschung* 54 (4) 385-401.

Maddieson, Ian and Ladefoged, Peter 1993. Phonetics of partially nasal consonants. In Marie Huffman and Rena Krakow (eds.), *Nasalization and the velum*, San Diego: Academic Press, pp. 251–301

Malchukov Andrej, Haspelmath Martin and Comrie, Bernard. 2010 Ditransitive constructions: A typological overview. In Andrej Malchukov, Martin Haspelmath and Bernard Comrie (eds.), *Studies in ditransitive constructions: A comparative handbook.* pp 1-64 Berlin/New York: Degruyter Mouton

Matthews, P.H 1991. *Morphology.* Second edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Matthews, Stephen 2006. On serial verb constructions in Cantonese. In Alexandra Aikhenvald and R.M.W Dixon (eds.), *Serial verb constructions: A cross-linguistic typology.* Oxford: Oxford University Press

Mayer, Mercer. 1969. *Frog, where are you?* New York: Dial Books.

Morrison, Michelle 2007. *Towards a revised definition of the serial verb construction: Evidence from the Asante dialect of Akan.* Term paper for Linguistics 408, 'Linguistic Field Methods', Rice University

Nichols, Johanna 1984. Functional Theories of Grammar. *Annual Review of Anthropology.* Vol. 13 pp. 97-117.

Nikolaeva, Irina and Spencer, Andrew 2013. Possession and modification - a perspective from canonical typology. In Dunstan Brown, Marina Chumakina and Greville Corbett (eds.), *Canonical morphology and syntax.* 207-238. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Nishiyama, A. and Koenig, J-P 2006. The perfect in context: A corpus study. *U. Penn Working Papers in Linguistics* 12 (1) 265-278

Noonan, Michael 1997. Versatile nominalizations. In: Bybee, Joan; Haiman, John; and Thompson, Sandra, (eds.), *Essays on language function and language type, in honor of T. Givón,* 373–394. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Noonan, Michael. 2007. Complementation. In Timothy Shopen (ed.), *Language Typology and Syntactic Description*. Vol. 2. (Second edition). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 52-150

Nwachukwu, P. Akujuoobi 1987. The argument structure of Igbo verbs. Lexicon project working papers 18 Cambridge: MIT

Oldendorp, G.C.A 1777. *Geschichte der Mission der evangelischen Bruder aus den Caraibischen Inseln.* Barby

Osam, Emmanuel K. 1994. *A functional grammar of Akan.* PhD dissertation: University of Oregon

Osam, E.K. 2004. *An Introduction to the structure of Akan: Its verbal and multiverbal systems.* Legon: Department of Linguistics

Palmer, F.R 1974. *The English verb.* London: Longman

Palmer, F.R 1986. *Mood and modality.* First edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Palmer, F.R 2001. *Mood and modality.* Second edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Pawley, Andrew 2009. On the origins of serial verb constructions in Kalam. In T. Givón and Masayoshi Shibatani (eds), *Syntactic complexity: diachrony, acquisition, neuro-cognition, evolution.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins

Payne, Thomas E. 1997. *Describing morphosyntax.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Pike, Kenneth L. 1947. *Phonemics: a technique for reducing languages to writing.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press

Prince, Ellen F. 1981. Towards a taxonomy of given-new information. In Peter Cole (ed.), *Radical pragmatics.* New York: Academic Press. 223-254

Rask, R.C.N 1828. *Vejledning til Akra-Sproget.* Copenhagen

Reindorf Carl Christian 1966. *The History of the Gold Coast and Asante.* Accra: Ghana Universities Press.

Saah, Kofi K. 2010. Relative Clauses in Akan. In: Enoch O. Abboh and James Essegbey (eds.), *Topics in Kwa Syntax.* Springer: Dordrecht.

Sasse, Hans Jürgen. 1992. Theory of language death. In Matthias Brenzinger (ed.), *Language death: Factual and theoretical explorations with special reference to East Africa.* Berlin: Mouton

Schladt, Mathias 2000. The typology and grammaticalization of reflexives. In Frajzyngier, Zygmunt and Tracy Curl (eds.), *Reflexives: form and function* pp. 103-124 Amsterdam: John Benjamins

Schaefer, R.P. and Egbokare, O.F. 1993. On the typological character of property concepts in Emai. In S.S. Mufwene and L. Moshi (eds.), *Topics in African linguistics,* 159-176. Amsterdam: John Benjamins

Schmidtke-Bode, Karsten 2009. *A typology of purpose clauses.* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Sebba, Mark 1987. *The syntax of serial verbs: An investigation into serialization in Sranan and other languages.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins

Shibatani, Masayoshi 1976. The grammar of causative constructions: A conspectus. In Masayoshi Shibatani (ed.), *The grammar of causative constructions (Syntax and semantics 6).* New York: Academic Press

Shibatani, Masayoshi and Pardeshi, Prashant 2002. The causative continuum. In Masayoshi Shibatani (ed.), *The grammar of causation and interpersonal manipulation.* pp. 85-126 Amsterdam: John Benjamins

Shibatani, Masayoshi 2006. On the conceptual framework for voice phenomena. *Linguistics* 44 (2), pp. 217-269

Shibatani, Masayoshi. 2009a. On the form of complex predicates: Towards demystifying serial verbs. In Johannes Helmbrecht, Yoko Nishina, Yong-Min Shin, Stavros Skopeteas, Elizabeth Verhoeven (eds.), *Form and function in language research.* Berlin: Mouton

Shibatani, Masayoshi. 2009b. Elements of complex structures, where recursion isn't: The case of relativization. In *Syntactic Complexity: Diachrony, Acquisition, Neuro-cognition, Evolution,* Talmy Givón & Masayoshi (eds), 163-198. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Shibatani, Masayosi and Khaled Awadh bin Makhashen 2009. Nominalization in Soqotri: A South Arabian language of Yemen. In W. Leo Wetzels (ed.), *Endangered languages: Contributions to morphology and morpho-syntax* 9-31 Leiden: Brill

Shibatani, Masayoshi 2011. *Toward the functional definition of clauses and sentences.* Colloquium presentation, Rice Colloquium.

Smith, Carlota 1997. *The parameter of aspect.* Second edition. Dordrecht: Kluwer

Smith, Carlota 1999. Activities: States or events. *Linguistics and Philosophy.* 22(5) pp. 479-508.

Stahlke, Herbert 1965. Serial Verbs. *Studies in African Linguistics,* 1.1: 60-99.

Stassen, Leon 2000. AND-languages and WITH-languages. *Linguistic typology* 4, 1-54

Stewart, John M. 1989. Kwa. In John Bendor-Samuel (ed.), *The Niger-Congo languages.* Lanham: University Press of America

Stolz, Thomas, Stroh, Cornelia and Urdze, Aina. 2006. *On comitatives and related categories: a typological study with special focus on the languages of Europe.* Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter

Svorou, Soteria 1994. *The grammar of space.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins

Talmy, Leonard. 1985. Lexicalization patterns: semantic structure in lexical forms. In Timothy Shopen (ed.), *Language typology and syntactic description Vol 3: Grammatical categories and the lexicon.* pp. 57-149. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Talmy, Leonard. 2000. *Towards a cognitive semantics. Vol 2. Typology and process in concept structuring.* Cambridge, Massachussets: MIT Press.

Thompson, Sandra 2002. Object complements and conversation: Towards a realistic account. *Studies in Language* 26:1 125–164.

Thompson, Sandra A., Longacre, Robert E. and Hwang, Shin Ja J. 2007. Adverbial clauses. In Timothy Shopen (ed.), *Language typology and syntactic description, Vol. 2* pp. 237-300

Truteneau, H.M.J 1971. *Christian Protten, Introduction to the Fante and Accra (Gã) languages 1764 and J.E.J Capitein's 1744 Fante Catechism.* London: Afro-Presse.

Vendler, Zeno 1957. Verbs and times. *The philosophical review.* 6 (2) pp. 143-160.

Watters, John R. 2000. Syntax. In Bernd Heine and Derek Nurse (eds.), *African languages: An introduction.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wekker, H.C 1976. *The expression of future time in contemporary British English.* North-Holland linguistic series. 28 North-Holland

Wentum, Comfort. 1997. *A lexical tonology of Ga.* MPhil thesis, University of Ghana: Legon

Wilkie, M. B. 1930. *Ga grammar notes and exercises.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Williamson, Kay and Blench, Roger 2000. Niger-Congo. In Bernd Heine and Derek Nurse (eds.), *African languages: An introduction.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Zimmerman, Johann. 1858. *A grammatical sketch of the Akra or Ga language including vocabulary of the Akra or Ga language with an Adanme appendix.* Stuttgart.

Zwicky, Arnold 1985. Clitics and particles. *Language* 61 (2), 283-305

Appendix A: Glossing conventions

1	first person
2	second person
3	third person
AK	Akan
AOR	aorist
ASSOC	associative
BGL	Bureau of Ghana Languages
BSG	Bible Society of Ghana
COMPL	completive
COP	copula
CTF	counterfactual
DEF	definite
EGR	egressive
EMPH	emphatic
FOC	focus
FS	frog story narration
FUT	future
GEN	genitive
HAB	habitual
IDEO	ideophone
IJ	interjection
IMP	imperative
IMPERF	imperfect
IMPERS	impersonal
IMPF	imperfective
INAN	inanimate
INDEC	indecipherable
INDEF	indefinite
ING.FUT	ingressive future
INTENS	intensifier
ITER	iterative
ITIV	itive

LOC	locative
NEG	negative
NM	nominalization marker
NMLZ	nominalizer (grammatical)
NOM	nominalizer (lexical)
NT	new testament
OBJ	object
PERF	perfect
PERT	pertensive
PL	plural
PossP	Possessive phrase
PRED.PRT	predicative particle
PROG	progressive
PROS	prospective
PROX.PRED.PRT	proximal predicative particle
PRSTV.PRED.PRT	presentative predicative particle
QP	question particle
RED	reduplication
S	singular
SBJV	subjunctive
SG	singular
SBJV	subjunctive
TOP	topic
VENT	ventive

Appendix B: Cited texts and speakers

Within this work, examples taken from recorded texts are indicated by initials or some other

abbreviation, followed by a colon and the line number from which the example was taken in

the transcribed text. In three texts, named DT, YH and LIB, the number that comes after the

colon represents the time-stamp within the recording that the sentence was uttered. Time

pressure prevented me from transcribing these texts. Below are the texts and a little more

information about them. Except for Oyo, the names used are pseudonyms.

DF (Death and Funerals) - A conversation between myself and two other women, Sally in her

late seventies and Dina in her early sixties. All three are related. As the name says, it revolves

around a discussion of recent family deaths.

FH (Family House) - A conversation involving the same participants as in DF, but this time

participants discuss issues concerning the family house.

MM (Mr. Mensah) - A conversation between Mr. Mensah and Dina on miscellaneous matters.

Both are in their sixties.

OYO (Oyoo) - A procedural narrative describing the activities and rituals involved in the

twins' festival and *Homowo.* The main speaker is Oyoo (her real name), a woman in her

seventies, with input from KK (woman in her thirties) and Kwei (Oyo's grand-nephew, 30-ish).

I also feature on the recording, mainly asking questions.

YM (Yoomo) - Another procedural narrative describing the twins' festival and *Homowo.*

Yoomo is a fetish priestess and a long-time employee of the Ghana Fire Service. Also featuring

in a limited capacity are myself and KK.

YH (Yoomo's house) - Casual banter among four or five people at Yoomo's house.

DT (Dina and Tess) - A phone conversation between Dina and Tess (in her late fifties).

CH (Church) - A sermon given by a Presbyterian priest.

LIB (Libation) - A libation offered by Yoomo as part of the twins' festival.

There were also 14 frog story narrations by as many speakers. "Frog, where are you?"

is a picture book by Mercer Mayer (1969). Speakers were asked to flip through the book and

narrate the story based on the actions depicted in the pictures. It is a story about a little boy

whose pet frog goes missing. He sets out into the forest to find him and encounters a number of

mishaps, culminating in him being reunited with his pet frog. Below is a list of the real names

of the narrators, their gender and approximate age.

Naa Borkai (BOR)   female, thirties

Nartey (NAR)   male, twenties

Sampson (SAMP)   male, twenties

Tina (TIN)	female, late fifties
Florence (FLO)	female, late seventies
Debbie (DEB)	female, early sixties
Aku (AKU)	female, thirties
Mavis (MAV)	female, 17 years old
Man Lizzie (MAN)	female, 12 years old
Mr. Adjetey (MA)	male, fifties
Manfred (MANF)	male, 11 years old
Kofi (KOF)	male, 10 years old
Nathaniel (NAT)	male, 8 years old
Elisheba (ELL)	female, 6 years old

Sample text from "YM"

1. Akua: mĩí̋=tá!ó   nɛ́   ó=tsɔ̃ɔ̃́   wɔ̀   ɛ̃̀ɛ̃̀
        1SG.PROG=search   NMLZ 2SG.SBJV=show   IPL   IJ
        hã̀ã̀jìàyèlèyélí=!ɛ́
        twin.festival=DEF
        "I want you to show us…errm…the twin festival"

2. KK: kùsúm̀
        custom
        "Customs"

3. Akua: ófáìnɛ́ hɛ̃̀ɛ̃́!ɛ́
        please yes
        "Yes, please."

4.   nằằ
mouth
"about"

5. Yoomo: yòò
"Ok"

6. Akua: hằằjĩàyèlèyélí = !ɛ́--
twin.festival = DEF
"The twin festival--"

7. Yoomo:
nɔ́	nɪ́		hèwɔ̀	nɪ́		à = yèɔ̀
NM	NMLZ		sake	NMLZ		3PL.IMPERS = eat-HAB

"Why it is celebrated."

8. Akua:
ɛ̀hɛ́ɛ̀	nɔ́	nɪ́		hèwɔ̀	nɪ́		à = yèɔ̀
IJ	NM	NMLZ		sake	NMLZ		3PL.IMPERS = eat-HAB

"Exactly. Why it is celebrated."

9.
kè	nɔ́	nɪ́		à = fé-ɔ̀
and	NM	NMLZ		3PL.IMPERS = do-HAB

"And what is done."

10.
kè	*how many days*		à = yè-ɔ̀
and			3PL.IMPERS = eat-HAB

"And how many days it is celebrated."

11. Yoomo: *Ok*

12. Akua:
mɛ́!ɛ́	*time*	à = bɔ́ì-ɔ̀		kè	nɪ́bí!í
what		3PL.IMPERS = start-HAB		and	things

13.
nɔ́-fĩã́-nɔ́		nɪ́		kɔ́-ɔ̀		hè
thing-all-thing		NMLZ		take-HAB		body

"Everything about it."

14. Yoomo: yòò   ó=jé̃!ŋ́   fẽ́ẽ́

            ok   2SG=there   all

            "How are you and your family?"

15. Akua: ófáìnẽ́   wɔ̀=jé̃!ŋ́   jògbằŋ̀ŋ

            please   1PL=there   well

            "Please, everything and everyone is well."

16. Yoomo: ɛ̀ɛ̃̀   à=tsɛ́-ɔ̀   mɪ̃̀   nằắ kwèíkɔ́

            IJ   3PL.IMPERS=call-HAB   1SG.OBJ   Naa Kweikor

            "Errm, my name is ~Naa Kweikor."

17.   í̃=wɔ́!ŋ́   gbɛ́ì   jí   yòómó àshắmɪ̃̀

            1SG=deity   name   COP   Yoomo Ashami

            "My deity name is ~Yoomo Ashami."

18.   mɛ̃̀ɪ̃   pìì   tsɛ́-ɔ̀   mɪ̃̀   kwèíkɔ́ *Fire Service*

            people many call-HAB   1SG.OBJ   Kweikor Fire Service

            "Many people call me Kweikor Fire Service."

19.   nò   jí   nɔ̃́   nɪ̃́   kɛ́   ò=kɛ̀-tsɛ́   mɪ̃́=!ɛ̃́

            that   COP NM   NMLZ if   2SG=take-call   1SG.OBJ=DEF

            nɪ̃́   à=bàá-!nắ

            NMLZ   3PL.IMPERS=FUT-see

            "That is what if you call me by, people will know (you are referring to me)."

20. Akua: yòò

            "Ok."

21. Yoomo: m̀m̀

            IJ

            "Well"

22.   bɛ̀   nɔ̃́   nɪ̃́   hèwɔ̀   nɪ̃́   à=yè-ɔ̀

            then   thing that   because   REL   3PL.IMPERS=eat-HAB

hǎ̂ǎjǐ-à-yὲlὲ   jí
twin-PERT-yam   COP
"So, the reason the twin festival is celebrated is"

23.   àtàá   nyɔ̃̀ŋmɔ̃̀   bɔ̀   à!kɛ́   mɔ̃̀-fɛ́ɛ́-!mɔ̃́=!ɔ́
           father God   create NMLZ   person-all-person=DEF
           ó=fɔ́   ékòmé
           2SG.SBJV=give.birth   one
           "God ordained that everyone will have one child at a time."

24. Akua: ófáìnɛ́ ò=bàá=nyɛ́   ó=wó   ó=gbὲὲ   nɔ̃̀
           please 2SG=FUT-able   2SG.SBJV=lift   2SG-voice   top
           fí!óò
           little
           "Please, can you raise your voice a little?"

25. Yoomo: yòò
           Ok

26.   bὲ   nɔ̃́   nɛ̃́   hὲwɔ̀ nɛ̃́   à=yὲ-ɔ̀
           IJ   NM   NMLZ   sake   NMLZ   3PL.IMPERS=eat.HAB
           hǎ̂ǎjǐ-à-yὲlé=!ɛ́   kὲkὲ jí   á!kɛ́
           twin-PERT-yam=DEF   just   COP   that
           "The reason why the twin festival is celebrated is simply that"

27.   àtàá   nyɔ̃̀ŋmɔ̃̀   bɔ̀   mɔ̃̀-fɛ́ɛ́-mɔ̃̀   nɛ̃́
           father God   create person-all-person   NMLZ
           é=fɔ́   ékòmé
           3SG.SBJV=give.birth   one
           "God created everyone to have one child at a time."

28.   hὲwɔ́=!ɔ́   kɛ́   ò=tὲὲ   ékòmé=!ɛ́   fɔ́-!mɔ̃́
           sake=TOP   if   2SG=go.PST one=DEF   give.birth-NOM
           nɔ̃̀   ò=nɔ̃́   !lɛ́   ény!ɔ̃́=!ɔ́
           and   2SG=get   3SG.OBJ   two=DEF

"So when you are about to have that one child and you end up with two"

29. kùsúŋ   yὲ nɪ́   à=fé-ɔ̀
    custom   exist NMLZ   3PL.IMPERS=do-HAB
    à=hɑ́-ɑ̀   nὲkɛ́ hɑ̀ɑ̂jɪ̃̀ɪ̃̀ nɛ́!ɛ́
    3PL.IMPERS=give-HAB this twins this
    "There are some rites that are performed for these twins."

30. Akua: m̀m̀
    IJ
    "I see"

31. Yoomo: kɛ́ ò=yà-fɔ́   é!nyɔ́=!ɔ́ bὲ
    if 2SG=ITIV-give.birth two=DEF then
    ó=!fɔ́   hɑ̀ɑ̂jɪ̃̀ɪ̃̀
    2SG.PERF=give.birth twins
    "If you give birth to two (babies) then you've given birth to twins."

32. Akua: m̀m̀
    IJ
    "Yes"

33. Yoomo: hèwɔ́=!ɔ́ àmὲ=bὲ nɪ́   à=kὲ-yè-ɔ̀
    sake=TOP 3PL=time NMLZ   3PL.IMPERS=take-eat-HAB
    ɑ̀mὲ̃ nɪ́yènɪ̃̂ jí
    3PL food   COP
    "So the time for eating their food (i.e. celebrating, honouring them) is"

34.   kɛ́ è=shὲ   áfɪ́
    when 3SG=reach year
    "when the year ends."

35.   dɑ́nɪ́ à=bàá-yè   hɔmɔ̃̀wɔ́=!ɔ́
    before 3PL.IMPERS=FUT-eat Homowo=DEF

à = yè-ɔ̀   yèèyé!yé

3PL.IMPERS = eat-HAB   Yeyeye

"Before Homowo (festival) is celebrated Yeyeye (festival) is celebrated."

36.   yèèyé!yé = ɛ̀   jí   hã̀ã̂jĭ̀-à-yèlɛ́ = !ɛ́

        Yeyeye = DEF   COP   twin-PERT-yam = DEF

        "Yeyeye is the twin festival."

37. Akua: m̀m̀

           IJ

           "Ok"

38. Yoomo: à = bàá-!hé   yèlɛ̀

           3PL.IMPERS = FUT-buy   yam

           "Yam will be bought"

           à = bàá-!yá-tsɛ́   hã̀ã̂jĭ̌ = !ɛ́   ã̀mɛ̃̀ = sùsùmã́

           3PL = FUT-ITIV-call   twin = DEF   3PL = spirit

           "The spirit of the twins will be summoned."

39,   *spiritually*

40. Akua: m̀m̀

           IJ

           "Ok"

41. Yoomo: nĭ̀   ã̀mɛ̃̀   ã̀mɛ̃̀ = bàá-tsɔ̃́ɔ̃́   nɔ̃́   nĩ́   ã̀mɛ̃̀ = bàá-!yé

           and   3PL   3PL = FUT-show   NM   NMLZ 3PL = FUT-eat

           "And it is they who will decide what they will eat."

42. Akua: *Ok*

43. Yoomo: mɛ̃̂ĩ̀   kòmɛ̃̂ĩ̀   bàá-tsɔ̃́ɔ̃́   tòò

           people   some   FUT-show   sheep

           "Some people will choose a sheep"

44.   kɛ̀   è=nɔ̃̀   wùó-!í   ényɔ̃̀

        and   3SG=top   chicken-PL   two

        "In addition to two chickens"

45.   kɛ̀   mù-tsùlù

        and   oil-red

        "and palm oil"

46.   kɛ̀=   àtàlé   nɪ́   ãmɛ̃̀=sùmɔ̃̀   nɪ́   ãmɛ̃̀=díɛ̃̀ŋtsɛ̀

        and   dress NMLZ   3PL=like   NMLZ   3PL=INTENS

        ãmɛ̃̀=bàá-!wó=!ɛ́

        3PL=FUT-wear=DEF

        "And a dress that they like that they themselves will wear."

47.   ãmɛ̃̀=yè   sùsùmã́=!ã́   nɪ́   ãmɛ̃̀=bàá-yà-tsɛ́

        3PL=have   spirit=DEF   NMLZ   3PL=FUT-ITIV-call

        "They have spirits that they summon."

48.   ãmɛ̃̀   nɪ̃̀   ãmɛ̃̀=bàá-yà-tsɔ́ɔ́   nɛ̃̀kɛ́   nɪ́yènɪ́!í   nɛ́!ɛ́

        3PL   FOC   3PL=FUT-ITIV-show   this   food   this

        "It is they who will decide on this food."

49. Akua: m̀m̀

               IJ

               "Ok"

50. Yoomo: kɛ̀   ãmɛ̃̀=nìnè-shɪ̃̀-nɪ́!í   nɪ́   ãmɛ̃̀=bàá-!wó

           and   3PL=hand-down-thing   NMLZ   3PL=FUT-wear

           "And the bracelet that they will wear."

51. Akua: m̀m̀

             IJ

             "Ok"

52.   à=tsɛ́-ɔ̀   lɛ̀   àbàkĺé
     3PL.IMPERS=call-HAB 3SG.OBJ abakle
     "It is called an "abakle.""

53. Akua: m̀m̀
     IJ
     "Ok"

53. Yoomo: à=kɛ̀   fĩ̀-ɔ̃̀   ã̀mɛ̃̀=nĩ̀nè shĩ̀
     3PL.IMPERS=take tie-HAB 3PL=hand down
     "It is tied to their wrist."

54   nò hèwɔ̀ kɛ́--
     that sake if
     "So if--"

55.   bɛ̀ *every year* jí bɛ̀ nĩ́   à=kɛ̀-fé-ɔ̀
     then   COP time NMLZ   3PL=take-do-HAB
     "So it is done every year."

56.   è=dắmɔ̃́ɔ̃́ɔ̃́   *date* kòmé
     3SG=stand.NEG   one
     "It doesn't fall on the same date."

57. Akua: hɛ̀ɛ́!ɛ́
     "Yes"

58. Yoomo: áfĩ nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́ é=bà-dắmɔ̃̀   *fourteenth*
     year this 3SG.PERF=VENT-stand
     "This year, it has fallen on the 14th"

58: Akua: m̀m̀
     IJ
     "Ok"

59. Yoomo: é!kólé = !έ *next year* è = bàá-!yá-dằmɔ̀ *fifteenth*
          maybe = TOP   3SG = FUT-ITIV-stand
          "Maybe next year it will fall on the fifteenth."

60.   *every year* = !έ   ékòmé kɑ̃́-ằ   nɔ̃̀
                    = TOP   one   lie-HAB   top
          "Every year it moves forward by one day."

61. Akua: *Ok*

62. Yoomo: hèwɔ́ = !ɔ́ bὲ   bɔ̀nɑ̃́ à = fé-ɔ̀   lὲ   jí
          sake = TOP   then   how   3PL.IMPERS = do-HAB   3SG.OBJ   COP
          "So how they do it is"

63.   à = wò-ɔ̀   bàà
          3PL.IMPERS = prepare-HAB   leaf
          "They prepare leaves/herbs."

64.   nɑ̃́   !jí   hằ̃âjĩ̃ĩ̀ à-bàà
          NMLZ COP   twin   PERT-leaf
          "Which is the twin's herbal infusion."

65. Akua: m̀m̀
          IJ
          "Ok"

66. Yoomo: ằmɛ̃̀ = yὲ   *special*   bàà   nɑ̃́
          3PL = have   leaf   NMLZ
          à = kὲ-jù-ɔ̀   à = hɑ̃́-ằ   ằmɛ̃̀
          3PL = take-bathe-HAB   3PL.IMPERS = give-HAB   3PL
          "They have a special herbal infusion that they are given a bath with."

67. Akua: m̀m̀
          IJ
          "Ok"

68. Yoomo: nὲkέ   hἆἆjῖῖ   à-bàà   nέ!ἕ
this   twin   PERT-leaf   this
"This herbal infusion"

69.   nò   ékò   jí   nɔ̋   nῖ   wɔ́=wò   kέ-mà
that   some   COP   NM   NMLZ 1PL.PERF=prepare   take.PERF-situate
shῖ   nέ!ἕ
down   this
"It is what we have prepared over here."

70.   m̀m̀
IJ
"Ok"

71.Yoomo: bέ   ó=nằ
QP   2SG=see
"You've seen it, haven't you?"

72. Akua: m̀ḿ!ḿ
IJ
"Yes"

73. Yoomo: hèwɔ́=!ɔ́   dἆnῖ   wɔ̀=bàá-wò   bàá=!à
sake=TOP   before   1PL=FUT-prepare   leaf=DEF
"So before we prepare the herbal infusion"

74.   wɔ̀=kὲ-bàá-tsɔ̋ɔ̋   ŋwὲῖ
1PL=take-FUT-show   up
"We will show it to heaven"

75.   nῖ   wɔ̀=kὲ-bàá-tsɔ̋ɔ̋   àtàá   nằắ   nyɔ̀ŋmɔ̀   á!kέ
and   1PL=take-FUT-show   father   title.female   God   NMLZ

é=jɔ́ɔ́   bàà   nɛ́!ɛ́   nɔ̃̀

3SG.SBJV=bless   leaf   this   top

"We will show it to God, that he should bless this water."

76. Akua: m̀m̀

              IJ

              "Ok"

77. Yoomo: kè-hɛ́   gbé!kɛ́-bí!í=!ɛ́   nɛ́

              take-give   child=PL   NMLZ

              à=kɛ́-!jú   á=hɛ́   ɛ̃̀mɛ̃̀

              3PL.IMPERS-take.SBJV-bathe   3PL.IMPERS.SBJV=give   3PL

              "For the children so they can be bathed with it."

78.   kè   ɛ̃̀mɛ̃̀=mɛ̃̀mí   kè   ɛ̃̀mɛ̃̀=pàpá=!á

            and   3PL=mother and   3PL=father=DEF

            "And their mother and their father."

79. Akua: m̀m̀

              IJ

              "Ok"

80.   kónɛ́   kɛ́   ɛ̃̀mɛ̃̀=sèèhó   tá!wíá ŋ̀=bá-!á

            NMLZ when   3PL=immediate.younger.sibling   Tawia PROG=come=DEF

            "So that when their immediate younger sibling, Tawia, is coming"

81.   nɛ́   lè   hɛ̃́   é=nɛ́   gbè   nɛ́

            NMLZ 3SG.OBJ   too   3SG.SBJV=get   way   NMLZ

            é=!bá

            3SG.SBJV=come

            "He will come unhindered."

82. Akua: m̀m̀

              IJ

              "Ok"

83. Yoomo: hèwɔ̀ kɛ́ à=wò bàá=!á à=mã̀
          sake when 3PL.IMPERS=prepare leaf-DEF 3PL.IMPERS=
          shì̃
          down
          "So when the herbal infusion is prepared and put down"

84. nĩ̀ ò=yɛ̀ shĩ̂ã mĩ̀ŋ nĩ̀ òò=tá!ó
     and 2SG=be.located house inside and 2SG.PROG=want
     nɔ̃́=!kó=!ɛ́
     thing=INDEF=DEF
     "And you are in the house and you want something"

85. ò=kɛ̀-bàá-tsɔ̃́ gbé!kɛ̃́-bíı=ɛ̀ à-nɔ̃̀
     2SG=take-FUT-pass child-PL=DEF PERT-top
     "You will pass your request through the children."

86. ò=bàá-!yá-hé dã̀ã̀ tɔ̀ kòmé
     2SG=FUT-buy alcohol bottle one
     "You will go and buy one bottle of alcohol."

87. nĩ́ jí *Castlebridge* tɔ̀ kòmé
     NMLZ COP Castlebridge bottle one
     "Which is one bottle of Castlebridge whiskey."

88. nĩ̀ ò=kɛ̀ ó=shìká nĩ́ jɛ̀ bò-díɛ̃̀tsɛ̀
     and 2SG=take 2SG=money NMLZ come.from 2SG-INTENS
     ó=tsùí mĩ̀ŋ
     2SG=heart inside
     "And you will give an amount of money that is from the bottom of your heart."

89. é!kólɛ́=!ɛ́ *ten Ghana* àlóó *twenty*
     perhaps=TOP or
     "Perhaps, ten Ghana (cedis) or twenty Ghana (cedis)."

90.   ò=kὲ-bàá-ŋmὲ̃   *one bottle*=έ=ὲ   nɔ̃̀

                2SG=take-FUT-lay   =DEF=DEF   top

                "You will add it to the one bottle (of Castlebridge whiskey)."

91. Akua: m̀m̀

                IJ

                "Ok"

92. Yoomo: nɪ̃̀   à=kὲ-bàá-*pour libation*   á=hɑ́̃   bò

                and   3PL.IMPERS=take-FUT-   3PL.IMPERS.SBJV=give   2SG.OBJ

                "And they will use it to pour libation for you."

93. Akua: m̀m̀

                IJ

                "Ok"

94. Yoomo: nɪ́̃   !jí   à=kὲ-bàá-yè   [ŋ̀kpáì]

                NMLZ COP   3PL.IMPERS=take-FUT-eat   prayer

                á=hɑ́̃   bò

                3PL.IMPERS.SBJV=give   2SG.OBJ

                "Which means they will pour libation for you."

95. Akua: [m̀m̀]

                                          IJ

                                        "Ok"

96. Yoomo: hὲwɔ́=!ɔ́   bé   nɪ́̃   è=bàá-shέ   áfɪ́

                sake=TOP   time   NMLZ   3SG=FUT-reach   year

                nɪ́̃   bàá-!bá   ék!óŋ́ŋ=!έ

                NMLZ   FUT-come   again=DEF

                "So by the time another year comes around"

97. Akua: hὲɛ́̃!έ̃

                "Yes"

98. Yoomo: ní̆́   !jí *next year* nɔ́ ní́

      NMLZ   COP   NM NMLZ

      è = bàá-!bá-ní!nɛ́ = !ɛ́

      3SG = FUT-come-meet = DEF

      "Which is the coming year"

99. Akua: hɛ̀ɛ́!ɛ́

      "Yes"

100. Yoomo: nɔ́ ní́   bò   ó = bà-bí = !ɛ́

      NM NMLZ   2SG.OBJ 2SG.PERF = VENT-ask = DEF

      "What you have come and asked for"

101.   hɛ̀ɛ̂jíí̃ = !ɛ́ àmɛ́ = fèé   àmɛ́ = !hɛ́   bò

      twins = DEF 3PL.PERF = do   3PL.SBJV = give 2SG.OBJ

      "The twins, they have done it for you."

102. Akua: ɛ̀ɛ̃

      IJ

      "I see."